

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pride Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 37:1–11; Genesis 41:46

1. God has a dream for you.

Numbers 12:6–8

2. Don't brag about the dream.

Matthew 12:34; Matthew 15:18

3. Deal with the root of pride.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?



Lesson Notes

Date: [4-22-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Pride Test]

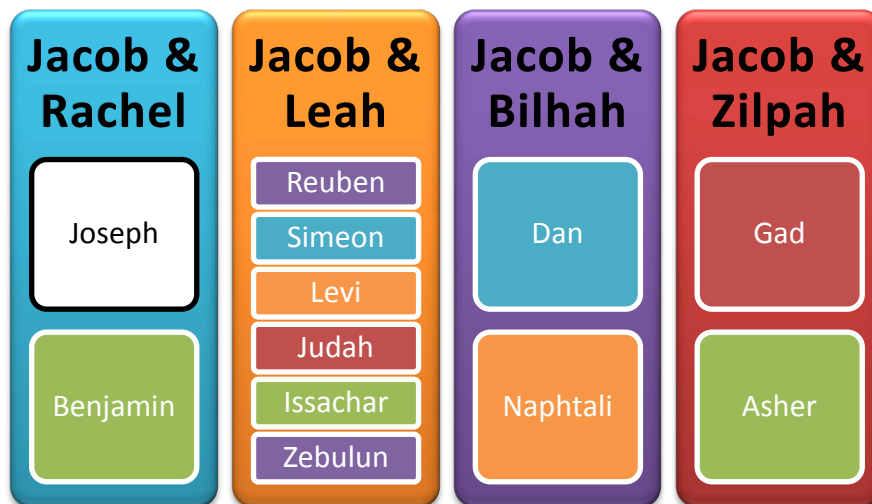
Notes

I. Introduction – *Genesis 37:1-11; 41:46*

- Today we are starting a new study called “From Dream to Destiny”. This is a 10 week study on the life of Joseph. God gave Joseph a dream when he was 17 years old. He began fulfilling his destiny when he was 30 years old. Between the years of 17 and 30 (13 years) of Joseph’s life, he had to pass 10 tests in order to fulfill the destiny God had for him. These were character tests because his character needed to be able to support his destiny. The first test was the PRIDE TEST.

- **Genesis 37:1-2.**

- So just a little background on Joseph:



- **Genesis 37:3-11 and 41:46.**

- As a way of introduction let’s just point out that Joseph was already a tattler before God gave him a dream. He went home to daddy to tell on his brothers. His brothers hated him because their father Jacob loved Joseph more than he loved them. Just look at his **coat of many colors**. They hated him even more when they saw that he had this coat made for him. His brothers hated him for the dreams he had and for him telling them his dreams.

II. God Has a Dream For You – Numbers 12:6-8

- So the first test Joseph had to take was the pride test. In order for us to pass the pride test we must understand 3 things. The first thing is that **God has a dream for you**. Just as God gave Joseph a dream and a destiny, He has also given you a dream and a destiny.
- The dream and destiny that God has for you are so much **bigger and better** than any personal dream or destiny you could imagine or want for yourself. In fact, your own selfish dreams can **cloud your view** of God's dream and destiny for your life. *My dreams of landing that big engineering job clouded my vision of the dream and destiny God had for my life.*



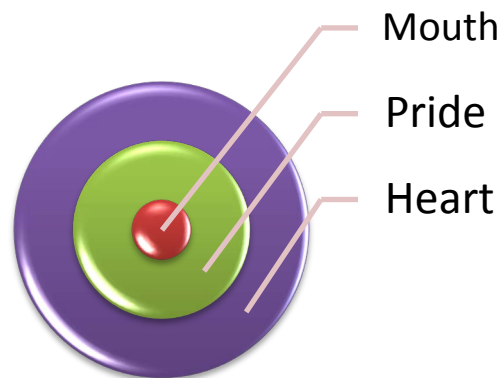
- So if God has a dream for you specifically, how can you know what that dream is? How does God show you His dream for your life? How can you be sure that your dream is from God?
- God shows you the dream He has for you through **His Word**. You've got to get to know the Giver of the dream: God. He is the only One that can **reveal** your dream and **fulfill** your dream.



- **Numbers 12:6-8.**
- Israel knew of God through His acts, visions, and dreams, but Moses knew God face to face.
- We must intimately get to know God in order to recognize the dream He has for us and that it indeed is from Him. **So what do you do when you get the dream?**

III. Don't Brag About the Dream – *Matthew 12:34; 15:18*

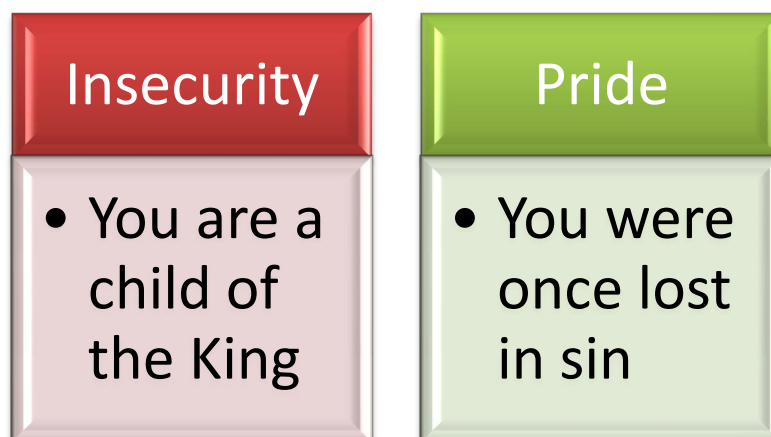
- Once you receive the dream from God, **don't brag about it!** The dream will lead to your destiny, but bragging about your dream will keep you from getting there.
- As soon as Joseph gets his dream, what does he do but **goes off and flaunts it** in front of his brothers. This made them even angrier with him. You'd think Joseph would have learned by now that he was a little prideful, but he didn't. Instead, he has another dream and decides to tell them and his father about it. Joseph has already failed the pride test! In reality, God never allows anyone to fail a test; **you just re-take it**. He doesn't put an "F" at the top of your paper but He does put a "Re-Take" at the top. He lets us take the test over and over until we pass because He wants us to pass.
- For some of us "Stop bragging" means "Stop talking". In other words, start thinking before you speak. Think about the words that are about to come out of your mouth.
- **Matthew 12:34 and 15:18**



- The reason why we brag is because pride is in our hearts. Whatever is in your heart will come out of your mouth.
- Pride always has to have a voice. It always has to be heard. Pride always has its own opinion and always interrupts other people. **I interrupt Tabitha** when she is talking to me all the time. *That's pride!*
- Joseph's dream wasn't his destiny. His purpose was not for his brothers to bow down to him but that he might become 2nd in command over the most powerful nation at that time and to store up food to save millions of people during a famine.
- Why did God give this particular dream to Joseph and not one about food or famine?
 - **Motivation:** Joseph would not have been motivated to help other people at 17 years old.
 - **To Weed Out:** God gave Joseph this dream so that He could weed out of his heart something that didn't belong: pride. Joseph would never have reached his destiny with pride in his heart.
- The dream puts you on a path and prepares you to be able to handle the destiny. If you can't handle the dream, what makes you think you can handle the destiny? **Be humble with your dream or you'll never reach your destiny because it will destroy you.**

IV. Deal with the Root of Pride

- Once you receive the dream you shouldn't brag about it. If you do, then you need to **deal with the root of pride** because this is how you pass the pride test!
- The reason why we constantly deal with pride is because we focus on the fruit, and not the root. **The root of pride is insecurity**. With every new challenge/responsibility come new insecurities. *Example of getting promoted at work and suddenly feeling overwhelmed and thinking you can't live up to your new role.*
- How do you deal with insecurity? You have to be confident in Jesus Christ and in the awesome fact that you are a **child of God**. When Satan tempted Jesus He began with "If you are the Son of God..." Jesus didn't respond by saying "Am too" and Satan "Are not". Jesus knew He was the Son of God.
- How do you deal with pride? You have to remember **where you came from**.
- Take this example for instance. There was once a prince who lived in a castle. He lived his everyday life and one day his eyes fell on a beautiful pauper, a poor woman in the village nearby. He decides to disguise himself as a pauper and develops a relationship with her. Soon things get hot and heavy so he asks her to marry him and they get married. Then she discovers that he is a prince and now she is the queen.
 - How does she overcome insecurity? By knowing she is the queen. She knows that her husband truly loves her because he sacrificed so much to get her.
 - How does she deal with pride? By remembering where she came from. Does this story sound familiar? I hope it does.
- **Understanding that you are a child of the King helps you deal with your insecurity, remembering where you came from helps you deal with your pride!**



FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pride Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some tests before we can fulfill our destiny.

Open What is one of your happiest moments in life?

Read Every person has a God-given dream and destiny. Many people live *with* the dream instead of living *in* their destiny. The key to knowing God's dream for your life is knowing God—the One Who can reveal and fulfill it (Numbers 12:6-8).

Before we can fulfill our destiny, we must pass some tests as Joseph did in the book of Genesis. The first is the pride test. When you receive a dream from God, don't brag about it like Joseph did! Bragging reveals that there is pride in our heart. Insecurity is the root of pride. If pride is in your heart, insecurity is in your soul. Understanding that you're a child of God will deal with insecurity in your soul; remembering that you are adopted and saved by God's grace deals with pride in your heart.

Talk

1. How does God show us His dream for our lives (Numbers 12:6-8)? How can we be sure our dream is from God?
2. Read Matthew 12:34 and 15:18. In what way do our words reveal what's in our heart? What does pride sound like?

3. Why do you think God will not allow us to reach our destiny when there is pride in our heart? (Read Psalm 10:4, Proverbs 11:2, 13:10, 29:23 and James 4:6.)
4. “The dream and our destiny are not the same thing. The dream is what starts us on the path to our destiny.” – Pastor Robert Morris In what way are the dream and destiny different from one another? What is the purpose of each?
5. How do we allow God to deal with pride and insecurity in our lives?

Live

1. Why is it so important for our identity to be in Christ and not in what we do, especially as it relates to fulfilling God’s destiny for our lives?
2. If you do not have a dream in your heart, ask one or two people in the group to pray with you to ask God to reveal His dream for you this week.

Pray

Thank God that He does His work in and through us. Thank Him that He has a purpose—a dream and a destiny—for you. If the Holy Spirit is showing you that you are carrying pride in your heart, repent and ask the Lord to forgive you. Submit your life and your dream to Him. Invite the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth and empower you to live for God’s purposes alone.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pit Test
Robert Morris

Genesis 37:13-34

1. The Position of the Pit

Genesis 37:18

2. The Perspective of the Pit

Genesis 37:31-33

3. The Purpose of the Pit

Jonah 2:1-2, 6; Genesis 37:22; Psalms 16:10

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?



Lesson Notes

Date: [4-29-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Pit Test]

Notes

- I. Introduction – *Genesis 37:12-34*
 - God has given each one of you a dream and a destiny. Many people live **WITH** the dream and not **IN** their destiny. The one reason why people get stuck in their dream and don't fulfill their destiny is summed up in one word: Character.
 - That is why you must go through character tests in order to get from living with the dream to living in the destiny. Joseph went through these character tests. The second test was the PIT TEST.
 - **Genesis 37:12-34**
 - The pit Joseph was in reminds me of a **story about a guy who worked the late shift** so it was always dark when he got off work. When he knocked off of work, he would always cut through a cemetery on his way home. One night it was very dark outside because the moon wasn't out. There was a fresh new grave that had been dug out and this guy ended up falling into this new grave. He began kicking and screaming, pulling out dirt and grass from the edge of the grave as he was trying to get out. He finally gives up and decides to lie down and wait till morning when it was light and someone would see him and help him out. Well later on that night a drunk passed through the cemetery and fell into that same grave. He began to kick and scream, pulling out dirt and grass from the edge of the grave as he was trying to get out. Finally when he was just about to give up, a hand out of nowhere touched him on the shoulder and said, "Hey buddy, you can't get out of here". **But he did.**

The Pit Test

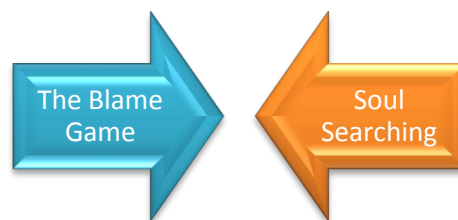
- You can get out of the Pit if you are properly motivated!

II. The Position of the Pit – *Genesis 37:18*

- The first thing you have to ask yourself when you find yourself in a pit is **“What brought me to this position?”** Did you do something to attribute to your circumstances?

- **Psalm 139:23**

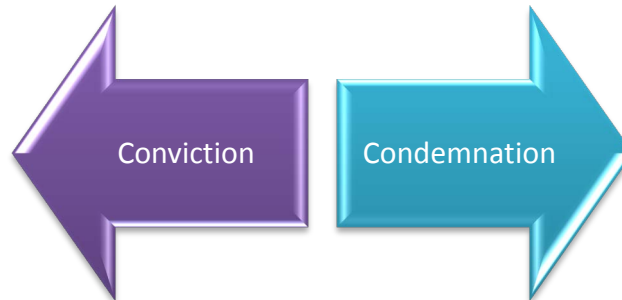
- One thing I must point out is that you need to do some **serious soul searching** to discover why you are in a pit. This is not condemning yourself, but simply doing some serious soul searching.
- Joseph could have easily said, “It’s not my fault I’m in the pit, it’s my brothers fault. It’s not the way I tell my dreams, not the way I present myself. It’s not **pride in me**, it’s **envy in my brothers**”!



