



Jeremy White, Lead Pastor
Valley Church

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Week 7: Grace to Obey (Gen. 39:1-23)

INTRODUCTION:

THE PRESENCE OF GOD...

1. Enables us to live in _____ obedience (37:1-6a)

“The LORD was with Joseph, and he prospered...” (vs. 2)

“The LORD blessed the household...because of Joseph (vs. 5)

2. Equips us to _____ sin (37:6b-12)

“But he (Joseph) refused...” (vs. 8)

“How could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” (vs. 9)

“But he left the cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.” (vs. 12)

3. Empowers us to _____ above our circumstances (37:13-23)

“So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there.” (vs. 22)

THE BIG IDEA:

No matter what trial or suffering you are facing – whether it is self-inflicted or through no fault of your own – God’s grace is sufficient to meet you where you are. He is for you and not against you. His power is made perfect in weakness (Rom. 8:31-39; 2 Cor. 12:7-10). You have all the grace you need to obey Him...

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION:

PERSONAL LIFE:

1. Share about one way that God's presence has been evident in your life this week. Could be at work, at home, in a social setting, or in your personal life with Jesus. The sky's the limit, so share what you can and try to be specific...

PONDERINGS:

2. As you think about the early life of Joseph – sold into slavery and then imprisoned over a false accusation – share about a time when you felt victimized by the unjust act(s) of someone else...

In what specific way(s) did you grow through that trial?

If you are still in the midst of that situation – what is God teaching you? Explain...

3. In Abraham's life, God's grace was manifest by rescuing him from his self-inflicted wounds. In Joseph's life, God's grace was manifest by reaching him in the midst of unjust suffering.

How do we reconcile the truth of God's unconditional grace with the reality of "reaping and sowing" in the natural world we live in? Discuss...

4. Read Acts 7:1-10, in which Stephen summarizes HIS STORY up to the life of Joseph. Discuss the following...

In verse 10 the word "goodwill" (NIV) or "favor" (NASB) is the Greek word "charis", which is the word "grace." What does this verse tell us about God's ability to manifest His grace?

Has God ever used an unbeliever in your life to manifest His grace toward you? Think carefully and try to share a specific scenario...

PROMPTINGS:

5. In the HIS STORY series thus far, we have seen God's radical grace manifested most notably in the following ways:
 - In the creation of life and the universe itself
 - In the provision of the animal skins for Adam & Eve after the fall
 - In the many warnings leading up to the flood of Noah
 - In the unconditional covenant made with Abraham
 - In rescuing Abraham from all of his failures
 - In the provision of the lamb to sacrifice in place of Isaac
 - In the spiritual growth of Abraham over the long-haul
 - In enabling Joseph to thrive in the midst of severe injustice

What in your opinion is one of the greatest ways God shows His love and kindness toward humanity in the world today...and why do you say this? In what way(s) are you increasingly becoming a conduit of His grace to others. Share some examples...