

4Ws

#WORTH IT

TO FINISH WELL, LIVE IN GOD'S PRESENCE!

MAY 21, 2023

WORSHIP

Awesome God, In Control,
How Great is Your Love,
Not For A Moment, See A
Victory

WELCOME

What reminds you, or
makes you aware of, God's
Presence the most in your
everyday life?

WORD

GENESIS 39:19-21, GENESIS 50:17-20

¹⁹ Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, "This is what your slave did to me," his anger burned. ²⁰ So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail. ²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer...

¹⁷ 'Thus you shall say to Joseph, "Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong." And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

Our new series is called **#WORTH IT – Finish Well**. It is a call for everyone in the pursuit of God's mission for us. CHRISTIANS do not have to follow the statistics of the world – that say only 25% of leaders finish well. What does it mean to finish well? **Matthew 25:21** says when we step into heaven, we enter into the joy of our Master! A real Christian is someone who follows Jesus and follows Him to the end!

To finish well, we must **LIVE IN GOD'S PRESENCE**. It is both a command and a promise (**John 15:4-5**), Jesus commands us to ABIDE (to stay intimate) in Him as a vine is to the branch. You and I can't bear fruit if we are not connected to the branch. To live in God's presence is to be conscious of our need and dependence upon Him. In **Hebrews 13:5**, Jesus gave a specific promise: "**I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you**". God is with us, the spatial presence of God – but there is also His manifest presence! If we love Jesus, we must obey His Word, and the benefit is that He "**will come to him and make Our abode with him**" (**John 14:23**) – a promise of permanent residence. **Exodus 33:14** is a promise given by God to Moses – one of the manifestations of His presence is a life of peace even during chaos and calamities!

You must be intentional to know that God is with you all the time. Even in our busy lives, we can function, live and work in the awareness of God's presence. Brother Lawrence, a former military man who became a monk, said "the soul that enjoys God in this world is looking for nothing but God Himself".

How do we see this in the life of JOSEPH? He understood God's Presence in his life. He could have been paralyzed and destroyed by his past – living with a dysfunctional family, brothers hated him as their father Jacob's favorite son. They hated him so much that they planned to murder him, except that by Divine Providence, they changed their mind and sold him as a slave instead.

1. WORK LIFE

Genesis 39:1-3 shows Joseph in Egypt, sold to an Egyptian officer, Potiphar. Joseph could have decided not to follow God anymore because of his circumstances, but Jacob taught Joseph so well about God and His promises, and so he decides to cling on to God. Even during deep disappointments, Joseph chose to LIVE IN GOD'S PRESENCE. This was noticed by his master, and Joseph's excellence set him apart from the other slaves. Does your earthly "master" see God working in you and through you? Let everybody know that we are different – during crises, and challenges – choose to respond in great peace by having a very intimate relationship with the Lord! **Genesis 39:4-5** tells us that Joseph was eventually made overseer over Potiphar's estate. Potiphar's household was so blessed by Joseph's excellence, and the source of his success was God! Excellence is to "do a common thing in an uncommon way" (Booker Washington). **Colossians 3:23-24** reminds us to do everything for the Lord, it is Him whom we serve. If we live in God's presence, it greatly affects our excellence at work, in school, and in whatever we do, we are excellent for the Lord's glory!

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WORD

2. MORAL LIFE

After being promoted, Joseph faced temptation. **Genesis 39:6-7** describes Joseph as handsome, having a nice physique, and he was being commanded by his master's wife to have sex with her. But because he lived in God's presence, Joseph did not listen to her (**vv. 10-12**). He continually thought about the consequences of sin, and Joseph believed it was not worth it to let sin destroy the goodness of God in him and through him. Joseph made a stand (**v.9**) and even told his master's wife that what she wants is sin against God! When we sin, we grieve God – and He does not deserve that disrespect. Joseph was able to escape the temptation, but in a sudden turn of events, his master decided to send Joseph to prison (**vv. 10-20**).

3. THOUGHT LIFE

Oswald Chambers once said that “**the root of all sin is the suspicion that GOD is NOT GOOD**”. When things are bad, what thoughts enter our minds? If you live in God's presence, you are able to change your thought life. **Genesis 39:21** tells us that even in jail, Joseph had the Lord's favor, and he kept doing the right things, so that he prospered in the things he did in prison (**vv. 22-23**)! **Genesis 40:6-7** shows that instead of feeling sorry for himself, Joseph concerned himself about others – encouraging and helping them out! He helped interpret their dreams, and Joseph asked that good word be sent to the Pharaoh about him (**vv.14-15**). Sadly, he was forgotten; so, Joseph again had to learn to wait. God gave Pharaoh a dream he couldn't understand (**Genesis 41:1**) and no one could explain it. Only then was Joseph remembered and called to the king's presence and Joseph credited God for the interpretation of dreams (**Genesis 41:16**). Because of godly wisdom, he got appointed as second-in-command, Egypt's prime minister! When faced with prosperity, honor and power, Joseph did not abuse it because HE WAS LIVING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

4. FAMILY LIFE / LEGACY

Joseph showed kindness to his brothers and did not seek revenge for what they have done to him (**Genesis 45:3-8**). As they asked forgiveness from him, he told them how he saw the hidden blessing of all the trials he went through (**Genesis 50:20-21**). For a child of God, every ADVERSITY has its HIDDEN BLESSING. Joseph chose to forgive his brothers, and even held on to the promise of God for the Promise Land. **Romans 8:28** reminds us that all things work together for good – as we live in God's presence, we can excel and make everything worth it!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

How do you practice continuously living in God's presence?

2. Setting It Right.

What difference will it make in your life if you live in God's presence? (work, moral, emotional)

3. Living It Out.

How will you apply this message to those people who have wronged you or hurt you?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for family, friends and those around you who are struggling to see God's presence in the world today. Seek God's manifest Presence in your own life so that you may be able to show excellence for Him in all you do, as an effective witness to others about Jesus. Share Christ this week to someone who needs His presence in their life.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for the Sudanese people caught in violence and conflict.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

GENESIS 50:20

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.