

## Step By Step

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### Patience

- Today we talk about Patience. If you were here a couple of weeks ago I pointed out that this is a struggle for me, because I am not the most patient person in the world.
- This is actually the same greek word that is used, when Paul says love is Patient.
- BUT The Word “Patience” from this passage is translated in other versions as Long-suffering.
- The greek word this is translated from can also be translated: ***Patience: endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance, forbearance, slowness in avenging wrongs***
- So when we think of Patience or impatience, we think of it in terms of getting what we want when we want it, but this word is more about being patient in difficult times, being patient with difficult people, waiting on the Lord, trusting in Him, and understanding that God

does not work in seconds (like we’re used to). He works in seasons.

- If there was anyone in the bible who showed an example of patience, perseverance, endurance, slowness of avenging wrongs... it was Joseph. If you’ve grown up in church or church culture you may have heard of this guy named Joseph in the book of Genesis..if you haven’t heard the story, man it’s a wild one. Joseph went THROUGH it but even after all the rejection, temptation, false accusation, and being forgotten we’re going to see that he chose to endure and trust, and through it God did some pretty amazing things through his life.
  - PRAY
  - Yelling at movies
    - Gary’s car accident [See Bottom]
  - Its gut wrenching, I yell at the tv every time, it’s hard for me even to watch, but some of the greatest scenes of the movie come after the worst one. The way they rally in the

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hospital, the way the play through the adversity in the state title game... Actually the horrors of that scene is one of the things that propels the story to be even greater... Making it the GREATEST MOVIE OF ALL TIME!!

- You see, there might be someone that needs to hear this this morning:

- **YOU MAY NOT LIKE YOUR SCENE, BUT GOD IS NOT DONE WITH YOUR STORY**

- How awful would it have been, if I just turned off my favorite movie of all time, or just walked out of the theatre the first time I saw it, because I didn't like the car accident scene?
- So many people give up on their goals, or the dreams that God has placed in their lives.... they throw in the towel because they don't like the scene they're in right now

- Joseph went through some tough scenes in life

- Genesis 37: We first meet Joseph when he is 17 years old. He's number 11 of 12 sons born to his dad named Jacob.
- Jacob's first 10 sons were born to his first wife named Leah, who he didn't really like that much, he got tricked into marrying her
- But Joseph is his first born son to his beloved second wife name Rachel, who he was crazy about. So Joseph is by far daddy's favorite. At one point he buys him this extravagant coat of many colors further emphasizing his favoritism.
- And his 10 older brothers hate him for it. And to be fair, Joseph could be a little annoying. At one point he's described as a tattle tail, no one likes that.
- And also, he's prone to have pretty vivid dreams and he has no problem sharing them. He has 2 different dreams of his entire family bowing down to him and he has the audacity to tell everyone about it.

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- And that just makes his older brothers hate him even more! After the second dream, even dad chimes in and tells him to keep those comments to himself.
- But Joseph had a dream, he gets excited about it as he is anticipating that God was going to do something great through his life, but he was hated for it
- You may have an incredible moments with God, where you begin to get a glimpse and catch a vision of what God wants to do in and through your life, and it gets you excited and you want to share it with people...don't be surprised when you get hit with negativity, don't be surprised if you face opposition, don't be surprised if you have people try to bring you "back to reality" or put you in your place...and it might even get more extreme
- THE PIT
- One day Joseph goes to check in his brothers who are working in the fields. See if they need

any food, water, or anything like that. But then while he's still a ways off, his brothers see him.

