



Overcoming Life's Challenges (Heb. 11:21-22; Genesis Chapters 37-50)

Overview: For the next three weeks we will be looking at the life of Joseph and His faithful journey with his God. We will focus more specifically on how he **overcame** life's challenges and obstacles. In summary, the story of Joseph in Genesis provides a rich revelation regarding the nature and character of God as He fulfills His eternal plan and purpose for humanity. Joseph's story also provides a rich tapestry of lessons that serves as an encouragement for followers of Jesus today to live by faith, trusting in God's plan amid adversity and uncertainty. Joseph's life points to the greater redemptive story that finds its fulfillment in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and invites believers to walk in faith, endure hardships, betrayals, and extend grace to others.

Overcome: Means to gain superiority over, to subdue, defeat, vanquish, or conquer. Joseph had to **overcome** favoritism, treachery, bitterness, anger, gossip, lies, slavery, betrayal, imprisonment, pride, as well as temptations in every area of his personal life.

Overcoming Game Plan: Joseph's ability to **overcome** challenges and emerge as a conqueror was rooted in his understanding of the nature, character, promises and purposes of the Lord. Several key aspects of Joseph's understanding contributed to his resilience and triumph.

1. **Faith** in God's eternal game plan!

"But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? 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'" Gen. 50:19-20

2. **Awareness** of God's abiding presence!

"Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. The **Lord was with Joseph**, so he became a successful man" Gen. 39:1-2

3. **Refusal** to Sin against God!

"There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil, and **sin against God?**" Gen. 39:9

4. **Embrace**ment of God's training regimen!

"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**. But the Lord was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer" Gen. 39:20-21

"And He called for a famine upon the land; He broke the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They forced his feet into shackles, He was put in irons; until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord **refined him.**"
Psalm 105:16-19

5. **Wisdom** and resourcefulness!

"Then Pharaoh said to his servants, 'Can we find a man like this, in whom there is a divine spirit?' So, Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one as **discerning and wise** as you are. You shall be in charge of my house, and all my people shall be obedient to you; only regarding the throne will I be greater than you.'"

6. **Passion** for reconciliation and Restoration!

"Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives . . . Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. And he **kissed all his brothers and wept on them**, and afterward his brothers talked with him."
Gen. 45:5; 14-15

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn from the message this past Sunday?
2. What is God's eternal purpose from creation to the last verse in Revelation 22?
3. What do you feel is God's purpose for your life and how have you seen it play out?
4. Where have you seen the Lord's presence and protection in your own personal life? Explain!
5. What kinds of tests and trials has the Lord taken you through to prepare you for His purposes?
6. How have you seen God use you recently to help fulfill His purposes?
7. Share a personal experience where you have seen the Lord's provision?
8. Is there someone in your life that you have not forgiven? If so, what is holding you back?