

## ULC Sermon Study Resource

### *The Gospel According to Joseph // Joseph Tempted*

**Pastor Marcus**

**August 6, 2023**

**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Icebreaker:** What's a good book you've read recently?

**Reading:** Genesis 39:1-23

#### **Outline:**

- I. Temptation of Power (v. 1-6a)
  - A. When Joseph arrives in Egypt, he is placed in Potiphar's (a high ranking official) house. While serving him, Joseph brought success to Potiphar and benefited him, without becoming arrogant.
  - B. Joseph embodies one of the fundamental differences between the church and the world, which is how we use power to benefit and bless those around us.  
**Q: *Where in your life do you have the power to benefit others?***
- II. Temptation of Sex (v. 6b-10)
  - A. Potiphar's wife tries to use her power to get what she wants, so she propositioned Joseph to sleep with him, but Joseph refused because it would be a betrayal to Potiphar and a sin against God.
  - B. "Accordingly vices are then only to be considered overcome when they are conquered by the love of God, which God Himself alone gives, and which He gives only through the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who became a partaker of our mortality that He might make us partakers of His divinity." -Augustine  
**Q: *When have you seen yourself or others abuse power to get what they want?***
- III. Temptation of Despair (v. 19-23)
  - A. Joseph is tempted to stray from God's design for sex, but resists and is falsely accused by Potiphar's wife of assault and is thrown in prison. However, Joseph resists the temptation to fall into despair over his situation and remains faithful to God.
  - B. Faithfulness does not guarantee that things will go well in your life, but we know that God sent his Son for us. Even when living a life of perfect faithfulness, Jesus was rejected and condemned. And yet he brought us salvation through his sacrifice. God is always with us.  
**Q: *When have you felt most rejected and tempted by despair?***

#### **Reflection/Application Questions:**

- 1) How can we resist arrogance when given positions of power?
- 2) Can we always use power to benefit other people?
- 3) How can we focus on conquering our vices without letting them rule our lives?
- 4) How can we resist despair even when our material conditions are so dire?

#### **Suggestion for further study:**

- Romans 8:28: How does this verse show us why we should remind ourselves to resist despair?
- Matthew 20:20-25 Q: How do these verses show us how we can redefine our earthly power as Christians?

#### **Closing Prayer:**

Gracious God, thank you for the example of faithfulness Joseph has shown us. Help us to resist all temptation and to recognize your plan for our lives. When we fall into temptation, teach us to turn to you so that we may overcome our vices and live for you. Strengthen us so that we may resist despair and walk humbly with you. Amen.