- They say, "Ugh, here comes this dreamer...let's kill him. Yea, let's kill him!" Then they start talking about killing off their own brother. Now they can't become unified in whether or not they're gonna kill him, so they just beat him up, strip him of his colorful coat, and throw him in a pit while they decide
- So Joseph has to lay there, listening to his brother discuss whether or not they're going to kill him.
  - Most people would give up here, but this kind of rejection can either BREAK you or it can BUILD you
    - "Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond"
  - You cant always control your circumstances, you DEFINITELY can't control other people, but you can always control your response

- Joseph's response is incredible...not with words, but with a lifestyle

- SLAVERY-POTIPHAR'S HOUSE

- So his brothers decide not to kill him. Instead they see some traders traveling through and decide to sell him off as a slave for some silver and then they fake his death. They cover his coat in animals blood and tell their dad that a wild animal killed him.

- All the while he's caravanned off to Egypt, the most prominent world power at this time, where he is sold again to work as a slave in a high ranking Egyptian official's house named Potiphar.

- So, he's sold as a slave, but that's not the whole story

- ***The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did***

***to succeed in his hands." Genesis 39: 2-3***

- Instead of lowering his head and feeling sorry for himself, he decides, he might be a slave, but he's not gonna live like a slave...his circumstances may not reflect it right now, but he's recognizing the presence of God in his life and he is living as if God has a much higher calling for his life than the situation he was currently in.
- So he might be a slave but he's gonna be the most successful slave he can possibly be
- This is a great example for us in scripture, because it is important for us to know that:
  - *Success is not defined by your circumstances, success is defined by your faithfulness where you are right now*
- Joseph works his way up, and Potiphar is so impressed with Joseph that he puts him in charge of everything in his estate to the point that the bible says that Potiphar didn't have to

concern himself with anything but the food that he ate

- Potiphar is a big fan of Joseph, but the problem is...so is Mrs Potiphar
- Tried to seduce him....he flees (don't fight temptation, you flee temptation)
- So Joseph does the right thing!...he should be rewarded and applauded
  - *But instead he gets falsely accused. Mrs Potiphar is so embarrassed of Joseph's rejection, that she accused him of trying to seduce her! Potiphar comes home and she's holding his jacket and says, "Look! This Hebrew you allowed in our home tried to take advantage of me, I screamed and he ran away!" Potiphar starts seeing red, has Joseph found and thrown in prison!*
- Man, can Joseph catch a break?? Tell me, Is there anything more frustrating, than when you are doing all of the right things, and yet nothing seems to go your way??

- But you know, things don't have to be going right in order to live right.
- It's actually living right, when everything seems to be going wrong that will develop your character and grow you the most.
- And even when everything seems to be going wrong, that doesn't mean God is absent
- So Joseph was now sitting in PRISON, but Genesis 39 says:
  - ***But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." Genesis 39:21***
    - THE LORD WAS WITH HIM?!...most of us would be asking WHERE ARE YOU GOD!
    - *You can **Never measure the presence of God in your life based on your present circumstances***

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- *Understanding that you are never away from the presence of God and that He is still working even if everything seems disastrous, is how you can live with true peace and patience in this life*
- *Because You may feel like you're in a pit, you may feel like you're in the prison...BUT GOD IS WITH YOU*
- Some of you may need to change the pronoun, and declare that over yourself on a regular basis
- He's not just with you...His steadfast love is toward you, and you have his favor
- *Understanding those three things could change the way you see every circumstance in your life*
- *You may be going through horrific family problems...BUT GOD is with you, His steadfast love is toward you, and you have His favor*
- *This season of life may be way harder than you expected....BUT GOD is with you, His steadfast love is toward you, and you have His favor*
- *You may feel completely lost and directionless, not knowing what you're supposed to be doing with your life...BUT GOD is with you, His steadfast love is toward you, and you have His favor*
- You see, God does not create the chaos in our lives, but He's can use it to work something in you that will not only benefit you, but also everyone else around you
- Understanding this is where the power in your life will come from, that will allow you to endure with patience, and can also allow you to be one of those annoying people can still be happy even when everything seems to be going wrong
- *Just like Joseph*

