

A TEST OF CHARACTER

Psalm 15:2 & 5 “He who walks blamelessly and does what is right... He who does these things shall never be moved”

The chapters of Genesis we cover today almost feel like a transition piece (a middle book of a trilogy), like it only bridges the gap between one section of the next. This is completely untrue, these chapters reveal more and more of Joseph’s character.

Everywhere Joseph goes he asks, “how can I be a blessing?” Even in prison there is an opportunity to bless as he is the only Christian in the entire country of Egypt. He wants to live so people would enquire about who God is so he is careful to represent God in a godly fashion. He is not sinless, but strives to honor God with his life.

SIX TESTS OF CHARACTER:

1) How do you do at telling the truth?

One amazing thing you see in Joseph is no matter what happens he tells the truth.

2) Do you suffer well?

No one wants to suffer, but part of the Christian life is suffering just like Jesus. He was wrongly accused and suffered injustice for us. It is better to suffer for the truth than be blessed for a lie.

3) Do you (will you/can you) wait Patiently?

Our culture doesn’t know or understand patience. Stanford researcher Philip Zimbardo writes that people are becoming emotionally upset at how long it takes their computer to turn on. We can communicate instantly with anybody on the globe yet we get mad when it takes our computer 30 seconds to light up.

Joseph waits patiently for years.

4) Do you serve the real God?

If you have the wrong God it usually works until you need it (like when you die, a false God does nothing for you). The God we make up in our own minds is not God, God is the real God. This is why He reveals Himself throughout the scriptures.

5) When you succeed, do you do so humbly?

Joseph could have been arrogant, but instead talks about Pharaohs’ necessity for the One True God.

6) Do you serve faithfully?

Had Joseph been selfish, this nation would perish. Instead he lays them out a plan so they can not just survive, but actually live. Joseph thinks, “these people need God.”

Joseph represents the kind of leadership that the readers of the Torah would be called on to follow.

- He is a leader like Daniel, who needed to “discern” the visions of the prophets to find the course of God’s future dealings with his people, rather than to wait on new prophecies to come.
- Joseph, like Solomon, is a picture of a truly wise leader who understands and sees the will of God in the affairs of those around him.
- Joseph stands as a prototype of all the later wisemen of Israel. All future leaders must stand the test of measurement against him.

In Joseph is foreshadowed the elements that later resemble David, Solomon, and, ultimately, the Messiah himself.

If God is your deepest treasure, then listen to the Holy Spirit who lives in you when He gives you direction. Pharaoh was raised from birth to be Pharaoh, Joseph only had the Holy Spirit *and pharaoh recognized that that was more valuable*. How did Joseph make it through the years of hardship and prison, how did he bless and not curse, how did he do good and not evil? He has the Holy Spirit.

This is the great gift of the Christian life, that Jesus connects us to God through the Holy Spirit. Once we know Jesus, all other things begin to figure themselves out (family, friends, faith). If we pick a battle and a hill to die on, it is this: The World needs Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in us, and we need to come humbly and serve and bless those around us so they will learn about Jesus.