

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week #2 of "Hold On" series - From Esteemed Leader to Wrongfully Accused Prisoner

SHARE IT

What was a circumstance in which it was difficult to choose to work hard?

What kinds of settings make it easy or challenging for you to honor God?

STUDY GOD'S WORDS IN THE BIBLE

What was Joseph's new situation (see also chapter 37)? What words are used to express the results of Joseph's works?

Notes to leaders: *He went from favored son to slave. In his new situation, he could have been tempted to be bitter or minimize his service instead, we see amazing results: "prospered, favor, success, entrusted, in charge, in his care, in charge." These words show that Joseph served with diligence and excellence and that God prospered Him.*

Where do you see God at work in this story? What specifically did He do?

Notes to leaders: *Although the situation looked hopeless, instead God blessed and prospered: "The LORD was with Joseph, the LORD was with him, the LORD gave him success, the LORD blessed, and the blessing of the LORD was on everything."*

How do you see faith at work in and through Joseph? (please list)

Notes to leaders: *Although Joseph was a slave, we see that he trusted God to do what only God can do. Note these words: He worked hard so that he "prospered . . . the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes . . . put him in charge of his household . . . he entrusted to his care everything he owned." When he was tempted, "he refused," had respect for "my master" and understood that with God's favor his master "entrusted" him with responsibility (cf. "My master"). He, by faith, believed that sin would be "sin against God" and therefore "he refused to go to bed with her" and "ran." All of this obedience was by faith in his all-knowing and all-powerful God.*

How might this story fit into God's master plan to bring his blessings to the world?

Notes to leaders: *Although Jacob's family acted in sin and it seemed like the end of God's plan to prosper the family to become a nation (as promised), God was still working, blessing, and favoring those who trusted Him. God was providentially working to bring about His plan.*

DISCUSS TOGETHER

How do we usually feel when we hear a story like this? Why is that?

Notes to leaders: *Most of us feel something unfair, unjust, etc. We can easily begin to feel that God has abandoned us or something worse. We know that God is in charge and have a difficult time believing that this is His plan or that He would allow something this evil to happen.*

How difficult would it be to work hard and do your best for someone else as they benefitted from your diligence? How are the words of Colossians 3:22-24 helpful?

Notes to leaders: *It is very difficult to focus on how God sees us rather than how others see us. These are some of my most needed verses. I need to remember me to work and serve "as for the Lord rather than for people."*

We see here that God was prospering Joseph in many ways. How is that also true for us? How should we respond to God's prospering?

Notes to leaders: *According to the Scriptures, God gives us every ability, opportunity, moment of favor and gift. Anything good that we do must come from God working through the Holy Spirit as we trust in Him. Therefore, He deserves all praise and honor. The amazing thing is, that when give Him the praise, and he gives us His joy and pleasure.*

Bitterness often follows these kinds of circumstances. How can we move forward when bitterness sets in?

Notes to leaders: *This is a massive question. We have all felt bitterness and the prison it brings. If someone shares that they feel bitter, please don't offer pat answers or try to resolve this in a minute. Instead, show them compassion and empathy and keep them in your prayers.*

Thanks be to God who gives us all favor in Christ,

Steve

p.s. - I sure hope you can join us for dinner on May 11.