- Just like in Potiphar's house, The Jailor sees something in Joseph's life and puts him in charge of all the prisoners and everything that needed to be done in the prison.
  - Again Joseph, was in prison...but he didn't live like a prisoner. He was living as if he was already walking in the Higher Calling God had for his life. What God was doing in him was so much greater than what was going on around him
  - It effected his attitude and demeanor, to the point that it could be a little annoying.
- At one point he finds himself in prison with the two guys, one had formerly been the chief Cupbearer to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. His job was to taste test any drinks before Pharaoh would drink them to make sure they were good and not poisoned. Very Classy job.
- The other was the Chief Baker. That one is self explanatory.
- But one day Joseph was walking around, twirling the prison keys, whistling a song, and he see's that these guys seem down. So he goes up to them and says, "Hey guys, why you so sad?"
  - "Why are we so sad?! Because WE'RE IN PRISON BRO!"
- But I think it says so much about Joseph that even in the midst of being in prison he still takes the time to notice that something is a little more off with these guys than normal. Why? Because
  - **People of Character, Care for people**
    - They don't allow their bad circumstances to bring everyone else down around them
    - They help even when no one else will help them
  - Why? because happy people help people, they don't sit around and wait for people to help them

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- So many people get frustrated with other people and even church because they're waiting for everyone else to help them and care for them
  - *But whatever you want other people to be for you, you first have to be for other people*
  - *Or else you'll just stay frustrated and depressed...focusing on what everyone else ISN'T doing, rather than what you COULD be doing*
- Sometimes the best way to keep your spirits up in difficult times is to stop focusing on yourself and how bad you have it and start focusing on helping other people instead
- The amazing thing is, is that whenever you do that, whenever you start putting your focus and energy into helping other people in spite of the prison you might feel like you're in....all of the sudden your stuff starts to get dealt with
  - All of the sudden, that depression that frustration starts to lose the grip it has on your life. And all you do is get stronger and stronger and stronger
    - Joseph is here to help...*whats going on?*
  - The dreams
  - Cupbearer: This vine had 3 branches, grapes grew out from them and I was squeezing the juices into pharaohs cup
    - *Easy, 3 branches, 3 days, you're gonna get outa here in 3 days and restored to your former position. You and pharaoh are gonna be cool again, but REMEMBER ME!*
    - *Bet, I gotchu*
  - Baker: I had 3 baskets on my head full of all kind of breads, and these birds were eating the bread out of the baskets...whats that mean?
    - *Yeaaaa, 3 baskets means 3 days, you'll get outa here too...but you're not gonna be*



*reinstated to your position, you're gonna be executed....sooooooo, wanna get breakfast.*

*- How do you move on from that??*

- But everything happened the way Joseph said it would...but the problem was, cupbearer forgot about HIM!
- He just goes on about his life, leaving Joseph sitting around waiting back in the prison

**- GENESIS 41:1 AFTER TWO WHOLE YEARS...**

- Does anyone else ever feel like this love with God at times feels like one giant eating game??
- But here's something that I have been learning and working through over the past couple of years. And that is:

**- IF YOU'RE WILLING TO WAIT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GROW**

- If you want God to work THROUGH you, you first have to let God work IN you

- I had a great pastor tell me one time, "A man cannot be greatly used by God until He is first greatly broken by God"

*- Jesus said, "Whoever is faithful with little will be faithful with much."*

- Joseph may not have completely understood at the time was that God was using the pit, the slavery, and the prison, to prepare him for something so much greater

- AFTER TWO YEARS// Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, has a dream and tries to use every single resource as his disposal to get his dream interpreted but nothing is working

- Then the cupbearer finally remembers and is like..... "Ohhhhh yea, well there was this one guy...back in prison who had interpreted me and this the guy's dream two years ago."

- "GO GET HIM!"

- How awkward would that have been?

- So they go get Joseph and bring him to Pharaoh. Joseph comes in Pharaoh's says, "So I hear you can interpret dreams." Joseph says, "It's not me, it's all God. But go head and tell me you dream and we'll see if God has an answer."

