

Continuing Humiliation (Genesis 39-40)

Thursday, May 1, 2014
7:18 AM

To Read:

Genesis 39:1-20
Genesis 39:21-40:23

I. Introduction

A. This morning we are finishing the first part of Joseph's story, seeing Joseph's continuing humiliation in Egypt

1. Remember that we are covering Joseph's story in three sections: humiliation, exaltation and blessing
2. Remember that both Joseph and Judah are pointing to one man who would fulfill this pattern: Christ
3. Phil. 2:5-11 - *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

B. I imagine that most of you can guess my simple outline this morning, looking at Joseph to see Christ

1. First, we will consider Joseph: a type of humiliation and make simple observations about Joseph's life
2. Then we will consider Christ: the fulfillment of humiliation and apply our observations of Joseph's life to Christ
3. Finally, we will consider Us: redeemed imitators and make some applications of our study

C. Before I start looking at our stories this morning, I want to consider its larger organization

1. In this last section of Genesis things happen in groups, groups of two or groups of three
2. In an overall sense we see this in the three sections of Joseph's story: humiliation, exaltation and blessing; and we see this in the two main characters, Joseph and Judah
3. This morning I want to consider the pattern of twos this morning, because it is integral to our story and explains why I chose such a large section to preach on this morning
4. In Joseph's story, many things happen in twos, especially dreams: Joseph has two dreams where his brothers and then his father bow down to him, there are two servants of Pharaoh that have two dreams with similar (although opposite) interpretations, and Pharaoh himself has two dreams that are interpreted by Joseph
5. In interpreting Pharaoh's dream, which we will consider at more length next week, Joseph points us to the purpose of this doubling, Genesis 41:32 - *And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about.*
6. Doubling represents something significant and predictive that God wants us to take notice of
7. So, this morning we are going to see that not only dreams happen in twos, but our whole story this morning is a doubled story - Genesis 39:1-20 and Genesis 39:21-40:23 happen in exact parallel to each other, they are doubled stories just like the dreams are doubled and these doubled stories call us to reflect that God is telling us something is sure to take place
8. This is why I am taking both of these stories together this morning because together they call us to look forward to what God is going to do
9. In essence, these stories are probably some of the things that Christ was referring to on the road to Emmaus when He said, *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"*
10. I have pondered that statement at length for many years and at first glance you sympathize with the two disciples, other than a few prophecies that could have easily been misunderstood, the Old Testament doesn't seem to straight up spell out Christ's death and resurrection
11. But, this morning we are going to see that the whole Old Testament is impregnated with an anticipation of one who would come and suffer and enter into glory and we are going to see that specifically in Joseph today
12. Joseph's story calls us to look forward, it is doubled because God had fixed it and it was sure to happen, Christ was going to come and fulfill Joseph's story by perfecting Joseph's type

D. Proposition: Despite God's presence with Joseph and demonstrated in Joseph, Joseph continued in humiliation according to the plan of God pointing to Christ who would continue in humiliation to be the savior of the world

II. Joseph: a type of humiliation

A. As I've just mentioned, our story is doubled, and we can see that as we set the two stories next to each other

1. Each story has four parts that progress similarly, so we'll use these parts as our outline for this section

B. First, Joseph was blessed by God's presence to bless the nations in exile

1. Both of our stories this morning start with a simple affirmation of God's presence with Joseph
 - a. Genesis 39:2 - *The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man*
 - b. Genesis 39:21 - *But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love*
2. These statements come right after two reminders of the humiliation that Joseph is suffering
 - a. Genesis 39:1 reminds us of where our story left off in Genesis 37, Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold
 - b. And Genesis 39:20 tells us that Joseph was there in prison after being unjustly accused
3. Despite Joseph's humiliation, though, God hadn't forgotten Joseph, He hadn't abandoned Joseph
 - a. God was still with Joseph, in fact God was working out His plan through Joseph and His plan was to bring Joseph down in humiliation to the place of bondage so that He could bless the nations who were in exile
 - b. This is the effect of God's presence in both passages, Joseph propagates blessing to the Egyptians
 - c. Potiphar sees that God is with Joseph and Potiphar's house is prospered and blessed through Joseph
 - d. Again, the jailer sees that God is with Joseph and the jail is prospered and blessed through Joseph
4. So, far from abandoning Joseph in exile, God was with Joseph in exile and He had a purpose in exile and that purpose was blessing, blessing the nations in exile