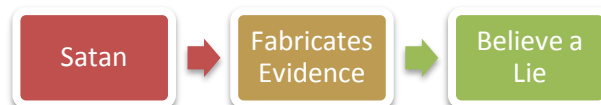
- That is exactly what we tend to do when we fall into a pit. We blame other people because it’s never our own fault; it’s always someone else’s. It’s **not our action** that puts us into a pit, **it’s our reaction**. Do some soul-searching to learn why you are in a pit.
 - It’s not your parent’s fault that you are who you are today!
 - Maybe you have financial struggles because you overspend and don’t tithe!
- **Genesis 37:18**
- Joseph’s brothers hated him. Why didn’t he ever think about this? Why is he not even with his brothers tending the flock in the first place? Most theologians believe that there was such animosity between Joseph and his brothers that Jacob had to separate them.
- Do you really think that Joseph’s brothers needed help tending the sheep? They were in the 20s, 30s, and even 40s. They didn’t need help, they knew all about taking care of sheep. Jacob is trying here to **develop a relationship** between his boys.
- The Bible says his brothers saw Joseph from afar off. How in the world did they notice him from afar off? It was that darn coat!
- Listen to this: **Joseph had his Father’s favour**; we have our Father’s favour. **Joseph’s father gave him a gift**; our Father has given us a gift. **Joseph lost his gift because of pride**; we can too! You can’t lose your salvation but you can fall flat on your face sometimes and lose the gifts that God has given you. Can we ever get back our gifts? Yes, when Joseph fulfilled his destiny, he probably had a **huge walk-in closet** with a button he could push to rotate his many coats if he wanted too.
- Joseph was proud of his gift. We need to be proud not of the gift but of the Giver of the gift.
- **When you discover that you are in a pit, do some soul-searching to learn why you are there.**

III. The Perspective of the Pit – *Genesis 37:31-33*

- After you do some soul searching and figure out why you are in the pit, **you need to get the right perspective**. There are 2 perspectives to every pit: **God's** and **Satan's**. We need to get God's perspective on the pit and not Satan's.
- Satan is the accuser of the brethren. The first thing that happens when we fall into a pit is Satan comes along and accuses us. He tries to condemn us.



- There's a difference between condemnation and conviction. Conviction is specific, condemnation is general. Conviction is "You did this and this, and that is why you are in this pit". Condemnation is "You are a bad person; you'll never measure up and be a good Christian". God never condemns. Condemnation does not come from God. Just remember John 3:16.
- **Genesis 37:31-33.**
- Satan is a liar and he is the father of all lies.
- Had a wild beast really devoured Joseph? No. Satan is such a good liar that he fabricates evidence to back up his lies. This was fabricated evidence. Jacob on his own came to the conclusion that Joseph was killed by wild beast. He believed this lie for 22 years! **Could you imagine** the brothers living with the secret for so long and not ever telling their dad the truth? They probably saw their dad cry numerous times. This was hardness of heart, it was a lie.



- Satan's #1 lie today is this: "You are married to the wrong person".
 - "Look how opposite you are. Duah! You'd kill yourself if you had to live with yourself. That is why you fell in love because he/she wasn't you!
 - Maybe you see a girl at the gym. Same values. Perfect match. Likes what you like. **This is a lie!**
- Satan will fabricate evidence at the gym that she is the one for you and he'll fabricate evidence at home that she isn't the one. Remember that **God doesn't give signs for divorce!** Don't believe the lie!
- **Get God's perspective on the pit, not Satan's. Look at the position you are in and see what God is saying about it.**

IV. The Purpose of the Pit – *Jonah 2:1-2,6 , Genesis 37:22, Psalm 16:10*

- The purpose of every pit is to **get you to cry out to God!** What else is there to do in a pit? You can go around griping and complaining for a while, but eventually you are going to have to give in to God.
- **Jonah 2:1-2, 6.** Jonah fell into a pit. Sheol means pit:
 - God told him to go to Nineveh; he disobeyed God and went to Tarshish.
 - He was thrown overboard and swallowed by a big fish.
 - He cried out to God because of his affliction. Affliction can be a good thing. It can get you to cry out to God.
- **Did Joseph**, for the first few hours while he was in the pit, rehearse how good he was and how bad his brothers were? Did he tell God that he knew one day He was going to get them back because of the dreams he had? After a few hours, he probably realized that maybe it had to do a little with him. But maybe after yet another few hours he got on his knees and cried out to God because he knew the only reason he was in the pit was because of his pride and himself, not his brothers.
- Check out these **types and shadows of Christ**:
 - In **verse 22** it says that Reuben wanted to deliver Joseph and bring him back to his father. Jesus brings us back to the Father. Reuben was the firstborn. He should have been the favourite son. Colossians 1:15 says that Jesus is the firstborn.
 - Joseph was stripped of his robe; Jesus was stripped of his robe. Joseph was betrayed by Judah. Jesus was betrayed by Judas; in the Hebrew, they are the same root word. Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of silver, scholars believe for a profit it was 30. Jesus was sold for 30 pieces of silver. Joseph was thrown into a pit; Jesus was thrown into a pit. The only difference is that Jesus didn't do anything deserving of being thrown into a pit.

Reuben	Joseph	Jesus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver• Bring Back to Father	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stripped of Robe• Betrayed by Judah• Sold for 30 Pieces of Silver Profit• Thrown into Pit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver• Bring Back to Father• Stripped of Robe• Betrayed by Judah• Sold for 30 Pieces of Silver• Thrown into Pit

- Jesus didn't deserve to be thrown into a pit, we did. Jesus went to the pit so we didn't have to.
- **Psalm 16:10**
- The Father will not leave you in your pit because He didn't leave His only Son in the pit.
- **If you are in a pit, cry out to the Father and He will deliver you, and restore your relationship and walk with Him.**

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pit Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but there are some tests we must pass before we can fulfill our destiny.

Open What is one dream you have for your future that gets you excited whenever you think about it?

Read Every person has a God-given dream and destiny. Many people live *with* the dream instead of living *in* their destiny. The key to knowing God's dream for your life is knowing God—the One who can reveal and fulfill it (Numbers 12:6–8).

Before we can fulfill our destiny, we must pass some tests as Joseph did in the book of Genesis. Last week, we discussed the pride test, which often leads us to the second test—the pit test. While pride *can* bring us into the pit, we often end up in the pit for reasons beyond our control. Regardless of the reason why we're in the pit, the way we pass the pit test is by crying out to the Lord. When we call upon the name of the Lord, no matter what pit we're in, God is gracious, merciful and faithful to bring us safely out of it.

- Talk**
1. Can you recall a time you walked through a season that felt like a pit test?
 2. Read Psalm 119:71 and Romans 8:28. How does God use hardships and pits for our good? Can you think of a time when this has been true for you?
 3. Read Psalm 107:6, Psalm 120:1 and Psalm 118:5–8. Tell about a time you cried out to the Lord and how He helped you.

4. Read Psalm 94:17–19 and Psalm 34:17–19. What do you think God is trying to show us through these verses?
5. Even in difficulty, we find comfort and hope when we cry out to God. What are some of the various ways God comforts us when we cry out to Him?

Live

1. Read John 14:26–27. In addition to His peace, God has given us the Holy Spirit as a Comforter. Whether we're in a pit test or not, how can we actively invite God's peace and the Holy Spirit into our lives?
2. Read Jeremiah 18:4–6. Whether being molded like clay or walking through the pit test, the things God brings us through are for a higher purpose. The pit test is a necessary part of the journey from our dreams to our destiny. Why is keeping the big picture in mind always important?

Pray

There is a good possibility that someone in your group this week is going through a pit test. Take time to ask each other if anyone is going through a particularly challenging season. Gather around them, and spend some time praying for them as a group.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Palace Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 39:1–6; Genesis 39:23

1. The key to prospering is the presence of the Lord.

Genesis 26:12–13; Deuteronomy 29:9; 2 Kings 18:7; 3 John 2

2. The key to the presence of the Lord is obedience.

2 Chronicles 17:3; 1 Samuel 18:12, 14; Deuteronomy 11:26–28; Job 36:11–12; Proverbs 28:13; Genesis 4:16

3. The key to obedience is faith.

Ephesians 6:1–3; Colossians 3:22–25; Hebrews 3:18–19

4. The key to faith is hearing the Word.

Romans 10:17

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Lesson Notes

Date: [5-6-12]

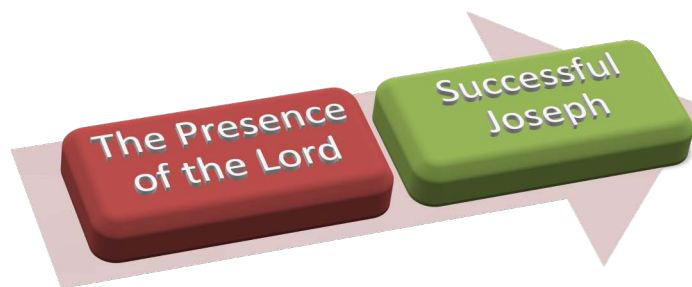
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Notes

I. Introduction – *Genesis 39:1-6, 23*

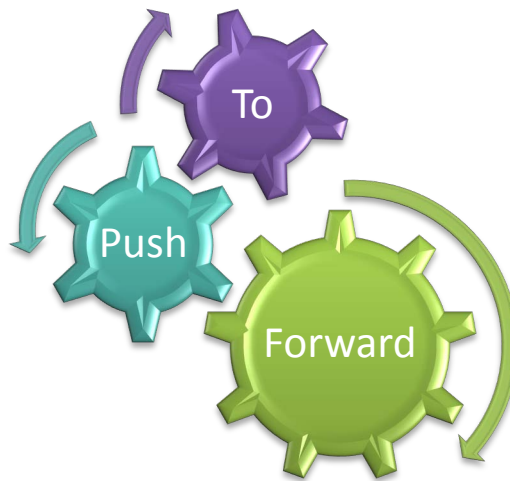
- Every single person in this class and in the world has been given a dream and a destiny from God. The one thing that keeps you from living in your destiny is your **Character**. So that is why we must go through character tests to get from living with our dream to living in our destiny. We've been looking at Joseph's life and see that he went through 10 tests to get from his dream to his destiny.
- Do you remember what the first 2 tests were?
 - #1: The Pride Test
 - #2: The Pit Test
 - #3: This week we will be learning about the PALACE TEST.
- **Genesis 39:1-2**. Hopefully you see a connection between the Lord being with Joseph and Joseph being successful.



- **Genesis 39:3-6**. I liken myself to Joseph in the Bible. No for real, the reason why it mentions Joseph being handsome is because he is getting ready for the *Purity Test* which is next week.
- **Genesis 39:23**. Because the Lord was with him! **Would that be ok with you?** Would it be ok that everything you did, you prospered? There are **4 keys**, simple keys, to being promoted, to being prosperous, to being successful in your job, your family, your marriage, your finances...and whatever you do.

II. The key to Prospering is the Presence of the Lord – *Genesis 26:12-13, Deut. 29:9, 2 Kings 18:7, 3 John. 2*

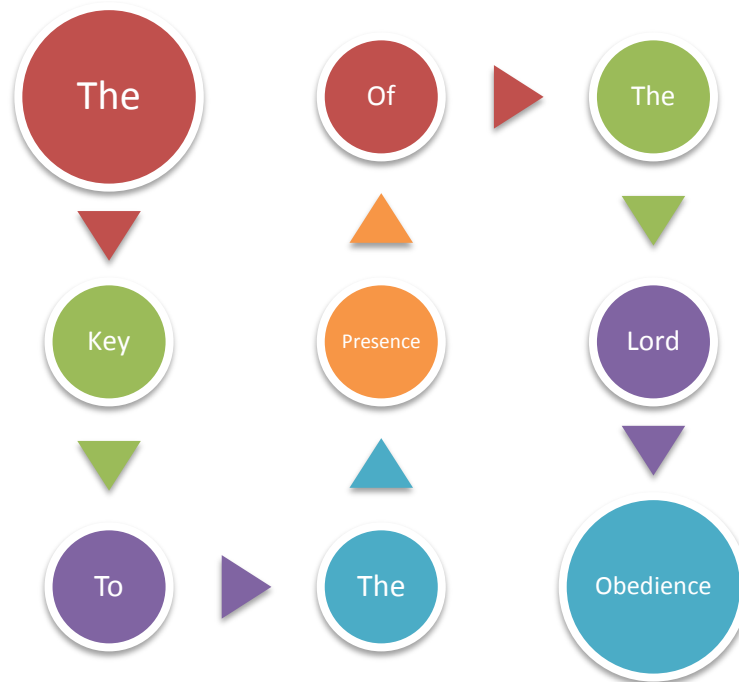
- **The key to prospering is the presence of the Lord!** Prosperity isn't a bad word. It's OK to prosper, there's nothing at all wrong with it. In fact, it's biblical. God wants to prosper you in your job, in your marriage, in your family, in your finances, and in your health. He wants to prosper you so that you can prosper others. **He wants to bless you so that He can bless others.**
- Prosper means **"to push forward"**. Again, would that be ok with you? Would it be ok if God continually pushed you forward?



- The reason why the key to prospering is the presence of the Lord is because the Lord never fails. He can't fail. If we walk in the presence of God, we will prosper. Find out what God is doing and get in on it.
- Let's see if God shy's away from teaching about prosperity:
 - **Genesis 26:12-13. Prosper, Prospering, Prosperous.**
 - **Deuteronomy 29:9**
 - **2 Kings 18:7**
 - **3 John 2**
- God wants to push you forward in your career, family, and everything you put your hands to!
- Even an unbeliever, Potiphar, recognized Joseph's success was because the Lord was with him. Does your employer believe they are blessed because you work for them?
- You might ask yourself, **"Ok, the key to prospering is the presence of the Lord. So what is the key to the presence of the Lord?"** Well I've thought about that and I've got you covered.

