

The story of Joseph is very familiar to most of us...especially if you remember the donny osmond and joan collins version of the famous Joseph and his technicolour coat. Jon is not keen but I love it. It's funny.

The passage we are looking at today is not funny, but it is so very rich. Full of many things to ponder on.

Do we look at the most obvious, resisting temptation; Joseph prospering in a foreign land as a slave because God is with him; False accusation and lies; or the rise of Joseph from arrogant, boastful teenager, oblivious to how his words and the favour he received from his father made enemies of his siblings..... dysfunctional family plus plus.

Joseph was steadfast in his refusal to give in to temptation. Everyday, Potiphar's wife flirted and tried to seduce him.

How did he do this? He was a handsome slave, obviously favoured by Almighty God because he was successful and wise with talents in leading others and organisation.

Potiphar left him to run the house and be in charge of all he owned.

Because he knew God.

Joseph had no concept of what was to come next. But God had a plan.

Isn't it interesting that as things are going so well, after being sold by his own brothers, he is falsely accused? He is innocent.

I am sure we can all see the similarity in this with Jesus and the accusations made of him throughout his ministry and before His sacrifice on the cross.

As I looked at this scripture, the part that infuriates me and that I can relate to is the false accusation. The lies and deceit because someone in power did not get what they wanted.

This is a big subject and probably too personal for us to discuss and share our stories.

Maybe we can think of temptation and how we can resist, how we have resisted?

Did you run? Turn away? Stop exposing yourself to 'it'?

Perhaps we can think about the ever present Lord. In all circumstances and situations.

It must have been terrifying to end up in prison but Joseph was not alone and God showed kindness to him. As Jon got us to think last week, maybe Joseph was shedding a layer of his false self. I like to see this as a layer of the protection he had covered himself with overtime. A mini transformation. The early stages of change.

That is truly wonderful.

A traumatic, scary situation and God shows kindness.

He does not let us go. He holds onto us and in the midst of the dark muddy grimness of life He is still present.

It may not feel like that but it's these times we need to remember, his faithfulness to us. He shows up.

Not always as quickly as we think he should. But he does.

And in the prison, in charge and favoured again, Joseph the dreamer of dreams becomes the interpreter of dreams.

How he saw himself must have taken a dive.

But he had already gone through a lot. He had been in dicey situations.

And through it all, God showed him favour.

We see it so clearly, often in others, but are blinkered to our own gifts of grace and mercy from the king of creation

Whilst in prison he was forgotten by the cupbearer. Another arrow.
Being forgotten can be as painful as being scorned.
God will never forget you. Your name is written on the palm of his hand

Joseph waited for 2 yrs... 730 days!
Did he feel forgotten or did he notice and praise God for the kindness and favour bestowed upon him in that place?
We often miss out on God's obvious presence because we are so busy waiting for the future answers to prayer, favours.
It is a peculiar and exquisite experience of faith when we realise that when we haven't seen the answers we await, or the plan we expect, we learn to see the light of God Himself. Right there in the blindness of our circumstances.

We all know that Joseph's life was a roller coaster.
But the overwhelming fact is that this cocky, handsome young man showed resilience and trust in God. Became a leader, favoured by his captors and respected. A man of God.

Take aways--
God never lets us go. He is always with us, in all things. Ready for us to lift our eyes and see the bright glorious light of Christ.
God sees it all. He knows the truth. He knows how you have held firm. He sees you doing your best.
God does not forget us.
It is not a sin to be tempted.
And, God loves us through it all.

Prayer
Lord, in good times and bad, you never leave us.
May we feel your presence, your peace and mercy as we navigate the twists and turns of this life. May we stand firm and trust in you. May we have faith that you see all things and your justice will come. May we see your glorious light in all situations.
Amen