C. Second, Joseph grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man

1. Because of God's presence in Joseph's life to bless him, Joseph found favor with God and man
 - a. 39:3-6 - *His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.*
 - b. 39:22-23 - *and [God] gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.*
2. Notice how many ways Joseph grows in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man
 - a. God shows Joseph favor, both in Potiphar's house and in the prison everything he does succeeds
 - b. Men show Joseph favor, both Potiphar and the Jailer put everything they have into Joseph's hands
 - c. Joseph grows in wisdom, he is a wise manager over both the house and the jail, keeping all in order
 - d. Joseph grows in stature, in 6 it says, *Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.*
3. God's blessing was not without effect in Joseph's life, in fact it was very evident, everyone could see it
 - a. God's presence to bring blessing was fulfilling its purpose, Joseph and those around him are blessed
 - b. Joseph was mediating the covenant blessing to the world

D. Third, Joseph's favor with God was clearly demonstrated

1. At the center of both stories there is a single episode that is highlighted about Joseph's time in the house and his time in the prison and these stories show how truly God's favor was demonstrated in Joseph's life
2. Joseph demonstrated flawless integrity when tempted - Genesis 39:7-12
 - a. This is the story at the center of Genesis 39 where Joseph turns away the advances of Potiphar's wife
 - b. Since we already read this section earlier this morning, I won't reread, but here's a quick synopsis - Potiphar's wife sees Joseph's blessing and instead of seeking God, she desires to have Joseph. So, she tempts Joseph to betray God and his master by sleeping with her, but Joseph steadfastly refuses, not once but over and over again he refuses. It says, *"And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her to lie beside her or to be with her."* Joseph even refuses to the point of running away from the tempter, even losing his clothes to flee the temptation. Joseph would have no part of it.

- c. This story shows that God's presence and blessing in Joseph's life was demonstrated through a God-oriented integrity - God had blessed Joseph so Joseph would obey God
 - d. This is the message of Joseph's speech to Potiphar's wife, first he notes how he has been blessed and has found favor in Potiphar's sight - evidences of God's presence and blessing in his life - and he concludes with a powerful statement, "*How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God.*"
 - e. God was with Joseph, Joseph could not reject God and sin, to do so would be a denial of God's presence
3. Joseph was blessed with wisdom and understanding - Genesis 40:1-8
- a. While Joseph is in prison, two prisoners are incarcerated, the chief baker and cupbearer to Pharaoh, and they fall under Joseph's limited authority. While there, they have dreams and Joseph notices that they are downcast and perplexed and asks them about it. When they tell him they've had dreams, he gives an interesting and significant answer, "*Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me.*"
 - b. In Joseph's answer, he recognizes God's sovereignty over all things, including His revelation
 - c. But then Joseph says that he is, somehow, the mediator of God's revelation - interpretations belong to God, but tell it to me and I'll tell you what God means
 - d. Joseph is saying that God has blessed him with wisdom and understanding to know God's revelation, because of God's presence with Joseph, Joseph can faithfully and accurately portray God's revelation
 - e. Joseph's growth in wisdom is a deeper understanding of God's purposes and revelation in this world
4. Joseph's wisdom was demonstrated in a prediction of death and resurrection - Genesis 40:9-21
- a. We have just considered the implications of Joseph interpreting the dreams, but I also want to consider the implications of the interpretations of the dreams
 - b. The cupbearer's dream was three grape vines that produce grapes which the cupbearer harvested and made into wine and gave to Pharaoh. His dream meant that in three days the cupbearer would be reinstated in his position. On the other hand, the baker's dream was three basket of breads that the birds ate and represented his coming condemnation and execution.
 - c. The significance of these dreams within the story is not great, they come true, assuredly, but the content and interpretation of the dreams doesn't affect the story line much. But, I want to observe their content because they become greatly important in the greater story, so let's make a few observations.
 - d. First, Joseph's wisdom was demonstrated in a prediction of condemnation and death for the baker and resurrection and restoration for the cupbearer - Joseph foretells death and resurrection
 - e. And Joseph's foretelling is represented in bread and wine - grapes are pressed out to provide a wine that brings favor with the great king and bread is broken and consumed as a symbol of a broken body
 - f. And, beyond even these, the death foretold is a specific death, a death of being hung on a tree
 - g. I'm sure most of you can start to feel the immense significance of these details, but I'll leave further discussion for the next section