III. The Key to the Presence of the Lord is Obedience – *2 Chronicles 17:3, 1 Samuel 18:12, 14, Deut. 11:26-28, Job 36:11-12, Proverbs 28:13*

- **The key to the presence of the Lord is Obedience!**



- **2 Chronicles 17:3.** The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the ways of David. He obeyed God.
- **1 Samuel 18:12, 14.** The Lord was with David because he behaved wisely. In other words, he obeyed! The Lord departed from Saul because he didn't behave wisely, he didn't obey.
- **Deut. 11:26-28.** God is letting you choose, to be blessed or cursed. God will bless you if you obey him.
- This is not a works doctrine. We are saved by grace through faith. **But if you are to succeed on this Earth, you have to obey.** This doesn't mean you won't face troubles or that life will always go the way you want it to, but that God will take you through them successfully.
- **Job 36:11-12.** If they obeyed, they would prosper and have pleasure.
- **Proverbs 28:13.** You will not prosper if you cover your sins, if you disobey.
- We live in a cursed world. It's like we live in a hail storm with great big chunks of ice falling on us. There's a **steel umbrella** that covers God and all you walk with Him. If we walk with Him, we are protected and covered. If we walk away from God, we will not be able to dodge the hail. We see this with Cain in Genesis 4:16.
- **Some of you may have a hard time being obedient to God. If so, you may want to know what the key to obedience is.** I've got that covered as well.

IV. The Key to Obedience is Faith – *Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:22-25, Hebrews 3:18-19*

- **The key to obedience is Faith!** Do you know why a farmer plants? Because **he believes** that he is going to be rewarded.
- Many of us have more faith in the **chair** we are sitting in and in the **hot water heater** than we do in God. We just turn the hot water knob on and...wait. It's not hot at first, oh, but we sure believe that it will get hot. We stand there, believing. *Listen, when you turn on the faucet of obedience, it may seem cold at first, it will get hot!*
- **We don't believe** there are rewards when we obey and consequences when we disobey. If we did believe, we would obey!
 - Children obey because they believe they'll be rewarded and they know they'll face the consequences if they disobey. EXAMPLES???
 - **Ephesians 6:1-3.** "With promise" means with a reward. What is the reward? It is living long **and** that it may be well with you.



- If you actually believed that you would be rewarded if you worked hard for your employer, even though they may be lost, you would do it. Some people may say "I'll work harder when I get a better job". **No you won't** because if your not faithful where you are, why would God give you more? You aren't going to get a better job until you start working.
 - **Colossians 3:22-25**
- **Hebrews 3:18-19.** We all want to do the right thing, to obey. But how? By faith! "The rest" was the reward of the promise land. Those who didn't obey were not allowed in. Why? Because of their unbelief! **So this means that obedience shows your faith.** Why does it say unbelief instead of disobedience? Because faith produces obedience. They disobeyed because they did not believe.
- **Now all of you are probably wondering what the key to faith is right?**

V. The Key to Faith is Hearing the Word – *Romans 10:17*

- **The key to having faith is hearing the word!** This key is so simple that EVERYONE can do this. It's your choice, it's up to you whether or not you prosper.
- Some of you may be wondering why the key to faith isn't doing the word instead:
 - **Romans 10:17.** The Bible says that faith comes by hearing, not doing!
- If you want to have faith, then hear the word:
 - Download sermons from the internet and itunes.
 - Listen to sermons cd's or mp3s.
 - Listen to your Bible on your Iphone or on cd's.
 - Listen to podcasts.
- Get into God's word, memorize it, meditate on it and study it. **The word has the power to change your life! Learn it! Know it!**



- You can prosper because you are walking with God.
- You walk with God because you obey.
- You obey because you believe.
- You believe/have faith because you hear God's Word.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Palace Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny.

Open What is your favorite season of the year? Why?

Read When Joseph was serving as a slave in Potiphar's house, he was probably tempted to "take shortcuts" or not totally apply himself to his work. But Joseph chose to honor God by being a good steward and doing things God's way. Therefore, "*The Lord was with him, and he was a successful man*" (Genesis 39:23). God wants to prosper us—to "push us forward"—so that we may bless others and help them prosper. We prosper when the favor of God is upon us.

The key to prospering is the presence of the Lord. We walk *with* God when we obey Him—when we do things His way. Salvation comes by grace; blessing comes through obedience (Deuteronomy 11:26–28). We live in a cursed world, and God's presence is a covering (a shield) for those who walk *with* Him through obedience.

The key to obedience is faith. When we obey, we demonstrate that we believe God's Word is true, and that there are rewards for obedience and consequences for disobedience. The root of disobedience is unbelief (Hebrews 3:18–19). The Bible says that we grow in faith by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The Word of God has the power to change our lives.

Talk

1. Read Luke 16:10–12. What does this passage have to do with “The Palace Test”? What is the relationship between stewardship and God’s favor?
2. What is the biblical meaning of the words “prosper” and “prosperity”?
3. Why does God want us to obey Him and for whose benefit?
4. What does Proverbs 28:13 say we are to do when we make mistakes? What will happen if we do not?
5. Read Hebrews 3:18–19. Why did God describe the disobedience of the Israelites as unbelief? What does this show us about the areas in which we struggle to obey God?
6. Romans 10:17 says, “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Why is the key to faith *hearing* the Word of God and not *obeying* the Word of God?

Live

1. What are practical ways to “hear” the Word of God? What ways have been the most effective or beneficial for you? How can you encourage one another to “increase your intake” of the Word?
2. In what area of your life do you need to obey God—to do things His way—even though it may be difficult?

Pray

Thank God for His goodness and for wanting to prosper you. Ask Him to reveal areas of unbelief in your heart. Repent for areas of unbelief and disobedience. Pray that the Lord will give you the “heart” to hear and receive the truth of His Word that you may walk with Him daily.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Purity Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 39:7–12

1. Impurity Affects Your Family

Isaiah 53:5

2. Impurity Affects Your Faith

James 1:14–16 (NASB)

3. Impurity Affects Your Future

4. Impurity Begins in the Eye

Matthew 5:28; Psalm 101:3; Proverbs 27:20; Matthew 6:22–23; Job 31:1

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Lesson Notes

Date: [5-13-12]

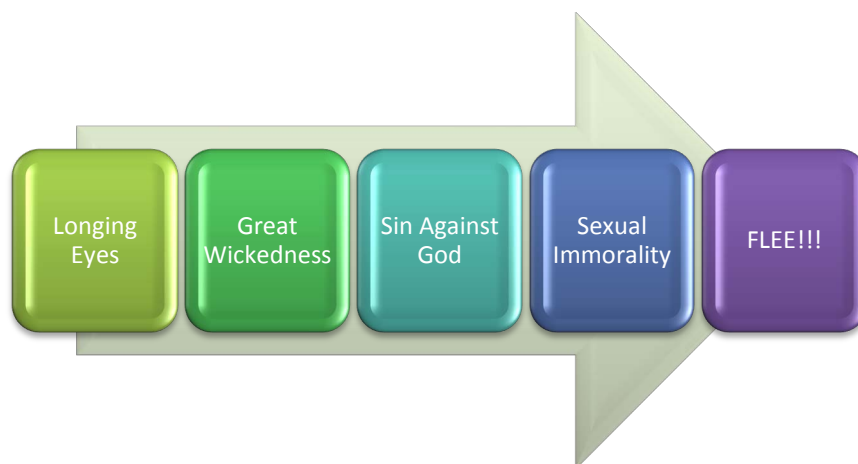
Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Purity Test]

Notes

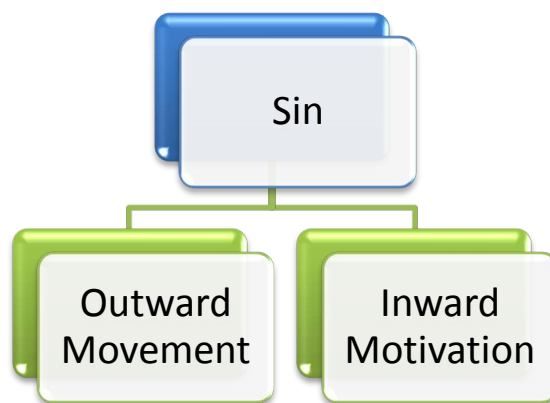
I. Introduction – *Genesis 39:7-12*

- We've been in a series called "From Dream to Destiny" and have been taking a look at the life of Joseph. Everybody has a God-given dream and a God-given destiny, just like Joseph did. Many times people get stuck living with the dream and never make it to their destiny because their character will not support their destiny. So God takes us through character tests, the same tests that He took Joseph through.
- The tests we've covered so far have been:
 - #1: The Pride Test
 - #2: The Pit Test
 - #3: The Palace Test
 - #4: Today we will be learning about the PURITY TEST.
- **Genesis 39:7-12**
- Notice the words "Longing eyes", "great wickedness", and "sin against God". Joseph called sexual immorality a great wickedness and a sin against God. Also notice what Joseph did in the face of sexual immorality: he ran away! This is congruent with 1 Corinthians 6:18: "Flee sexual immorality..."
- I want to show you some things that sexual impurity will affect in every person's life and then give you a very, very practical key to avoid and overcome sexual impurity.



II. Impurity Affects your Family – *Isaiah 53:5, Exodus 34:5-9*

- The first thing that sexual impurity does is it **affects your family**.
- David fell morally in 2 Samuel 11 and his children fell morally in 2 Samuel 13. David was unable to see the attack on his children because of the blindness in his own life.
- The first thing we need to do is blow away a major life from Satan:
 - “As long as you don’t transgress, as long as you don’t step over the line, as long as you don’t physically do it, it’s not going to affect your family, even though you allow it in your mind, whether it is pornography or any impure thing”.
- Whenever the Bible talks about sin it talks about an **inward motivation** and an **outward movement**.
 - Transgress: This is an outward movement. It means to step over the line, to trespass.
 - Iniquity: This is an inward bent or motivation toward sin. It is sin.



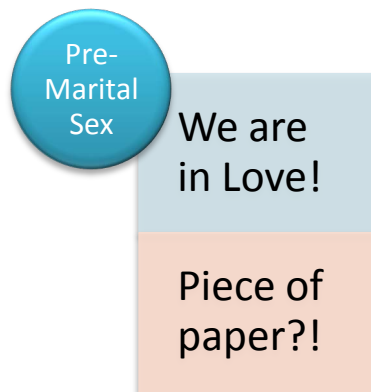
- Many people believe that if they don’t transgress, they’ll be ok.
- **Exodus 34:5-9**. These verses don’t mention transgression, **they mention iniquity!** In other words, if it’s in your heart, it will affect your family! The inward motivation towards sexual impurity that you have will affect your children, your grandchildren...



- What we tolerate in one generation, we embrace in the next. What one generation does in moderation, the next does in excess. This is because if it’s in the hearts of one generation, it’s in the hands of the next.
- Iniquity is inward motivation, transgression is an outward movement. If it’s in your heart, it will affect your family. Don’t allow sin into your heart.
- I can prove that Jesus died for our inward and outward sins:
 - **Isaiah 53:5** – Jesus was wounded (thats outward) for our transgressions, He was bruised (thats inward) for our iniquities.

III. Impurity Affects your Faith

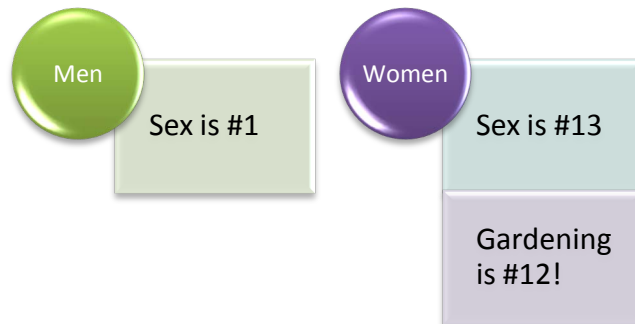
- Sexual impurity also **affects your faith**; it affects your relationship with God.
- Tell me what is wrong with this example: A young lady asks, “If we love each other and know that we are going to get married, **what difference does a piece of paper make?**” Why can’t we just have sex now since we know we are getting married”?
 - The couple is focused on a piece of paper.
 - In fact, the paper doesn’t make a lick of difference. It is the blessing of God that makes the difference. Satan has got us so focused on a piece of paper that we miss the real importance: **the blessing of God.**



- When God tells you not to do something, it’s not because He doesn’t want you to have fun, but that He doesn’t want your life to be destroyed.
 - **When you tell your kids** not to play near or in the road, it’s not that you don’t want them to have fun but that you want to protect them.
 - So when God tells you to “Flee sexual immorality...” there’s a reason. The reason is that all sexual immorality **opens up the door** to numerous other sins: deception, manipulation, lying, sneaking around. David had to commit murder in order to cover up his sexual impurity.
- So when you have premarital sex you learn to lie and sneak around. And so it affects your relationship with your family and with God.
 - For instance, a young couple decides to have premarital sex. The young man comes to the door to pick up the girl for their date. The girl comes down the stairs and her mom asks “What are you doing tonight”? Of course the girl isn’t going to come right out and say “We are going over to his house to have premarital sex”. No, she lies about what they are doing and says they are going to see a movie. Now deception has entered her life, she’s deceiving her mom.
 - So what happens next is the couple comes to Church and sings songs to God with their **hands raised** and their **hearts covered**. And they learn to be deceptive with God and no longer feel convicted that this is a **great wickedness to God.**



- Sexual Impurity also affects your marriage. When you begin to sneak around you start to develop an **appetite** that God never intended for you to have. You develop an appetite for “sneaking around sex” and you get an adrenaline rush when you do so. And think about this: when you get married, you don’t have to sneak around anymore. That’s why the husband will say “the sex isn’t like it used to be”. He’ll want to bring things into the marriage to spice things up. But he won’t be able to because he has developed an appetite that God never intended for him to have. The appetite can go both ways too: sex or romance. Sex for men and women is different. So what both of you do is create an appetite that God never intended for you to have. This is how the deception works: flirts at work/gym, sneaks around, fulfills appetite, gets divorced and remarries, doesn’t get the rush anymore, and the cycle repeats itself.