- PHARAOH'S DREAM:
- Pharaoh says that he keeps having this dream where it starts off with 7 Cows all fat and happy chillin' by the banks of the Nile river. But then out of nowhere, 7 skinny ugly cows come out of the river, and THEY EAT THE FAT COWS! In another dream the same things happen with some stocks of corn! What does that mean??
- God then gives Joseph insight to tell him that the 7 cows symbolize 7 years. The 7 fat cows symbolize 7 years of plenty. In the next 7 years, the land is going to produce like crazy and their going to have more crops and food than they know what to do with. But the after the 7 years of plenty

there are going to come 7 years of famine. So what they needed to do was store up all of the excess food during the plentiful years, so they would have enough to sustain them and the surrounding nations during the 7 years of famine.

- Pharaoh says, "THIS GUY IS AWESOME!"
- ***Genesis 41: "This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you." -Genesis 41:37-40***
- Sounds a lot like Potiphar's house doesn't it, sounds a lot like what happened in the prison right?

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- It's incredible that because Joseph was able to endure with patience... the pit, the slavery, the prison...all of that actually just prepared him for the palace!
- *Joseph has finally made it!* He had a dream of people bowing down to him, 13 years later he finds himself in the palace. He's got a family now, he's succeeding in everything he does
- Once the famine hits, he's got people from all over the known world at the time, coming to him for help
- And two years into the famine, one day a group of guys come in bow down before him, and when they stand up he realizes that its his brothers...*they don't recognize him, ohhhh but he recognized them*
- The same guys who faked his death, sold him into slavery, turned his life upside down and ripped him away from his family.
  - Now he remembers the dream he had when he was 17...
- His dream of them bowing down has come true, he holds all the power and all the cards now, he can get anything he wants now. He enact his revenge, he can take all their money, he can destroy them for what they did to him...but Joseph wasn't stuck on that scene
- In an example of true patience, he wasn't quick to avenge wrongs
- Joseph understood that there was a much bigger picture here
  - The dream he had when he was 17 wasn't about the power, wealth, and having people bow down to him. It was about God doing something through his life that would save hundred of thousands, if not MILLIONS of lives!
  - THATS THE AMAZING THING ABOUT SERVING A GOD WHO WORKS ALL THINGS OUT FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM

- *Because they may have intended it for evil but God used it for so much good!*
- *So Joseph could be thinking, “How can I be mad about being thrown into the pit, or being thrown into the prison whenever God used those things to work something in me that not only benefited me, but also EVERYONE around me”*
- That kind of perspective changes everything!
- After a few chapters of Joseph going through an emotional roller coaster, he couldn't keep it together anymore!
- He says “It's ME! Your brother! Joseph! Who you sold into slavery all of those years ago!”
- *His brothers are shocked, they're paralyzed with fear, because the logical conclusion is that they are about to get repaid for all the evil they did to him over 20 years ago*
- But in Genesis 45, Joseph says to his brothers: **“And now do not be distressed or**

***angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God.” -Genesis 45:5-8***

- *Joseph understood there was something so much bigger than him going on here*
- *Instead of focusing on the hurt he had experienced, he focused on God's faithfulness throughout*
- *He could be thinking, “How can I be mad about the The pit, when that led me to working in Potiphar's house, where I gained invaluable experience working in a high ranking officials household that prepared me for where I am now”*

