

Home Group Notes

April 29, 2018

SHARE IT

Have you ever experienced a surprising new opportunity come your way? What were the results?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *For me, this has happened in opportunities to serve, connect with people, and job opportunities. Most significant is when I feel God gives me favor with people who do not yet know Christ.*

STUDY THE WORD

Genesis 41

What do we learn about God? How was God involved? What was He doing?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *God was always working to bring about His will. Though He sometimes seems silent, He was working in all the people around Joseph (his family, leaders, prisoners, Pharaoh, etc.). In addition, God was preparing Joseph for his new opportunity. He repeatedly opened doors for Joseph to manage, lead, and care about the people in his world.*

The application for us: God is always working and bringing about His will. Though we don't always know how and who, He is bringing things together for His purposes.

What was Joseph's role in God's plan? What did it require of him? What were his words?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *In short, to be faithful in the circumstances of his life (his life situation). Joseph needed to continue to trust God, operate on what he knew about God's character and will. His first words to Pharaoh (after getting cleaned up from being a prisoner) were "I cannot but God will . . ." Joseph always pointed to God in his speech and actions. In this opportunity, he indicated that there is a God more powerful than any human and that this God can answer questions of the deepest kind.*

What was Egypt's and Pharaoh's role in God's plan? (Pharaoh was thought to be a manifestation of God)

NOTES TO LEADERS: *The word "Egypt" occurs 21 times in this short passage. While God was preserving and preparing Joseph's family, he was also doing a work in Egypt. Later in history, we know that Egypt learned more about the true God (Moses and beyond). In addition, God was working through Egypt to preserve and multiply God's people as well as feed the word around them. Pharaoh was moved by God to recognize Joseph's God-given wisdom. This led to the Israel's preservation.*

What is the message of the dream? What does this imply about life and people?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *The dreams reveal that God knows the future, that if we trust in God's revelation, our future will be blessed (in spite of our difficult circumstances).*

How is Joseph's response and behavior a good example for us today?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Joseph seemed to respond to both the bad and the good in life with humility, trust in God, obedience, and ready to give God the glory.*

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What do we learn about God and His purposes from this narrative? What is our part? How can we pay attention and respond?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *This passage points to the sovereignty of God over all of life including rulers. As we walk through life, we can see His providence (the work of God through circumstances), all of which are accomplishing the goodness of His will. Our response should be like Joseph – to humbly acknowledge the supreme rule of God, to trust in His will and ways with immediate and complete obedience. This also means that we treat the other people in our world as God treats them – with dignity and love.*

We do well to pay attention to how God is working by examining the workings through the lens of Scripture, God's character, and believe that He is always working things together. (John 5:17; Romans 8:28)

Our 'Now what' statement is "Be faithful in the circumstances you're in until God gives you a new assignment."

- Why is this sometimes difficult?
- How might this glorify God?
- What are your present opportunities to engage in representing him now?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *This is the key statement for the week. Since God is always working and always in control, our response is to be faithful right now. Faithful includes more than surviving – it means faithful to God's plans and our role as His ambassadors.*

The third question gets personal. This helps us to team up together to pray for, to encourage, and to support one another as we live like Joseph in our present circumstances.

How can we know when a new opportunity is from God? How should we then respond?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *For Joseph, he had little trouble discerning his new opportunities to be a slave and a prisoner and a leader. For us, we sometimes wrestle with knowing when an opportunity is from God. For the most part, being faithful today results in us knowing and recognizing God's work and growing to have a heart for God. As that happens, we grow in our ability to know how He is leading us.*

May our Father help you know His love and give you wisdom as you do life and mission together.

Steve