

## Joseph's story can be described initially as one disappointment after another.

1. His brothers put him in a pit
2. His brothers sell him into slavery.
3. He is falsely accused by his master's wife.
4. He is placed in prison.
5. He is forgotten after helping to interpret the dreams of the cup-bearer and the baker, have you ever felt forgotten?

In spite of these things, Joseph somehow overcomes the challenge of discouragement. Instead of getting bitter, Joseph got better. Instead of getting sour, he somehow stayed sweet. Joseph overcame discouragement because he walked with God and was filled with the Spirit of God. (1 Peter 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:12; John 16:33)

### 1. Why does discouragement come?

- a. When our circumstances are not what we expected. (39:20)
- b. When our circumstances are not what we believe we deserve. (40:14-15) (1 Peter 2:20-21)
- c. When our circumstances are not changed. (season of preparation) (41:1)

Every trial is designed to show you something you don't know about yourself.

### 2. What choices do you have when faced with the discouragement?

- a. You can give in to despair. (Joshua 7:7; Job 10:1; Psalm 31:10; Psalm 42; Lamentations 3:1-26)
- b. You can deny your problem.
- c. You can face disappointments with faith.

Charles Spurgeon looked back upon dark hours in his own life and said: "I bear willing witness that I owe more to the fire, and the hammer, and the file, than to anything else in my Lord's workshop. I sometimes question whether I have ever learned anything except through the rod. When my schoolroom is darkened, I see most."

See: Deuteronomy 31:8; Isaiah 43:2; Hebrew 12:3-6

### 3. How can you face discouragement faithfully and realistically?

- a. You must maintain a right relationship with God. (see 39:2, 21)
- b. You must resist temptation. (39:9-13)
- c. You must focus on others. (40)
- d. You must live by faith.