E. Nonetheless, Joseph was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief

- 1. Despite every evidence of God's presence and blessing in Joseph's life, Joseph is further humiliated twice
 - a. Despite his integrity Joseph was despised by men, Genesis 39:19-20 - *As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison.*
 - b. Despite his wisdom Joseph was disregarded by men, Genesis 40:23 - *Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.*
- 2. The ends of these stories should provide tension with everything demonstrated in the stories
 - a. They should call us to question whether God's presence to bless is really with Joseph
 - b. What good did God's blessing presence bring to Joseph? He only ends further in bondage and exile.
 - c. Fortunately, we know the end of the stories and know that God's presence truly was with Joseph, even through the darkest parts of his life, and the darkest parts of his life are preparing him to take his place as the leader of Egypt to save the world from famine
 - d. But within these stories we don't see that yet, Joseph has to trust in God's presence by faith because all he can see around himself is suffering, Joseph is languishing in prison forgotten by the world
 - e. God's presence was there, we see that clearly, but within the story His presence had to be taken by faith
 - f. Joseph suffered much to prepare him to be the savior that the world needed, that's where God's presence took him

III. Christ: the fulfillment of humiliation

A. Christ was blessed by God's presence to bless the nations in exile

1. Just as God had not abandoned Joseph, so God was present with Christ as well in exile
 - a. We see a poignant reminder of this at Jesus' baptism, Matthew 3:16-17 - *And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*
 - b. And even right before His crucifixion, Jesus states in John 16:32 - *Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.*
2. And, just like Joseph, God's presence in Christ was for the purpose of blessing the nations
 - a. Simon, the prophet in the temple, recognizes God's purpose in his statement over Christ in Luke 2:29-32 - *"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."*
3. Christ was sent into humiliation and exile, but not without God's purpose and presence, Christ was God's presence in this world in order to mediate the blessings of the covenant to all who are in exile
 - a. Christ is 'God with us' and He is with us to bless us - Christ is the mediator of the blessings of the covenant to all who will come under His authority and seek His blessing

B. Christ grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man

1. God's presence with Joseph was demonstrated as he grew in favor with God and man
2. And God's presence with Christ was similarly evident, so that Luke can say plainly in Luke 2:52 - *And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.*
3. Luke records this statement after recounting the story of Christ displaying wisdom in the temple, baffling the teachers of the law with His wisdom - the marks of God's blessing in Christ's life were evident
4. And we can think beyond this to the many miracles and other works that Christ performed that all scream out that Jesus is the one blessed by God to bring blessing to the world
5. Jesus calls us to see in John 14:10-11 - *Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.*
6. God was with Christ to fulfill His purposes and we can see God's presence with Christ

C. Christ's favor with God was clearly demonstrated

1. Christ demonstrated flawless integrity when tempted
 - a. Think of the record of Christ's temptation in Matthew 4 - Christ, after leaving heaven and being sent to earth, after receiving a promise of God's presence at His baptism, and after going through great hardship in a long fast is tempted by the devil. He is tempted to declare self-sufficiency and turn stone into bread. He is tempted to demand God's protection and test God by jumping off the temple. He is tempted to gain a kingdom without going to the cross by worshipping the devil. But each time Christ refuses.
 - b. Just like Joseph, Christ was tempted and not just once, but over and over again in the midst of hardship
 - c. Yet, in the midst of temptation, even in the midst of hardship, Christ steadfastly refused every temptation, making him the ultimate example of flawless integrity
 - d. I Peter 2:22 - *He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.*
2. Christ was blessed with wisdom and understanding
 - a. Matthew 12:39-42 - *But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.*

