

Sermon Series: *Through it all God still loves us*
Sermon #1
Persevering through dysfunction to fulfill God's dream
Genesis 37:1-36

- I. **Dysfunction displayed in the family can lead to a misinterpretation of the Christian worldview. Genesis 37:1-11**
 - a. Despite the dysfunction in our upbringing God can still appoint us and use us to be agents of God's blessing. Genesis 37:1-3
 - b. Joseph's brothers had strong hatred and were jealous of him because their father made him an ornamented robe. Change is sometimes hard to accept however, we must never neglect or disrespect who God appoints as our leaders. Genesis 37:3-4, 5, 8, 11 ; Hebrews 13:17
 - i. How is your heart towards God appointed leaders?
 - c. Joseph's brothers' and father's response to his dreams were both that of misunderstanding. We should also expect to be misunderstood by others when we live to be God's agent of blessing to others. Genesis 37:5-10
 - d. We should continually consider keeping the things of God in our minds even when we don't have full understanding. Genesis 37:11; Luke 2:19, Mathew 1:20-23
- II. **Dysfunction (Sin) left unresolved in our lives can cause damage and eventually destroy all of our personal relationships. Genesis 37:12-22**
 - a. Joseph was sent by his father to see if all was well with his brother in Shechem and was willing to be available to do his father's will. God is looking for believers who He can send to do His will and bring Him Glory. Genesis 37:12-14
 - b. Joseph demonstrated his love toward his brothers in his willingness to go beyond doing his father's will by searching for his brothers who wandered away from home. Genesis 37:15-17
 - c. Joseph's brothers missed the opportunity to receive the good news from Joseph due to their hardened hearts. We must understand that the enemy loves to keep us in relational strongholds when we choose to not repent of our unconfessed sin. Genesis 37:18-22, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Matthew 15:19
- III. **God can help us to endure through any mistreatment of evil and all of life circumstances that He allows us to encounter. Genesis 37:23-36**
 - a. Joseph was stripped of his ornamented robe and was thrown into pit by his brothers because of their enmity towards him. We can expect to suffer enmity when we go forth to be a blessing. Genesis 37:23-25

- i. How have you responded towards the mistreatment of evil in your life?
(Romans 8:28, 38-39, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 13:5, 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- b. Joseph's brother thought that they finally got rid of their brother when they sold him as a slave to the Ishmaelites. We should praise God for His sovereign control over every detail of our lives! Genesis 37: 25-28
- c. Reuben's response towards Joseph being removed from the pit was one of mourning and of a guilty conscience for the sin that he had committed towards his brother; Jacob's son deceived their father into thinking Joseph was dead. It's never too late to turn to the Lord. He is not looking to condemn you but to welcome you home when you trust in him. Genesis 37:31-35 (John 3:17-18, Romans 5:6)

Joseph's life teaches us how to endure through sufferings by persevering in the faith. God is looking for willing servants who will do His will. Will you respond to Him today?

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Bible Study Questions:

1. Explain with group why God allows suffering in our lives to bring about character development.
2. Does God still speak to His people today through dreams or just through His word? Use scriptures to support your answers.