- So remember that God tells us to flee sexual immorality because He loves us and doesn’t want our families and our faith to be affected and hurt by it.
- If you’ve had premarital sex: confess it to each other and to God. Repent of it and close that door!

IV. Impurity Affects your Future

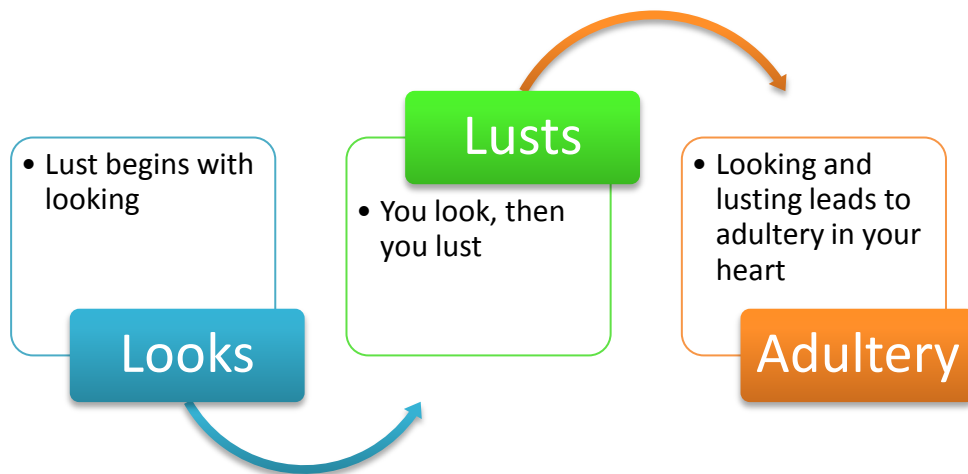
- Sexual impurity affects your family, your faith, **and your future!**
- When Joseph faced sexual impurity's temptation as Potiphar's wife threw herself at him, Satan probably said to him, "Man come on. You are a slave and Potiphar's wife likes you. All those dreams you had, they'll never come to pass. **Your brothers thwarted** those dreams and God's plan for your life. Just do it".
- Listen to me. The only person that can thwart God's plan/destiny for your life **is you** by the choices you make. Joseph would have thwarted God's plan for his life if he would have made the wrong decision.
- If you've fallen morally, you can still live in the destiny God has for you. You just need to be healed and set free. You must have the power of the Holy Spirit in order to live for God on this Earth.



- If you choose to continue in sexual impurity, you will never fulfill the destiny that God has for you.
- So what is the answer? You've learned how sexual impurity affects your family, your faith, and your future. Where do we go from here? **We learn how sexual impurity begins and then we stop it!**

V. Impurity Begins in the Eyes – *Matthew 5:28, 6:22-23, Psalm 101:3, Proverbs 27:20, Job 31:1*

- This is how sexual impurity begins. **It begins in the eyes!** Many people believe that sexual impurity begins in the heart, but it doesn't! It begins in the eyes.
- Remember what Potiphar's wife did? She cast **longing eyes** on Joseph. She had lust in her heart because she looked. Joseph was a handsome person. So the solution is simple: **don't look at handsome people!** Train yourself not to look, because if you look, you lust.
- **Matthew 5:28**
- This verse says that we look to lust. Jesus said if it's in your heart, its sin, you've already done it. Jesus also gives a progression: looks – lusts – adultery.



- If you don't want to commit adultery, then don't lust in your heart. If you don't want to lust in your heart, then don't look! It's that simple. If you are driving down the road and see a pretty woman jogging, don't look. Looking empowers lust. Don't watch movies with nudity, don't go to the beach. If you struggle in this area, **run away!** *Dustin would always tell me when I was in youth that he and Sean would look at a tree and start describing how pretty the tree is in order to not look (lust) at a girl at school.*
- If you struggle with sexual impurity, whatever it is, tell your wife! **Struggle through it together.** Confess it all to your wife. It will be the hardest thing for you to do, but it will be the best thing you could ever do to start fixing things.
- And Ladies, don't condemn your husband. Don't feel insecure. **He has a problem with lust, not love.** Lust is never love. Potiphar's wife didn't love Joseph, if she did, she would have left him in the Prison for 13 years. It's lust. He is not saying that he doesn't love you but that he is struggling with an appetite that God never intended for him to have. And guys, she'll have an easier time forgiving you of **lusting than lying.**
- **Psalm 101:3**
- **Proverbs 27:20**
- **Matthew 6:22-23**
- **Job 31:1**

FROM DREAM TO DESTINY

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Purity Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.

Open What is one important characteristic you look for in a friend?

Read While Joseph was serving as a slave, Potiphar's wife repeatedly tried to seduce him. He refused every time, saying that he would be sinning against God if he gave in (Genesis 39:7–12). Keeping ourselves pure is an issue of character and is foundational to our person.

Impurity affects your family. Sin is the outward action; iniquity is the inward motivation and is handed down through generations (Deuteronomy 5:9). This means that lust in your heart affects your family even if you never “act” on it.

Impurity affects your faith. When we walk in any form of sexual immorality, we train ourselves to walk as liars and deceivers before God and others to cover our sinfulness. Impurity creates an unholy appetite in our lives.

Impurity affects your future. Like Joseph, it may seem that we have nothing to lose by giving in to sexual impurity, but nothing could be further from the truth. If you've fallen, you can be restored by confessing and repenting of your sin and returning to God's ways.

Impurity begins in the eyes. Lust is empowered by looking. It's an appetite of the flesh. Confess and repent from sin, and become accountable—especially to your spouse. Then don't look!

Talk *If you have a mixed group, consider having the men and women talk in separate rooms to encourage greater depth and vulnerability in the discussion.*

1. Sin is outward; iniquity is inward. To “transgress” is to step over a boundary. What does this tell us about “harmless” internal thoughts, fantasies, etc.?
2. Read James 1:14–16 and 1 John 1:5–6. How and why are sexual immorality and deception so closely related to one another? How does sexual immorality in our lives teach us how to resist, or stiff-arm, the Holy Spirit?
3. Read Matthew 5:28, Psalm 101:3 and Matthew 6:22–23. Why must we guard our eyes and hearts?
4. Read 1 John 2:15–16. How does sexual immorality create unholy appetites within us? Which have been most challenging for you to deal with or guard against? What are practical principles and guidelines we can create in our lives to help guard ourselves from these appetites?

- Live**
1. If you’re married, why is it critical to “struggle together”? Why can this feel so difficult? How can we encourage openness with one another?
 2. Read 1 John 1:5–10. If we’ve fallen (through sin or iniquity), what are we to do? What does God promise?

Pray In pairs, confess to God any area in which you’ve fallen or are struggling with sexual impurity. Ask Him to forgive you, cleanse you of unrighteousness, and set you free. Commit to seeking the help you need.

Thank God that He has provided us with everything we need to pass the purity test. Thank Him for the power of the Holy Spirit who leads us into all truth and light. Thank Him that He is more than enough for us.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prison Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 39:13–23; Romans 5:3–5

1. Tribulation Produces Perseverance

John 16:33; James 1:2–3

2. Perseverance Produces Character

Genesis 40:14–15, 23

3. Character Produces Hope

Proverbs 13:12

4. Hope Produces Appointments

Romans 5:3–5; Genesis 40:6–7

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.



Lesson Notes

Date: [5-27-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Prison Test]

Notes

- I. Introduction – *Genesis 39:13-23, Romans 5:3-5*
 - Every person has a God-given dream and a God-given destiny. We've been basing our study on the life of Joseph and the 10 character tests he had to go through to get from his dream to his destiny.
 - Last week was the purity test. We talked about how Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph. He did the right thing, she lied, and he went to prison as a result. So today we are going to learn about the PRISON TEST.
 - **Genesis 39:13-15.** She tells an outright lie.
 - **Genesis 39:16-23.** Notice that God will always be with you through every trial. Also notice something else that we haven't really talked about: **every test is about stewardship**. How well would Joseph steward his own body, his attitude, his actions, what belonged to another man? You will not fulfill your destiny if you aren't a good steward.
 - The prison test is the test of perseverance. God develops character in our lives when we go through trials. God works character into our lives when we go through trials so that we can fulfill our destiny. There are simple steps/keys to passing the prison test. There always a simple formula for passing every test we go through.
 - **Romans 5:3-5.** Notice in verse 3 that it says we glory in tribulation. There are 2 Greek words for glory:
 - The first word appears nearly everywhere and it means the outshining, **how we see God's glory**, how God shines.
 - This particular word isn't used very often and it means to **rejoice**. We are to rejoice in tribulation. The root of this word is to wish or to pray. In other words, we wish or pray for tribulation because it causes us to rejoice. How in the world does tribulation cause us to rejoice? **Well I've got 4 points for you today.**

Glory

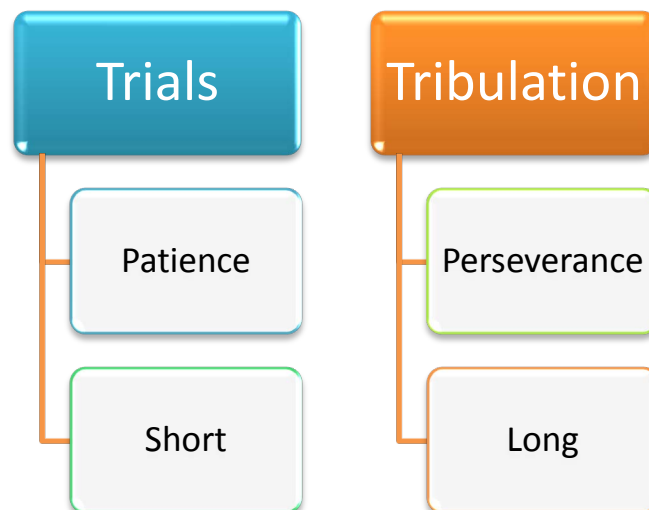
- Outshining
- How we see God's glory

& Glory

- Rejoice
- Wish and Pray

II. Tribulation Produces Perseverance – *John 16:33, James 1:2-3*

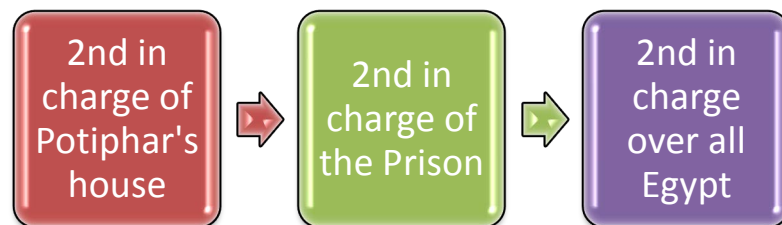
- We can rejoice in tribulation because **it produces perseverance**. This comes right out of Romans 5!
- **John 16:33**. Jesus promises that we will face tribulation. We don't have to wish for tribulation...it will find you!
- **James 1:2-3**. Trials produce patience, and tribulation produces perseverance.
 - **Patience:** Patience is waiting with contentment. It's not waiting while tapping your foot or looking at your watch. It's what you do while you are in the drive thru at the bank or at a fast food restaurant. It's keeping your heart right while waiting for something.
 - **Perseverance:** Perseverance is fighting the battle while you are waiting with contentment. In other words, perseverance involves a war, a battle. Trials are brief, tribulations are long. Perseverance is a long and difficult trial. ***Isn't this an encouraging message?***
 - Joseph waited 13 years to get from his dream to his destiny.
 - Paul stayed in Antioch for 13 years before going on his first missionary journey.
 - Abraham waited 25 years to have Isaac.
 - Moses lived in Median for 40 years before he led his people out of Egypt.



- It's very possible that our responses to our circumstances determine how long our tribulations will last.

III. Perseverance Produces Character – *Genesis 40:14-15; 23*

- We can rejoice because **perseverance produces character**. Nothing else produces character; not having someone pray for you, and not having someone teach you. You have to go through a long, difficult trial.
- **The worst thing you can do** for a person is to promote them before that are ready, or deliver them out of a trial that God is taking them through to develop character in their life.
- Joseph is a man of great ability. He rises to 2nd in charge of Potiphar's house and was never questioned by him. He became 2nd in charge of the prison and the keeper of the prison never questioned him. And he became 2nd in charge of Egypt and Pharaoh never questioned him. He was a man of great ability. But was it really Joseph's ability or God's favour that produced this? I really think Joseph prolonged his stay in the prison longer than he had to. The reason for this was the God needed to develop his character.



- **Genesis 40:1-15, 16-23**. In these verses we see that the baker had his head cut off and the butler was restored as Pharaoh's butler. But something isn't right with this picture. Joseph tells the butler to remember him so that he could get out of there. Joseph wanted the butler to **drop a hint** to Pharaoh that he was ready to get out of there. But the butler forgot about Joseph. He believed in his abilities, after all, he was a man of great ability.

Drop a Hint!