- b. Just like Joseph, Christ was the mediator of wisdom to those around Him, and, like Joseph, Christ's wisdom was ultimately demonstrated in rightly portraying the revelation of God, Matthew 13:54 - *and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"*
 - c. But, unlike Joseph, Christ perfects wisdom so we can say that Christ is wisdom is the revelation of God
 - i. So Hebrews can say, *"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature"*
 - ii. And Colossians can say, *"Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*
 - iii. Christ is wisdom perfected in a perfect revelation of God, He is a perfect representation of who God is and what God's will is to us and thus embodies all wisdom
3. Christ wisdom was demonstrated in a prediction of death and resurrection
- a. Joseph's wisdom was demonstrated in a prediction of death and resurrection and so was Christ's
 - b. This is what we just read in Matthew 12, Christ's supreme claim to wisdom comes directly after He tells the scribes and Pharisees that the only sign He will give is the sign of Jonah, of death and resurrection
 - c. Christ often made this prediction, John 2:18-20 - *So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"*
 - d. Thus all the symbolism wrapped up in the dreams in Joseph's story are fulfilled in Christ - though they have little relevance to Joseph's story, they tie Joseph's story forward to Christ's
 - i. Christ predicts and fulfills His own death and resurrection within three days
 - ii. Christ dies under a curse, bearing the displeasure of the great king by being hung on a tree
 - iii. And Christ displays the truths of His death and resurrection in bread and wine that are set before us every day, wine that represents grapes that have been crushed under God's wrath and presented to Him for satisfaction and bread that represents a body broken under the curse of God

D. Nonetheless, Christ was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief

- 1. Christ, the one who was perfectly blessed with God's presence is nevertheless led into further humiliation so that Isaiah can say in Isaiah 53:3-4 - *He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*
- 2. Christ should have been received with honor and glory, thanksgiving and blessing, reverence and obedience, yet we rejected Him - like Joseph, Christ continues in humiliation, a humiliation that leads ultimately to death
- 3. So, like Joseph, despite His integrity Christ was despised by men
 - a. John 8:46-47 - *Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."*
 - b. And again in John 10:31-33 - *The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."*
 - c. Christ was the very embodiment of integrity, yet His sinlessness did not relieve Him from His humiliation, in fact, it was necessary to complete His humiliation so that, as II Corinthians 5:21 says - *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
 - d. Christ sinlessness not only didn't spare Him humiliation, it prepared Him for humiliation, the humiliation that would make Him the savior of the world
- 4. And, like Joseph, despite His wisdom, Christ was disregarded by men
 - a. In fact, this is the conclusion of the story in Matthew 13 that we read earlier, Matthew 13:53-56 - *And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"*
 - b. The people saw the wisdom of Christ, but they disregarded and despised it, in fact they went beyond what the cupbearer did - they didn't only forget, they willfully rejected Christ's wisdom
- 5. Like Joseph, none of the blessings of God in Christ's life spared Him continuing humiliation, but this humiliation had a purpose - Christ suffered much to prepare him to be the savior that the world needed

IV. Us: Redeemed Imitators

A. Our two stories this morning have an overwhelming number of excellent applications this morning

1. In fact, in my first draft of this sermon I had seven main applications, still acknowledging that I would be skipping over many applications - I've decided that seven was too many, so I've whittled it down to four
2. Because of this, most of my applications of our story this morning are going to come out of Genesis 39
3. Genesis 40, with the interpretation of the dreams, has slightly less direct application to our lives so I decided the applications I made out of Genesis 40 could be left for your own meditation
4. This is not to say there aren't applications out of Genesis 40 - perhaps we could meditate on what it means not to despise prophecy as in I Thessalonians 5:10 or we could think about the need to faithfully and accurately portray God's revelation even in distress