- “*And yea, I was Falsely accused and sent to prison, but that allowed me to meet the cupbearer...who put me in front of Pharaoh...who allowed me to help all of these people!*”
- Even further than that, Joseph may not have understood this at the time. But the story of Joseph, isn't just about the story of Joseph.
  - It wasn't about his brothers bowing down to him. It was so much bigger than that. God didn't just save and preserve Joseph, he used Joseph to save and preserve His people, the nation of Israel, by bringing them through a famine...So God could one day, through this group of people, bring salvation to ALL people from the famine that sin produced.
- Jesus was the True and Greater Joseph
- CALL BAND
  - Joseph was favored by his father and his brothers hated him for it
- **Jesus** was favored by His Father and the world hated Him for it
  - Joseph was sold by his brothers for silver
- **Jesus** was sold by his disciple for silver
  - Joseph was wrongly accused and sent to prison
- **Jesus** was wrongly accused and sent to the grave
  - Joseph was faithful and came out of prison and was given all power and authority in Egypt
- **Jesus** was faithful and came out of the grave and was given all power and authority in Heaven and on Earth
  - And Joseph may have sat down at the right hand of Pharaoh
- BUT **JESUS** sat down at the right hand of the Father

- Just like Joseph, **Jesus** would look his betrayers in the face, and He would provide for them, comfort them, and bring them into the palace.
  - I know that, because I was one of his betrayers. My sin put Him on the cross.
- ***But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved [ME], even when [I WAS] dead in [MY] trespasses, [HE] made [ME] alive together with Christ— [And now ALL of us, when we accept this great love] HE raises us up with Him and [seats] us with Him in the heavenly places ...***
  - When He saves you, your identity and your position completely changes.
    - We go from rebel to royalty,
    - We go from enemy to friend
  - It does not matter how deep of a pit you've been thrown in or how long that sin, that addiction, that depression, anxiety, guilt, shame or pain has kept you in a prison
    - He is bigger and better than it all
- We sang earlier about waiting on the Lord. That word “wait” from psalm 130 means “To look eagerly for” “To hope” and “To expect”
- So waiting on the Lord, is not just sitting around and doing nothing until He does. No, it's eagerly looking for Him and His workings in the midst of the pit, in the midst of the prison, in the midst of the pain...and confidently expecting Him to work something through it.
- We can go through the trials with patience because we know the scene is just temporary, the story is still going, and the Author of it all is SO GOOD
- That's why we seek Him. Because we're promised that when we seek Him with our whole hearts, we will find Him. When we ask, it will be given. Knock and you will be answered. That's why we can trust him.

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How many of you love you watch movies? You would call yourselves movie people. I love to watch movies, I come from a movie watching family. And I'm one who can get emotionally invested in a movie. Now, I'm not a big cryer, I'm not like Skip and Jeremy who will cry 5 mins into a sermon. I guess I'm not that spiritual. But there are other ways to get emotionally invested in the movie, namely yelling at the tv. I've been guilty of this, especially during sporting events. My own roommate doesn't even want to be home when the Eagles are playing. Ive gotten better at it, its a process of sanctification, trust the process. But it can even be a movie that I've seen 100 times and I can still find myself yelling at it.

Remember the Titans is the greatest movie of all time. I would say that its my favorite movie of all time but I don't think that would do it justice. Now, within the greatest movie of all time, there is also one of the worst scenes of all time. If you're not familiar with the story, TC Williams high school had just desegregated their school and the football team, the Titans, are leading the charge toward unity. They have had an incredible undefeated season, and they just won the game that punched their ticket to the 1971 Virginia State Title. They get back to the school and when the team gets off the bus the whole town is out there to celebrate with them. Gary Bertier, the team captain, All-American linebacker is taking in the

whole scene. James Taylor is playing softly in the background, He just made amends with his girlfriend, he starts driving around taking in the scene of the school finally coming together. He sees one of his buddies, they're pointing at each other. YOU MAN, NO YOU MAN! Garry hits the accelerator, starts to take off, and I Yell GARY! LOOK TO YOUR LEFT! By the time Gary listens to me, a truck comes barreling into the drivers side of his Camaro, paralyzing him for the rest of his life. Its gut wrenching, I yell at the tv every time, its hard for me even to watch....but, you know, some of the greatest scenes of the movie come after the worst one. The way they rally in the hospital, the way the play through the adversity in the state title game... Actually the horrors of that scene is one of the things that propels the story to be even greater...ITS THE BEST MOVIE EVER MADE!!