- 2 years later Pharaoh has a dream. Now the butler remembers Joseph. *Who gave Pharaoh his dream?* God did. *Why did God wait 2 years to give Pharaoh the dream?* Why not just 2 days? Because Joseph needed to develop his character:
 - Here's what happened: Joseph is ministering in the prison and God says "alright, he's doing great! He's serving and ministering to people while in prison". Then Joseph says "Oh don't forget about me butler. Drop a hint to Pharaoh". And then God says "Oh not yet. Not right yet, he's still not ready".
 - Because if God would have gotten him out of prison, Joseph would have believed that the way to succeed is to drop hints. *God never rewards manipulation!* God waited 2 years because Joseph's character couldn't support his destiny.

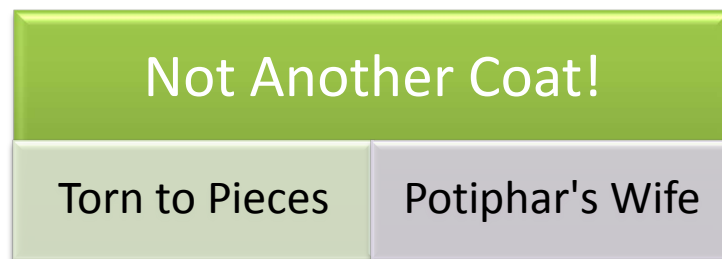


IV. Character Produces Hope – *Proverbs 13:12, Romans 5:5*

- We can rejoice because we know that **character produces hope**.



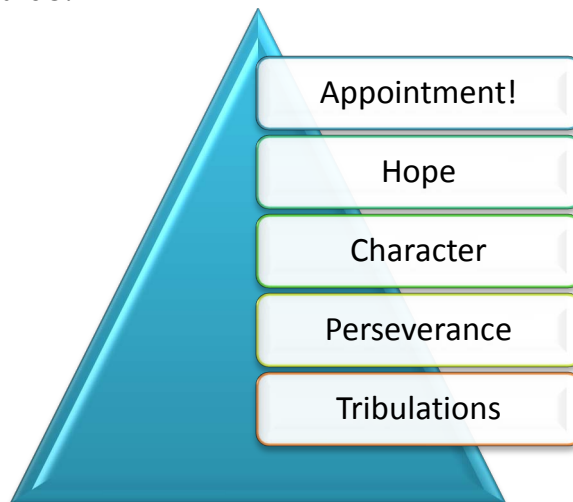
- Character is not only how we **act**, but how we **react**. Joseph did the right thing (act) and suffered the wrong consequences. How do you think Joseph reacted to this? Do you think he had hope? We are to have hope in our tribulations.
- Hope is not that God will deliver you from your circumstances but that God will walk you through them. Our hope is in God, not in our circumstances changing.
- **Proverbs 13:12**
- **Romans 5:5**
- Have you ever thought about this: What was the evidence that Satan fabricated to get Jacob to believe that Joseph had been torn to pieces by a wild animal? **A coat!** What was the evidence that Satan fabricated to support the lie that Joseph tried to rape Potiphar's wife? **A coat!**
- If I'd been Joseph, I'd never wear another coat! I could see it now being 20 degrees outside and Joseph shivering cold and someone offers him a coat and he tells that person, "**No, get behind me Satan.** I don't want another coat"!



- What is it that Satan keeps tricking you with? Is it the internet? Put safe guards in place. Get rid of the computer. Do whatever you have to. **Satan has no new tricks.** Whatever Satan has used before to make you stumble in the past he'll use again in the present and future to get you to stumble.

V. Hope Produces Appointment – *Romans 5:5, Genesis 40:6-7*

- And finally, we can rejoice because **hope produces appointments!**
- **Romans 5:5.** This verse says that hope **does not disappoint**. This is a double negative. The prefix dis- means “not”. Think about the words “approve” and “disapprove”. If someone disapproves, they do not approve. So when it says that hope does not disappoint, it means that hope does not not appoint, meaning that hope appoints!
- Hope appoints! Hope produces appointment! We are all going through some kind of tribulation in our lives. That tribulation will produce perseverance in us. That perseverance will produce character if we respond correctly. That character will produce hope. And that hope will produce a divine appointment for us to step into our destiny. That is what we just saw in Romans 5!



- **Genesis 40:6-7.** Joseph kept his heart right. By keeping his heart right with God, this led to a divine appointment. That divine appointment led him to stepping into his destiny.
- Joseph is an OT type of Christ:

He was numbered with the prisoners although he did nothing wrong.

He was specifically numbered with 2 prisoners. One was condemned, one was set free.

Joseph said to the butler "Remember me".

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prison Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.

Open As a child, what did you look forward to the most: Christmas or your birthday?

Read The Prison Test is the test of perseverance. God develops His character within us through the things we go through. Romans 5:3–5 gives us a “formula” for developing perseverance and shows us that we can progress from “tribulation” to “hope.” It instructs us to “glory” (to rejoice) in our difficulties because of what they produce in our hearts. Tribulation produces perseverance, which produces character, which produces hope.

Patience is waiting with a right heart. Perseverance involves warring or battling during a tribulation with a right heart. A trial is short, but tribulation is long and difficult. The Bible says that tribulations are the only thing that produces character within us (Romans 5:3–5). God never rewards manipulation; He rewards a right heart *during* tribulation.

Character is not only how we act, it's how we react. Joseph did the right thing and suffered wrong results (imprisonment), yet He responded with a right heart before God and towards people. When we suffer, our hope should not be that God will deliver us from our circumstances, but that God will walk with us through them. Hope is what prepares us for divine appointments because we believe that even when people do not keep their word, God always will.

Talk

1. In your own words, what does it mean to persevere with a right spirit? Does this mean that we should never feel discouraged?
2. How do you tend to respond when you are falsely accused or treated unfairly? Why do you think that is?
3. Read James 1:2–3 and John 16:33. How can we “rejoice” or “count it all joy” when we go through tribulations? Where must our focus be in order to do that?
4. Read Genesis 40:14–15. In what way was Joseph being manipulative? Why doesn’t God reward manipulation or positioning ourselves?
5. Disappointment means to believe that we have “missed” an appointment or something that was supposed to be. How can we deal with disappointment during tribulations in a godly way?
6. What is the difference between *hoping* that God will deliver us from our circumstances and *believing* that God will walk through them with us?
7. How does walking in hope open the door for divine appointments?

Live

1. What scriptures or truths about God’s character can help you face tribulations with hope?
2. What trial or tribulation are you dealing with right now in which you need to develop perseverance (to battle with a right spirit)?

Pray

Thank God that His grace is more than enough for anything we go through in life. Ask Him to open your eyes to see His hand at work within your difficult circumstances. If you have responded with fear, bitterness, impatience or manipulation, confess it and ask Him to forgive you. Ask Him to complete the work He is doing in your heart.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**

FULLFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prophetic Test

Robert Morris

Psalm 105:17–19; Psalm 12:6; Psalm 18:30; Psalm 119:11; Psalm 105:19 (NLT)

1. I Submit My Word to His Word

1 Corinthians 13:9

2. I Test My Word

1 Thessalonians 5:18–21; 1 Corinthians 14:29; Deuteronomy 13:1–3

3. I Hold on to My Word

Philippians 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:18–20

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.



Lesson Notes

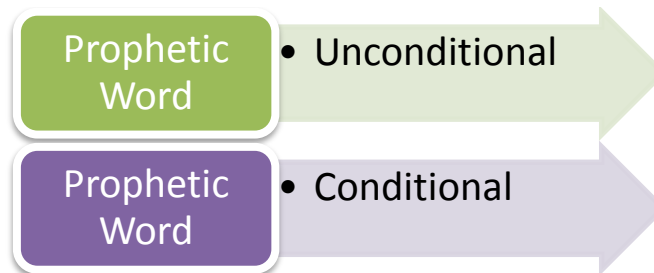
Date: [6-3-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Prophetic Test]

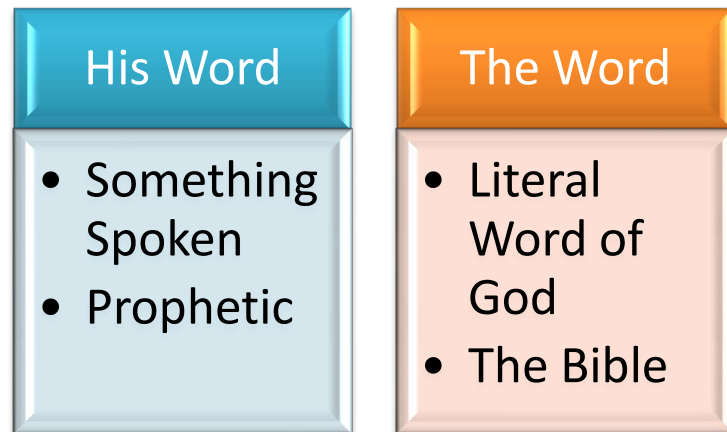
Notes

- I. Introduction – *Psalm 105:17-19, 12:6, 18:30, 119:11, 105:19(NLT)*
 - When God speaks prophetically, there are some word's that are **not conditional**. It doesn't depend on men for it to happen. For example, Jesus is coming back whether you are ready for Him or not. This isn't conditional on your response.
 - Yet there are many prophetic words spoken by God that are **conditional** on man's response. For example, Leviticus 26:3-4, 14-16.



- God gave a dream to Joseph when He was 17 years old and He stepped into his destiny when he was 30. This week we'll be learning about the PROPHETIC TEST. God spoke a prophetic word over Joseph's life and he was tested before that prophetic word came to pass.
- God has spoken a prophetic word over your life; He has a destiny for you. He has a desire for you. He sets a path for you, but if you turn away from that path, you will not reach your destiny.
- God speaks. He creates by speaking. He had spoken His word over us; He has a destiny for us. He may have spoken a word over you so that you would become a successful mom, an entrepreneur, and a teacher. You may be going through a test to help prepare you for these things; God may be developing your character to support your destiny.
- Today we are going to look at Joseph's life not in Genesis but in the book of Psalms.

- **Psalm 105:17-19.** Verse 19 is the key verse. To better understand these verses we need to take a look at them in Hebrew. The 2 phrases of interest are HIS WORD and THE WORD. So we need to look at the word word. There are 2 different words for word:
 - **His Word:** This is a very common Hebrew word; it's used in the OT 1495 times. It's the word DUBAR and means "something spoken". Until the time of *what was spoken* over Joseph came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.
 - **The Word:** This is used only a few times and it means the "literal word of God". It's what we use when we talk about scripture, the bible. It would have been the Torah. So here's what it's saying, "**Until the time that his prophetic word came to pass, the literal word of God tested him**".



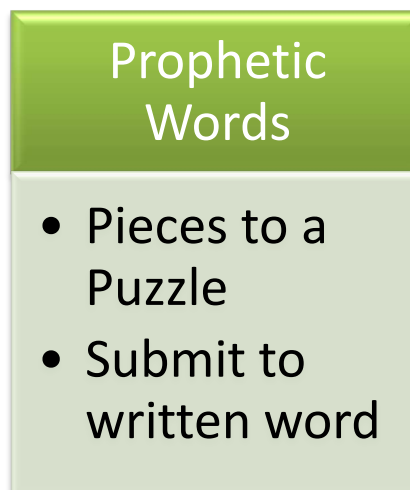
- Here are a few verses that have the 2nd word in them:
 - Psalm 12:6
 - Psalm 18:30
 - Psalm 119:11
- Listen to me carefully. This word (the bible) tests us. This book will determine whether or not what was spoken over us comes to pass.

**The Bible
Tests You**

- You may say, "Wait a minute. Wouldn't His literal word and the prophetic word be the same thing"? We are going to talk about how a prophetic word has a difference to it than the literal word.
- **Psalm 105:19 (NLT).** This verse sums up our entire study.
- God tests our faith with prophetic words; He tests our character with the word (the bible). **So what is the difference between the prophetic word and the literal word of God? How can you know that the prophetic word of God is over your life?**

II. I submit My Word to His Word – 1 Corinthians 13:9

- Here's the only difference between the prophetic word of God and the literal word of God: **the human element**. Your word must align with His word. You need to **submit your word to His word**.
- **1 Corinthians 13:9**. Is there anyone in here who knows in full? In other words, is there anyone here who knows everything? Since we only know in part, since we don't know everything, we only prophecy in part. What are prophetic words anyway?
- Prophetic words are like **pieces to a puzzle**. We may get a prophetic word, but it's not their entire picture, it's just a piece to a big puzzle. We may get another prophetic word, and soon we begin to see the big picture or puzzle coming together.
 - For instance, one person may have a word from God that says this year is going to be one of darkness. Another person may get a word from God that says it's going to be a year of light. Which one is true? Which person is right? Sometimes we tend to pick one or the other. But we have to remember that they are like pieces to a puzzle. Maybe it's that those who believe in the Lord will have a year of light and those who choose not to believe a year of darkness, similar to the 9th plague in Egypt.



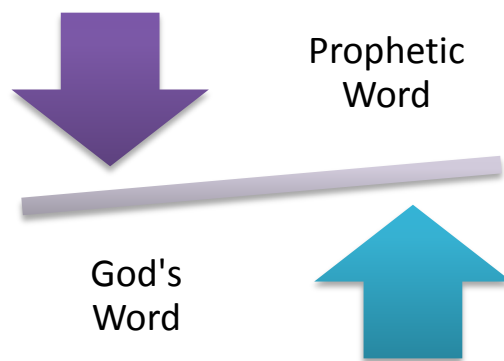
- We have to understand that every spoken word of God, every prophetic word, is submitted to the written word. Every word of God is submitted to the God of the word.
- God speaks over us, but there is an **IF and THEN**. Some people will never fulfill their destiny because they won't submit to the word; they won't submit to authority, they won't tithe; they won't get into God's word themselves.