B. We must beware of temptation

1. In Joseph's story, we see temptation of the greatest magnitude attack Joseph, even temptation that continued and repeated itself over and over with terrible incentives
 - a. And we see this same temptation and even greater temptation attack Christ
 - b. This calls us to see the reality of temptation and prepare against temptation
 - c. Temptation is a part of life in this fallen world, if Christ was subject to temptation we will be to
2. We must be aware of temptation - I Peter 5:8 - *Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*
 - a. Peter calls us to be sober-minded and watchful, that is to have our minds prepared and steeled against temptation that is coming because it is sure to come because we have a great enemy, the same enemy that tempted Christ
3. We must be prepared to resist temptation - I Corinthians 10:13 - *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*
 - a. Paul tells us that we can resist temptation and we must resist temptation, so as we prepare for temptation we should be prepared to resist, to give it battle, as it were, so that it will not overcome us.
4. We must plead for deliverance from temptation - Matthew 6:13 - *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*
 - a. This last phrase of the Lord's prayer reminds us that our greatest preparation for temptation cannot come from us, but a continual resting in God. Paul tells us that we can resist temptation, but that resistance is not in our own power - only God can prepare us to resist temptation rightly, so we must be in prayer BEFORE the temptation happens so that we can meet it with the power of God
5. We must rest in Christ during temptation - Hebrews 4:15 - *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*
 - a. This brings us back to our study this morning. Joseph was not the only one who was tempted, Christ was tempted and stood as well - He stood in a much greater way than Joseph did. So He knows what it means to be tempted and is ready and able to give grace to those who are tempted. So we can and must rest in Christ through temptation. So the preparation for temptation is to know Christ and to be in communion with Christ so that when temptation comes you can rest in the one who has already defeated temptation.

C. We must demonstrate integrity

1. This morning we saw Joseph live with flawless integrity in the midst of a very difficult situation and, more importantly, we saw that Christ fulfilled Joseph's type and lived a perfectly sinless life
 - a. So Joseph calls us to imitate Christ in His perfect integrity, we must imitate Christ in His sinlessness
 - b. John tells us plainly in I John 3:5-6 - *You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning;*
 - c. Christ was sinless and Christ appeared so that we would be sinless, therefore we must live with this purpose, to put away the evil of sin and walk in newness of life
 - d. Just as God was with Joseph and God was with Christ, as believers, God promises that He is with us - to continue in sin is to deny His presence, to deny the blessing of His presence and is unthinkable

2. But not only does Joseph call us to integrity, he gives us a pattern for fighting for integrity. So, how does Joseph demonstrate integrity?
 - a. He simply refused - Genesis 39:8 says simply, "*But he refused...*" He didn't take even one step in the direction of sin, when sin called he said no. It reminds me of the anti-drug slogan, 'just say no,' - that was Joseph's attitude toward sin
 - b. He reminded Himself of God's great blessings - Genesis 39:8 continues with his speech to Potiphar's wife, and the majority of the speech recounts how God has blessed him in Potiphar's house so that Potiphar has entrusted everything to him. Joseph focuses on all that God has done for him instead of what sin is tempting him to.
 - c. He reminded himself of the evil of sin - as Joseph continues his speech, he finishes with a clear statement recognizing sin as wickedness, an evil and unworthy thing to do against God. If God is present to bless him, then Joseph cannot deny Him in sin.
 - d. He would not even allow himself to listen to sin's allurements - despite Joseph's speech, Potiphar's wife keeps calling, but Joseph refuses even to listen to her. He doesn't allow himself to dwell on the potential benefits of sin, the allurements that it is holding out. He doesn't allow his mind to wander in that direction. Instead, he hardened his heart against it.
 - e. He was willing to resist to the point of harming himself - the end result of Joseph's refusal to sin was a long jail sentence. But Joseph didn't turn to sin, he persisted in refusing sin even to his own harm. Joseph won a battle against sin because he was willing to fight to the death.
3. So, we can imitate Joseph and learn from Joseph
 - a. We should remind ourselves of God's great blessings, that is, of the gospel. We should remind ourselves of everything that Christ has done for us in the gospel and turn away from the sin that denies that - Titus 3:11-13 - *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*
 - b. We should remind ourselves of the great evil of sin, especially as demonstrated in the cross of Christ - I Peter 1:17-19 - *And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*
 - c. We should not even listen to the allurements of sin, and should simply and steadfastly refuse to follow after it at all - James 1:13-15 - *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*
 - d. We should be willing to resist even to the point of harming ourselves - Hebrews 12:3-4 - *Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.*

