

How Does God Spell "Success"

"Success Full" Series- Part 1

Connect: When you were 18 years old, how did you define "success"? What were your goals that you needed to meet to have a measure of success?

Hook: Match up the following quotations with the correct authors:

Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency. Consistent hard work leads to success. Greatness will come.

Albert Einstein

Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson

The road to success is always under construction.

Winston Churchill

Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.

Arnold Palmer

In our study on success, we will read about a young man, Joseph, who is sold into slavery by his own family. This family betrayal is followed by the horrible actions of others that included seduction, false accusations, and harsh imprisonment. Not a good beginning to the "successful life". Yet we find that Joseph finds a measure of great success...especially in the eyes of God!

Book:

Gen 39:1 When Joseph was taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelite traders, he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

Gen 39:2 The LORD was with Joseph, so he succeeded in everything he did as he served in the home of his Egyptian master.

Gen 39:3 Potiphar noticed this and realized that the LORD was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did.

Gen 39:4 This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned.

Gen 39:5 From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the LORD began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished.

Gen 39:6 So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man,

Gen 39:7 and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded.

Gen 39:8 But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household.

Gen 39:9 No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God."

Gen 39:10 She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible.

Gen 39:11 One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work.

Gen 39:12 She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

Gen 39:13 When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled,

Gen 39:14 she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed.

Gen 39:15 When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me."

Gen 39:16 She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home.

Gen 39:17 Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said.

Gen 39:18 "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!"

Gen 39:19 Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her.

Gen 39:20 So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained.

Gen 39:21 But the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him His faithful love. And the LORD made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden.

Gen 39:22 Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison.

Gen 39:23 The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The LORD was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.

Look:

A reminder from Brandon's lesson - Definition of success: "*Success is discovering and living out God's purpose.*" Let's look closely at the example of Joseph in the above chapter and discuss his journey in discovering and living out the purpose that God would have for his life:

What kind of attitude, do you suppose, did Joseph, the slave, have toward the people of this strange and new land of captivity?

What are the attitudes of people today that you would describe as "successful"? Do you think Joseph exhibited any of those attitudes?

What are the necessary prerequisites in life to experience success? (In other words, what did Joseph have "*going for him*" when he came to Egypt?)

Over and over again (Gen. 39:2-3, 21, 23) the Bible states "*the Lord was with Joseph*". What does this statement mean and how might it affect "success"?

What kind of work ethic is required for success?

What kind of moral ethics did Joseph have? Did this benefit his success? Why or why not?

What part did "failure" (wrongly accused and imprisoned) play in developing or hindering Joseph's success?

Ultimately, what was the cause of Joseph's success in Potiphar's house? In the prison?

Why did God bring prosperity and success to a slave like Joseph?

What lesson really stands out to you based on this chapter of Joseph's life?

Key to the above matching the right quotes with the right authors:

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