- Through this study you've hopefully discovered a dream that God has given you. You've anxiously figured out your dream and want to discover how you can step into your destiny. Here's how you can do just that: **Get into this book (the bible)**. Start doing this book and start obeying this book.
- **So first of all I submit my word to His word!**

III. I Test My Word – *1 Thessalonians 5:18-21, 1 Corinthians 14:29, Deuteronomy 13:1-3*

- Once you submit your word to His word, then you **test your word**. What do I mean by saying you test your word?
- **1 Thessalonians 5:18-21**. This passage tells us to test all things. In other words, test prophecies.
- **1 Corinthians 14:29**. If you say that you have a prophetic word, a dream from God, then I'm going to judge that word. I'm going to make sure it aligns with the Bible.
 - Prophecy is like **shooting water through a screen**. If there is dirt in the screen, it's coming out on the other side. The water may be pure when it comes out the house, but if the screen is dirty, the water is dirty. The reason why we judge prophecy is because we are fallible. How do we test it? The BIBLE!



- **Deuteronomy 13:1-3**. If someone gives you a word and it turns out that it doesn't line up with God's word, then don't do it. Don't follow it. God's word is confirmed by God's word.
- In Hebrew, the word "test" can also mean "prove". This is what I mean by that: when you buy a house, you have to get it inspected. One type of inspection is for **mold**. In Texas, there are 2 types of mold inspectors. One company will test for mold and another will come and remove the mold. The first company will come back a re-test to make sure the mold is gone. The company who removed the mold can't test for the mold because their results will be biased. We can't test God's word; we have to let God's word test His prophetic word over us.
- Remember, you can't test prophetic words with the literal word if you don't know the literal word!

IV. I Hold on to My Word – 1 Timothy 1:18-20

- The last thing you should do is to **hold on to your word**.
- **1 Timothy 1:18-20**. Paul is speaking here. Paul tells Timothy that he is one of his spiritual sons and that he wants him to hold fast to the prophecies spoken over him and to take those prophecies and wage a good warfare.
- But Paul also told Timothy to have faith and a good conscience.



- You receive **faith** by hearing the word. You have a **good conscience** by doing the word. You can't walk in or receive the prophecies of God if you aren't going to walk in the word of God.
- Hymenaeus and Alexander are 2 young men who rejected the prophecies over their life and because of that they suffered shipwreck. They went off the path and went on their own way. Paul said he delivered them to Satan to learn not to blaspheme. They didn't hold on to their prophetic word spoken over them.
- Rejecting the word of God is blasphemy. Have faith and a good conscience by accepting God's word and doing His word.
- **When you were in the womb, your Father spoke a destiny over you. But until that destiny comes to pass, you will be tested by His literal written word.**

FROM DREAM TO DESTINY

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prophetic Test

- Focus** God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character-building tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.
- Open** Do you have a favorite quote or saying? What is it, and why is it meaningful to you?
- Read** Psalm 105:19 says, *“Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.”* In the original language, this verse means that until the time of the spoken (prophetic) word that Joseph had received came to pass, the literal Word of God tested him. Unless your life lines up with the literal Word of God, your spoken word (destiny) will not happen. The fulfillment of our prophetic word, or destiny, is conditional upon our response to God’s Word. All words from God must be submitted to the God of the Word.
- Prophetic words must be tested (1 Thessalonians 5:19–21). If it doesn’t line up with the written Word of God, the word must be rejected. God will not contradict Himself! We can only test the prophetic word if we’re familiar with the written Word of God. Once we’ve submitted and tested the prophetic word, we’re to hold on to it (Philippians 3:12). In 1 Timothy 1:18, Paul encouraged Timothy to “wage the good warfare” using the prophecies that had been spoken over him. We can use the prophetic word of God to authoritatively do battle in the spirit when times are difficult, just as Joseph had to hold fast to the dreams God had given him when he was enslaved and imprisoned.

Talk

1. What are other words or phrases to describe the destiny of God for your life, besides “spoken word,” “prophetic word” or “destiny”?
2. Some words from the Lord are unconditional, while many are conditional (containing an “if” and a “then,” such as 2 Chronicles 7:14). Personal words are almost always conditional upon our response to the word.
 - a. What other unconditional prophecies or promises of God come to mind?
 - b. Why are so many spoken/prophetic words from God conditional?
3. Why must the prophetic word always be submitted to the Word? How is this different from testing a word?
4. Specifically, how do you test a word? (1 Thessalonians 5:19–21, 1 Corinthians 14:29, Deuteronomy 13:1–3)
5. Why is it important to understand that our prophetic word is only part of the picture and not the whole thing (1 Corinthians 13:9)?

Live

1. It’s important to allow other people to help us test or judge our words from God. Who is in your life who can or will help you with this?
2. What is a word that you believe God has given you pertaining to something you’re going through right now? How can you “hold fast” to this word?

Pray

Ask God to give you the ability to hear what He is saying to you. Make or renew your commitment to live according to His ways/Word that you might “lay hold” of all that He has for you. Thank Him that He has a perfect desire and destiny for your life. Ask Him to speak to your heart clearly and often.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Power Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 41:8–9, 14, 37–44

1. From where does power come?

Psalm 62:11; John 19:10–11

2. To whom does power come?

James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:5–6; Genesis 41:15–16

3. Why does power come?

Acts 10:38; Deuteronomy 8:17–18

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version.



Lesson Notes

Date: [6-10-12]

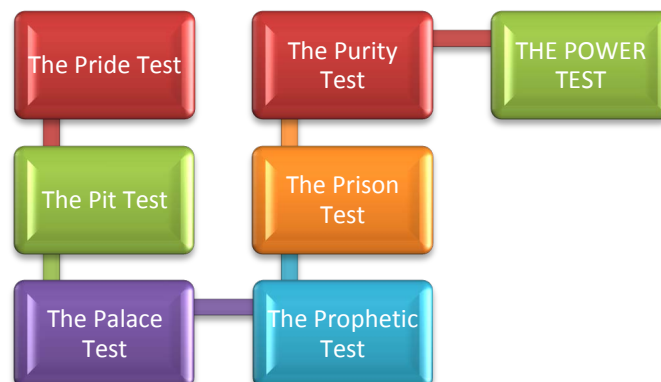
Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Power Test]

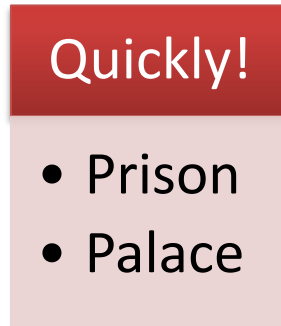
Notes

I. Introduction – *Genesis 41:8-9, 14, 37-44*

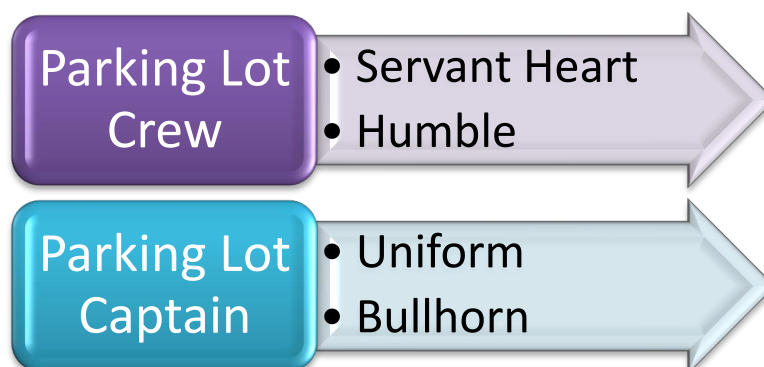
- This is the 7th lesson in the study we've been doing called "From Dream to Destiny". After this week we have 3 more lessons; 8, 9, and 10. Let me give you a quick recap of what we've covered so far:
 - The Pride Test: This is the test we take when the dream comes. It's how we respond to the dream.
 - The Pit Test: This is the test we take when the enemy comes against us. Satan attacks us and fabricates evidence.
 - The Palace Test: This test is all about how well we can steward what belongs to someone else. It all belongs to God!
 - The Purity Test: This test is about how well we steward our own bodies. It's the test of moral purity.
 - The Prison Test: This is the test about how well we respond when we do the right thing but the wrong thing happens to us.
 - The Prophetic Test: This test is about how we are allowing God's word to mold us for the prophecy over our lives.
 - The POWER TEST: This week is the Power Test! The power test happens when we step into our destiny that God has for us. This happened in Joseph's life when he was 30 years old. Pharaoh had 2 dreams, Joseph interpreted those dreams, and he stepped into the destiny God had for him. He didn't fulfill his destiny, but he did step into it. When we walk in the destiny, we are still taking tests. **This is the first test we take as we step into the destiny God has for us.**



- **Genesis 41:8-9, 14.** Notice the word “quickly”. It’s important to understand that the power test comes quickly.



- **Genesis 41:37-38.** Even an unbeliever recognized God’s Spirit.
- **Genesis 41:38-44.**
- I just want you to notice that Joseph goes to sleep in the prison, wakes up in the prison, goes to the palace, and the next day wakes up in the palace. **Promotion can come in one day.** In one day you can step into your destiny.
- Remember the pride test? It’s how we respond to the dream. The Power Test is how we respond to the destiny.
- Many, many people don’t understand that you will be tested by success. And many times people aren’t ready for success and end up failing the test.
 - For instance, there is a guy at a small country church who is on the **parking lot crew.** He just loves to help people in the parking lot; he has such a servant heart. And so the Pastor notices, comes to him and says, “You do such a good job in the parking lot, I’m going to make you the **parking lot captain**”. The next week the guy shows up in a uniform, a bullhorn, and a flashlight that looks like it belongs in a Star Wars movie.
 - Ok, he’s failing the Power Test! Something changed when he got the position. This is the Power Test. **There are 3 points to the Power Test and they are phrased as questions.**

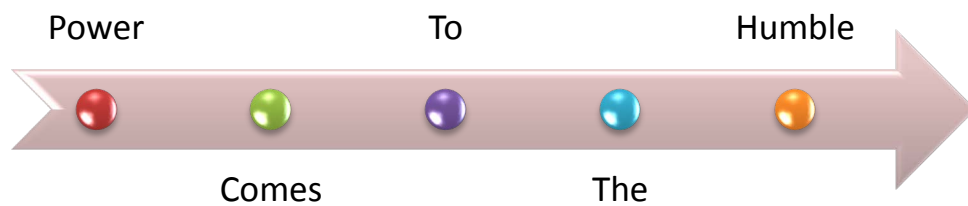


II. From Where Does Power Come? – *Psalm 62:11, John 19:10-11*

- **Psalm 62:11. All power comes from God!**
- **John 19:10-11.** Isn't this crazy? This has to be the funniest scripture in the Bible. He is saying to the creator of the universe, "Do you not know that I have power over you"? I can see Jesus now laughing underneath His breath at this absurd statement!
- The Power Test is recognizing that God's power and blessing is on your life when you respond to His voice and obey Him. In other words, **it's not** believing that you're successful because you've done so many great things; **nor** is it thinking that it's all because of God and nothing about you. It's understanding that God blesses and gives power and success to you as you obey His word and allow Him to live through you. It's understanding that without the blessings of God, you wouldn't be able to do what you do. But because you've walked in obedience, in stewardship, in humility, in servant hood, that God blesses and give power to you.
- We can actually have a sense of **false humility**.
 - For instance, there was a guy who had a sense of false humility. He was a singer and every time someone came up to him to congratulate him on a very good song at Church, he'd always respond by saying "It was all God". Well, one day he had just finished singing a really moving song when a guy came over to shake his hand and tell him "Brother that was good"! The singer said back to the nice gentleman, "Brother it was all God"! And the guy responded back by saying, "**Well it wasn't that good**".
- See, the way you pass the Power Test is to understand, yeah, you've worked hard and responded to God's voice, but it's God who gives power/authority/success. All power comes from God.
- Did you know that the **desire for power** comes from God? Satan has twisted it and caused it to be a selfish and a self-centered desire, but the original pure desire for power comes from God. – Genesis 1:28. We are even created in the image of an all-powerful God.
- Power is not for your own good, but **for the good of others**. Why did God give Joseph power? To feed multitudes during a famine. God gave Joseph power so that God could bless people. Joseph understood that and used his power correctly.
- Everyone wants power. If you don't believe me, just observe **little girls** play with baby dolls. They make the dolls do whatever they want and whenever the dolls don't behave they get a spanking. The little girls are in charge, they are in control. Or if you still are convinced, just observe how a **little boy** with older brothers treats a new little puppy. He finally has someone to boss around. Why? Because there is a natural desire for power and authority.
- In fact, Jesus said if anyone desires to be great in the Kingdom (He didn't say whoever desires to be wrong and have bad motives) let him be the servant of all. It's not wrong to desire to be great in the Kingdom. If you desire power for the right reasons, it's a good thing.