D. We should expect enmity

1. Both Joseph and Christ despite and even because of their integrity were hated by men
 - a. In this story we see clearly that the world hates those who won't participate in their sin
 - b. So, if we are following after Christ, we should expect enmity, we should expect persecution and hatred
 - c. We shouldn't let the world's hatred catch us off guard and push us away from Christ, instead we should expect it so that when it comes it does not discourage us
2. Listen to all the warnings in Scripture to be prepared for the world's enmity
 - a. John 15:18 - *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.*
 - b. I Peter 4:4 - *With respect to this [sinful activities] they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;*
 - c. I John 3:13 - *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.*

E. We can rest in God's presence

1. Although there is much to see in our two stories this morning, the central point is God's presence
 - a. God was with Joseph even when it appeared that He wasn't
 - b. Even at the worst moments God was there to bless him and prepare him for His role in God's plan
 - c. But for much of the story Joseph had to receive this by faith, we get to hear the statement of God's promise, but Joseph didn't - Joseph went through ups and downs until he ended up languishing in a jail cell, far from all help
2. Like Joseph, God has promised to be with us as well, even through the worst times
 - a. Christ promised His disciples His continuing presence, even after His death, John 14:16-18 - *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.*
 - b. And Christ affirms and strengthens that promise in Matthew 28:18-20 - *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*
 - c. So Hebrews can exhort us in Hebrews 13:5 - *Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*
 - d. Christ fulfills the promise of Isaiah 43:1-2 - *But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.*
3. So, like our story, we have at the beginning of our stories the statement of God's presence
 - a. But, like Joseph, God's presence often has to be understood in faith, because we can't see the end
 - b. We will pass through hard times in this life - we will lose loved ones, lose jobs, get various illnesses, even face death ourselves and all of this due only to living in a fallen world, and beyond that we can anticipate persecution, enmity and hatred expressed in a multitude of ways because we follow after Christ
 - c. Christ Himself tells us that, *"In the world you will have tribulation."* We will face a variety of hardships that might tempt us to doubt the promise of God's presence, or at least not to rest in it
 - d. But Peter reminds us, in I Peter 4:19 - *Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.*
 - e. We have a promise that God, in Christ, will be with us, so through the worst days, the worst trials we can rest - we can entrust ourselves to our Creator, knowing that He is still sovereign over this world and that He is still working out His plan
4. And we can fully trust in this because Christ is our ultimate example
 - a. As we already considered this morning, God's presence continued with Christ even through His time of humiliation on this earth, even approaching the cross Christ affirmed this in John 16:32 - *Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.*
 - b. And Christ is our ultimate example of resting in God's presence through the hardest times, so that Peter can say in I Peter 2:23-24 - *When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*
 - c. *Christ Himself entrusted His soul to God, resting in the promise of His presence and purpose*
 - d. But Christ is not only our example, He is also our surety, the surety that God will be with us through every trial, as it says in Romans 8:32 - *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?*
 - e. No matter what happens, God will continue graciously giving us all things because He has already given us all things in His Son - in Christ we are sure that God's presence and purpose is continuing regardless of what circumstances we may face
 - f. Christ has passed through the trials of suffering and Christ will be with those who are suffering - no matter what is happening around us, we can always rest in Christ