III. To Whom Does Power Come? – *James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:5-6*

- So we know from where power comes. Now let's look at to whom it comes to.
- **James 4:10.** When it says “lift you up” it means “give you power, authority, and responsibility”.
- **1 Peter 5:5-6.** God gives grace. One aspect of grace is empowerment. He gives power, He empower the humble. **So power comes to the humble!**

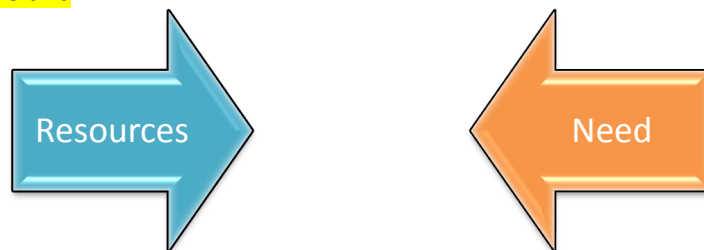


- When we usually first start out doing something, we tend to always be humble. But after doing it a while and getting used to things, we tend to lose that humility.
 - For instance, let's say I was going to be out of town next Sunday and needed someone to teach in my place. **So I come to Dave** and ask him to teach and he's like "Oh no, I can't teach, I wouldn't do a good job, I just can't do it, I'd be too nervous". Then I say "Oh yes you can Dave, I've prayed about it and I really feel like God would have you to teach". So all week long Dave is slaving away, nervous as all get out, can't hardly sleep because he's making sure the lesson is good and from God. Sunday rolls around and, because of Dave's humility, God decides to lift him up and works mightily through Dave and the lesson he brings. After the lesson Johanna comes up to him and says, "Dave you did a really good job today". Then Dave says "Yeah I knew I was cut out for this, I knew I'd bring it"! It all of a sudden changes, Dave has failed the Power Test. **So power comes to the humble.**

Dave &
Sunday School

IV. Why Does Power Come? – Acts 10:38, Deuteronomy 8:17-18

- Ok, we know where power comes from and to whom it comes to. So now let's learn why power comes!
- **Acts 10:38. God gives power to help people.** He gives power to people because He loves people.
- **Over here** is everything, all the resources in the World. God own all these resources, He own everything. He has all the resources in the World and well, out of this World too. He owns mars; didn't know if you knew that or not. **Over there** are all the hurting people, the people that need to be fed, the missionaries, the Church building that need to be built, the people who need to be saved. If you want a business analogy, here's the supply and there's the demand. Have you ever thought about this: what is in the middle? YOU! God is looking for humble stewards that He can channel His resources and power through. He wants to get all His power, all his resources, all the supply to all this need over here, **but He works through people to achieve this.**



- **Deuteronomy 8:17-18.** God gives power in order to establish His covenant, so that people may come into the new covenant of Jesus Christ. He gives power, not so that you can have a nice car or job, but that people might be saved! He wants to bless you so that He can bless others. Why did God allow Northside to build the LifeCenter? So that we can say "Hey look at us, look at us"? NO! **So that people would be saved! It's awesome when people with power use it to bless other people!**



- God gives power because all power belongs to Him. He gives power to the humble. And He gives power to help people.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Power Test

- Focus** God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character-building tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.
- Open** When you were a child, what job or responsibility were you given that you were most proud of?
- Read** The Power Test is something that we're often launched into *quickly*. Joseph was *quickly* promoted from the prison to the palace after the king sent for him and he interpreted the king's dream (Genesis 41). The Prison Test determines how we respond when bad things happen to us; the Power Test is about how we respond when good things happen, such as a promotion or an increase in responsibility or recognition. Each of us will also be tested by success.
- We must recognize that we do well to work hard and respond to God's voice, but all power, blessing and favor comes from God. Power (greater influence and/or responsibility) is given to those who are truly humble in spirit. Pride always looks foolish, but pride and power look especially awful together!
- We're created in the image of an all-powerful God, so the desire for power is a good thing as long as it is for the right reason. God shares His power with those who share His heart to help people. God has all the wealth and power of the world, and He is looking for humble servants through whom He can channel it. We're blessed to bless others. God increases our influence for the sake of other people—that we may help them.

Talk

1. In your own words, what is the Power Test about?
2. What is “power”?
3. God is all-powerful and we’re created in His image. Therefore, the desire for power is not wrong as long as we desire it for the right reasons. How does this idea compare to what you have thought or have been taught?
4. What is the difference between true humility and false humility? What types of words or attitudes might we use or display if we’re walking in false humility?
5. Read James 3:13–18, James 4:10 and 1 Peter 5:5–6. What do these passages teach us about humility?
6. Each of us is a catalyst between the grace and resources of God and the people who need them (Deuteronomy 8:17–18). This is the purpose of the influence and power that we’ve been given. How do you describe what it feels like to be used as a channel or funnel for God’s resources towards another person?

Live

1. Have you ever been given more power from God and then acted “ugly”? What happened in your heart? How do you feel about that now?
2. What area(s) of power, influence or responsibility are you currently walking in? How will you submit yourself to God and others while carrying this power or responsibility?

Pray

Thank God that He shares His power with His people. Thank Him for entrusting you with some level of power, influence and responsibility. Ask Him to help you to grow in wisdom and humility. Thank Him for using you to share His grace and resources with others.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prosperity Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 41:33–36; Genesis 47:26; Malachi 3:8–11; Exodus 13:1–2, 12–13

1. The Firstborn Must Be Sacrificed or Redeemed

2. The Firstfruits Must Be Offered

Exodus 23:19; Proverbs 3:9–10; Genesis 4:3–5

3. The Tithe Must Be First

Leviticus 27:30; Exodus 13:14–15

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

Lesson Notes

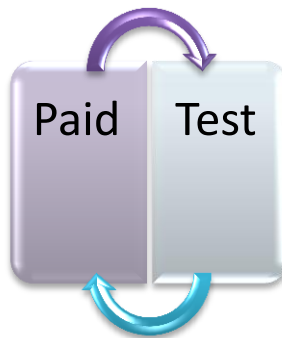
Date: [6-17-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Prosperity Test]

Notes

- I. Introduction – *Genesis 41:33-36, 47:26, Malachi 3:8-11, Exodus 13:1-2, 12-13*
 - Every person takes the **PROSPERITY TEST**. God wants to prosper us so that we can help prosper others. **Every time you get paid** you take a prosperity test. Who are you going to honor first when you get paid? If you don't honor God, you fail the prosperity test and nothing else in your life will fall into place.



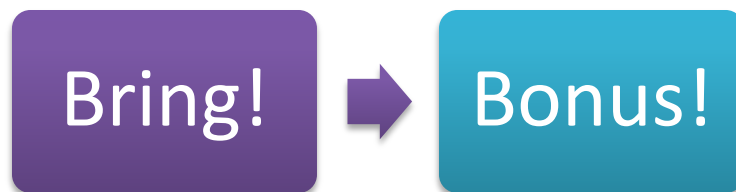
- **Genesis 41:33-36**. Joseph's plan was to save up **1/5th** of the produce during the 7 plentiful years to feed the entire world during the 7 years of famine. His plan was so good that he fed the entire world and extended Egypt's control over the whole world by exchanging grain for land.
- This was a great plan, but did Joseph put God first? The key to the Prosperity Test is putting God first.
- **Genesis 47:26**. This was not an Egyptian principle but a Jewish one. Here's what Joseph did: he gave 1/5th to Pharaoh, **except for the tithe**, which belonged to God.
- The #1 reason why people don't tithe is because they say **they can't afford to**. Listen to me; you will never be able to afford to tithe, until you tithe. Here's the reason why: tithing removes the curse. Until you tithe, you are under a curse. As soon as you get paid, something else will break, right? Everyone needs to get out from underneath the curse and tithe.

Under a
Curse

- **Malachi 3:8-9** (BEFORE You READ) By the way, this is the Bible. God put these verses right where He wanted them, because tithing is a test. It's a test of your heart, and for you to argue about tithing, it reveals in your heart that you don't want to honor God. To argue about being blessed is so stupid.

Right Where
He Wanted It!

- **Malachi 3:10**. Notice it says **bring**. You can't give a tithe because you can't give what isn't yours. You can only bring it. You bring the tithe into the storehouse, not missions, not some other fund, but the Church!



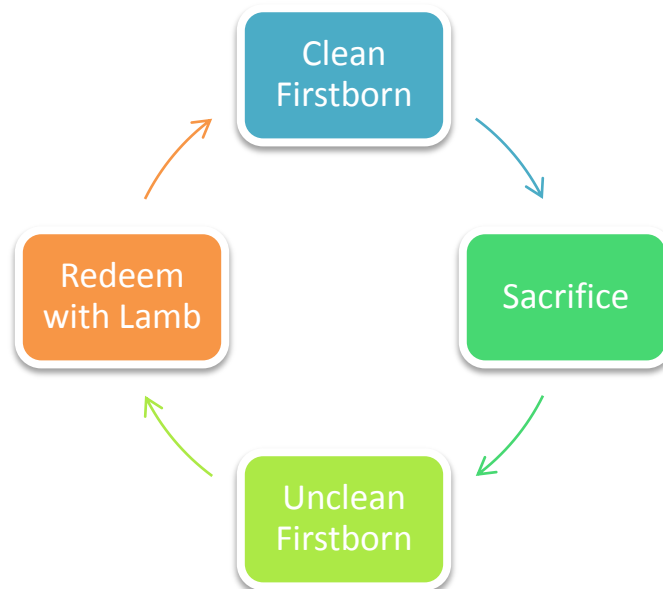
- **Malachi 3:11**. And, here's the bonus, and, **if you order right now**...He'll rebuke the devourer for your sake. We live in a fallen and cursed world. God wants to redeem our finances out from underneath the curse.
- **Exodus 13:1-2, 12-13**. Let me make one statement about these verses. You are going to lose it anyway! **Any first thing given is never lost, and any first thing kept is always lost**. The tithe is going out of your account whether you bring it to God or the devourer takes it from you.

You are going to lose it anyway

- Bring to God
- Let Devourer Steal It

II. The Firstborn must be Sacrificed

- This is what we just read! The firstborn must be sacrificed. If your animal was a clean animal and it had a firstborn, you were to sacrifice it. If an unclean animal had a firstborn, you were to redeem it with the sacrifice of a clean one. Let me say that one more time. If your animal was a clean animal and it had a firstborn, you were to sacrifice it. If an unclean animal had a firstborn, you were to redeem it with the sacrifice of a clean one



- Everything points to Jesus in the Bible. Were you born clean or unclean? UNCLEAN! We were all born in sin. Was Jesus born clean or unclean? CLEAN! The clean had to be sacrificed so that the unclean could be made clean. Jesus is God's tithe! You know why tithing brings a blessing, because you give it in faith. You aren't going to pay all your bills and then tithe. You are going to bring your tithe and then pay all your bills. It's faith that releases the blessing. God gave Jesus in faith, while we were still sinners, mocking Him, beating Him. Jesus was sacrificed so that all the unclean could be made clean.

**Jesus is
God's Tithe!**

- The first portion is the redemptive portion; once it is brought the rest is redeemed. The 10% redeems the 90%. When you tithe, you bring the 90% out from underneath the curse. 90% with God's blessing will go further than 100% without His blessing.

III. The First fruits must be Offered – *Exodus 23:19, Genesis 4:3-5, Proverbs 3:9-10*

- **Exodus 23:19.** Remember it says BRING. He says to bring it into the house of the Lord. You can't designate your tithe because it goes to the house of God.
- Have you ever thought about this: Why did God ask for all the silver and gold from **Jericho**? Because it was the tithe. It was the first city in the Promised Land. It was consecrated for the house of God. When some of it was kept, **it became cursed**. When you give your tithe it becomes blessed. But when you keep it in your pocket it becomes cursed.



- Tithers and non-tithers always give the same testimony according to Robert Morris. Tither's say that they are always blessed. Non-tithers say that they just can't afford to tithe. Here's a deal that **Northside** will make with you: Start tithing today through the end of the year and if you are not satisfied, they'll give you your money back. This deal is for your own good, to get you motivated. I'm tired and your friends here at Northside are tired of trying to help keep your marriage healthy, bailing you out financially, providing jobs, we are tired of seeing you struggle. TITHE! God says tithe and He will rebuke the devourer! It's a pretty good deal for just 10%!



- **Genesis 4:3-5.** Why did God accept Abel's offering? Because Cain didn't bring his first fruits; just look at the words "process of time" and "it came to pass". Abel brought the firstborn and Cain didn't bring the first fruits. God cannot accept anything less.
- **Proverbs 3:9-10.**

IV. The Tithe must be First – *Leviticus 27:30, Exodus 13: 14-15*

- **Leviticus 27:30.** The Hebrew word for “all” is “all”. It all belongs to God.
 - Let me ask you a couple questions. Let’s say that you run a **landscaping business** and I’ve hired you to landscape my yard. After paying out all your expenses I owe you a profit of \$1000 so I give you ten \$100 bills.
 - **Q1:** How much is the tithe?
 - **Q2:** Which \$100 bill is the tithe? The first one that leaves your hand is the tithe; it’s the redemptive portion.
- You don’t set aside some money for the mortgage, then some for the electricity, then some for the car, then some for the tithe. **In that case, the mortgage company got your tithe.** The mortgage company doesn’t have the power to bless your finances. We know this from the last 2 years. And you don’t have to be legalistic about it either. If your wife does the grocery shopping right when you get paid and you didn’t tithe, it’s ok! Because it’s about the heart. God needs to know your heart says He is first!
- Please listen to me. Your marriage, finances, health, and the other important things in life to you won’t line up until you put God first! So tithe. God will take care of the rest!
- **Exodus 13:14-15.** Here’s what he’s saying: **picture a little boy** comes running into the house and finds his daddy to tell him that one of the sheep is having a baby lamb. It’s the firstborn. So the little boy, his daddy, and the whole family run outside to watch the miracle of birth. The little boy is so excited. Then is daddy grabs the little lamb, takes him over here and cuts its throat and lets it bleed to death. The little boy is watching all of this of course and you know what he’s thinking right? Don’t mess with dad!
 - This verse says that there’s coming a day when your son gets older and he is going to start noticing you doing this. He’s going to come to you one day and say, “Dad, um, I want to talk to you, um, about something. And, um, maybe you don’t even, um, know you are doing this. But um, uh, when, when all of our animals, when um, they have their firstborn, and again dad, you may not even know this. But um, when they have the first one, you uh kill it. We are in the ranching business dad and um, this is cutting into our profits. I just want to bring it to your attention”.
 - The verse says here’s what you do: Take your son and tell him, “Son, I need to tell you something about our family that you don’t know. We weren’t always in the ranching business. We didn’t have sheep, we didn’t have land. In fact son, we were slaves. **BUT GOD**, with a mighty hand, delivered us and gave us all that we have. Therefore, we gladly give the firstborn of all we have”.
 - This should be your attitude towards tithing! You weren’t always a Christian. You were once lost, enslaved to sin, without grace and mercy. **BUT GOD**, with a mighty hand changed your life and gave you His Son. God with a mighty hand delivered you from your sin. Therefore, you should gladly tithe.

But God!

- **Therefore we gladly...**
- If you can’t handle money/tithing, you won’t be able to handle your destiny.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Prosperity Test

- Focus** God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.
- Open** Have you experienced what you would call a “financial miracle”? What was it?
- Read** The Prosperity Test examines whether or not we use our prosperity (money) wisely. Money is meant to meet our material needs such as food, clothing and shelter, but beyond that, God wants to use *us* to distribute His resources on the earth. He’s looking for faithful people to steward His resources. God uses money to test our hearts, beginning with whether or not we’ll put Him first through tithing (bringing Him the first 10% of our income). Every time we receive a paycheck, we take The Prosperity Test.
- We live in a cursed world, and until we tithe, our finances are under a curse. God wants to redeem us from the curse. Throughout the Bible, we learn the principle of the first: *giving the first redeems the rest*. Jesus was *God’s tithe*—He redeemed the rest of us when He was sacrificed.
- The *first* fruits must be brought to God. That is, the *first* of our income, or “prosperity.” Tithing brings blessing because it’s given in faith. (It doesn’t require faith to give the last 10%!) Any first thing given is never lost; any first thing kept is always lost. Tithing isn’t about legalism; it’s about the heart. Exodus 13:14–15 tells us the first fruits offering (or tithe), is reflective of a sacred covenant between God and His people.

Talk

1. There are over 2,300 references to money in the Bible. Why do you think the way we handle our resources is so important in our relationship with God?
2. Up 'til now, would you say that you've truly understood *why* we should tithe? In general, how would you characterize your attitude towards tithing? Why?
3. What does the word "redeem" mean? How does the tithe "redeem" the other 90% of our income?
4. What do the following verses tell us about how we can pass the Prosperity Test?
Malachi 3:8–11 Exodus 13:1–2 Proverbs 3:9–10
Leviticus 27:30 1 Timothy 6:6–10 2 Corinthians 9:7
5. The tithe isn't giving—it's returning to God what's already His. Anything over and above the tithe is giving (an offering). How is our attitude towards tithing affected when we understand this?

Live

1. The principle of the first fruits (tithing) is not about coming under condemnation—it points to how to live in victory. If you've struggled with this issue, be encouraged. The way to get victory in any area is to rely on God's help, and the way to get His help in your finances is to put Him first. What does Malachi 3:10 promise to those who will step out in faith to obey God with their tithe?
2. What are practical strategies to begin tithing when you feel that you can't "afford" it? What will you do this week?

Pray

If you haven't been tithing regularly, ask the Lord to forgive you for robbing Him and not putting Him first. Tell Him you'd like to take Him up on His offer in Malachi 3:10, and commit to begin tithing in faith. Ask Him for help in your finances—for direction, provision and wisdom. Thank Him that His desire towards you is for good and not to condemn you. Express your love for Him and your desire to serve Him first.

To receive help managing your finances through classes or counseling, visit stewardship.gatewaypeople.com.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pardon Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 50:15–21

1. Release

Genesis 50:19; Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:19 (NLT)

2. Receive

Matthew 6:12–15

3. Believe

Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 53:6; Habakkuk 1:13; Job 36:7; 1 Peter 3:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Lesson Notes

Date: [6-24-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Pardon Test]

Notes

I. Introduction – *Genesis 50:15-21*

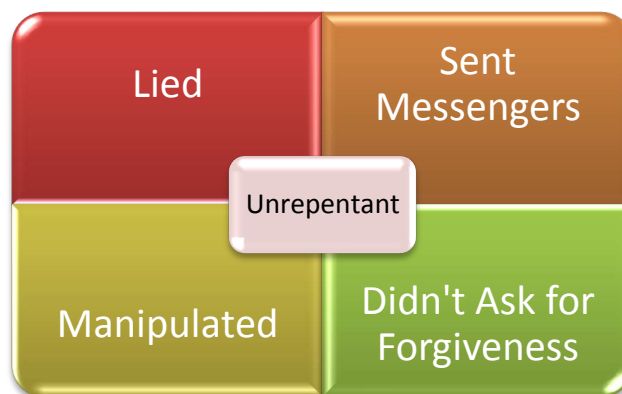
- This is the 2nd to last lesson in our study “From Dream to Destiny”. It’s called the PARDON TEST. Next week is the last lesson called the purpose test; we will be learning how to discover God’s purpose for your life.
- Remember that Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, and were originally going to kill him. If you were Joseph, would you be able to forgive them?
- **Genesis 50:15-21.** Joseph probably wept because he had just found out that his father had died. He didn’t know until now. The only way Joseph could have spoken kindly to his brothers is if he already had dealt with them, if he had **forgiven** them already in his heart.
- This is the first time we see the word “FORGIVE” in the bible. It means to **absolve fully** or **release from penalty**. It also means **to lift up or to bear**.
 - This is exactly what Jesus did for us. He lifted our sin off of ourselves and bore it on the cross. He released us from the penalty of sin and absolved us fully.



- So how in the world can we pardon? If you don’t learn to pardon or forgive people, you will never fulfill your destiny. There are 3 words you need to know to be able to forgive.

II. Release – *Leviticus 19:18, Romans 12:19*

- Let's take a closer look at the passage we just read:
 - When Joseph's brothers saw that their father had died, they thought that Joseph might be mad at them and seek out revenge. So they sent messengers to him to tell him that his father had a dying wish, really a dying commandment. This commandment was to forgive his brothers of their sin. And they threw God in there too. This made the lie a little more believable. They really put a lot of thought into this lie. Joseph's brothers seemed as if they had repented, but we can see right through their lie. They didn't repent; they lied, manipulated, and didn't ask for forgiveness.
 - Can you forgive someone that doesn't repent or ask for your forgiveness? Someone that lies and manipulates? **This is the Pardon Test!** When you don't forgive, you put yourself in the place of God.



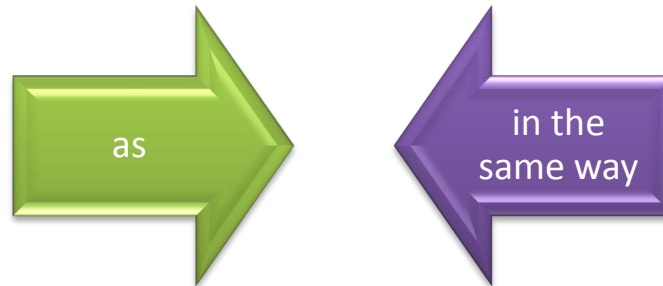
- **Leviticus 19:18**
- **Romans 12:19**
- This is why we are commanded not to take vengeance:
 - It means to bring justice to an unjust situation. But it's impossible for us to do this because we are not just. **We are justified, but not just.** He is the only One who is just. When you live your life with unforgiveness, you'll always try to avenge yourself. You'll spend all your life trying to prove something rather than **please Someone.**
- Many times we **rationalize** out why it's ok not to forgive someone. We say something like "What they did was wrong and I will always have a grudge against them. I'll always hold it against them; I can't forgive someone who is wrong". Here's what God would tell us in response to that stupid rationalization: "Of course they are wrong, you don't forgive someone who is right"!

But they are wrong!

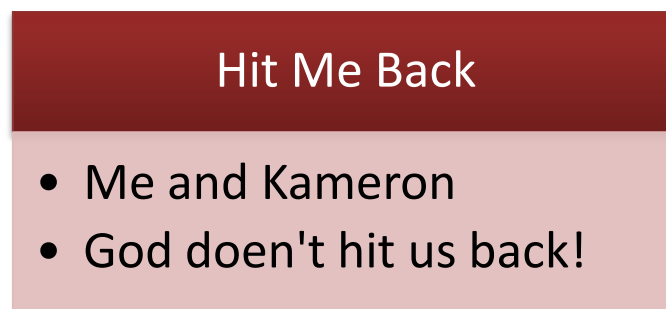
- That's why you forgive people, because they are wrong. **You need to release them.** If you are still going through it in your mind, it doesn't matter what comes out of your mouth, you still haven't forgiven them. You know why? *Because God doesn't go through our sins in His mind! He has forgotten them, and forgiven us!*

III. Receive – *Matthew 6:12-15*

- How many of you have prayed the Lord's prayer?
- **Matthew 6:12.** The word "as" means "in the same way". So what you are really saying is Lord, will you forgive me **in the same way** that I forgive other people? For some of us, this information would have been helpful before you prayed the Lord's prayer because you don't forgive people like you want God to forgive you.



- Here's how we forgive according to the Bible. The Bible says "Freely you have received, freely give". We've received forgiveness freely. Therefore, we can **freely give forgiveness**.
 - If you have a problem forgiving people it's because you have a problem receiving forgiveness. If you feel in any way that you have to pay for your sins or earn forgiveness, then you will make others to the same thing.
- Have you ever heard of the **hit-me-back** mentality? *Example of Kam and me.*



- Well, some of us have the hit-me-back mentality. We think that because we sin, God gets us back by giving us a flat tire, or bad health, or over-drafting on our bank account, or the washing machine breaks. We believe that God gets us back when we sin and now we are even and it makes us feel better. God does not do this! God does not hit-us-back so that we feel better about our sin. God is never going to get even with you.
- **You've got to receive forgiveness** or you'll have a problem forgiving other people.



IV. Believe – *Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 53:6, Habakkuk 1:13, Jon 36:7, 1 Peter 3:12, 2 Corinthians 5:21*

- We are to release, receive, **and finally believe!**
- We are going to read a few Bible verses and then tie all of this up.
- **Psalm 103:12.** How far is our sin?
- **Isaiah 53:6.** What happened to our iniquity?
- **Habakkuk 1:13.**
- **Job 36:7.** God can't look on wickedness, but He will never take His eyes off the righteous.
- **1 Peter 3:12.** God can't look on wickedness, on sin.
 - This makes me think to myself, "Well I sure wish I was righteous! According to these verses, God can't even look at me."
- **2 Corinthians 5:21.** We were born sinful. So sinful, God is so pure, He can't look at sin. He took all my sin, lifted it off of me, bore it Himself so that I could be the righteousness of God and He could look at me. God did such a wonderful job at it that **He can look at me, He can talk to me, He can walk with me, and He can give me Jesus Christ!**
- If you really believe this, you can forgive other people. If you really believe that you have received forgiveness freely, you can give it freely. *Don't hold on to bitterness, it will destroy your life.*

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Pardon Test

Focus God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.

Open Describe what “the perfect day” would be like in your home.

Read Can we truly forgive someone who has done us great wrong, even if they never acknowledge it or repent? This is The Pardon Test. In Genesis 50:15–21, Joseph passed this test when he chose to pardon his brothers for selling him into slavery even though they never repented for it.

The three keys to passing the Pardon Test are to *release*, to *receive* and to *believe*. To pardon means to fully release someone. Romans 12:19 tells us that it's never right for us to try to avenge ourselves. Only God can bring justice to an unjust situation because He's the only one qualified to do it. When we don't release someone, we spend our lives trying to prove something (that we were wronged) rather than to please Someone. We're to forgive others without condition.

Our ability to *extend* forgiveness is directly dependent on our ability to *receive* forgiveness. If we feel that we're paying for our wrong or that we have to earn forgiveness from God, we'll make others pay and earn our forgiveness. The Bible says that through Jesus we have been forgiven completely. We have been made righteous. Therefore, because we have believed and received God's forgiveness fully and freely, we can forgive others.

Talk

1. In your own words, describe what it means to pardon, or forgive, someone.
2. As we stated earlier, when we will not forgive, “we will live to *prove something* rather than to please Someone.” Describe a time (in general) when you have observed someone change the course of their life by refusing to release another person. How did this statement prove to be true?
3. We don’t forgive someone for being right. That’s why it can be so difficult to forgive. What, in particular, do you find especially difficult to forgive (i.e., betrayal)?
4. What is wrong with requiring an apology or confession before being willing to forgive someone (Romans 12:19, Leviticus 19:18)?
5. How are receiving forgiveness from God and extending pardon to others related?
6. The Bible says that because of His holiness, God can’t even look upon wickedness. It also says that His eyes are always on the righteous. We were all born sinful. Why can God keep His eyes on us now? (See Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 53:6 and 2 Corinthians 5:21)
7. When we refuse to forgive, we fail the Pardon Test. What are we essentially communicating to God when we refuse to forgive others?

Live

In groups of two or three, take a few minutes to tell God how much you have needed Him to pardon you, and thank Him that He has forgiven you fully and freely.

Now, in response to the forgiveness God has given you, tell Him that you choose to forgive _____. (Name the relationship or circumstance that He brings to mind. Do not specifically name the person or circumstance, but keep it general. You can pray about it specifically in private.) Ask Him to help you release it fully and freely, leaving justice to Him in this relationship or situation.

Pray

In addition to prayerfully thanking God for His pardon and choosing to extend that towards others, pray for any specific needs represented in the group.

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Purpose Test

Robert Morris

Genesis 45:3–8

1. Believe that you have a purpose.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

2. Understand that God is in control.

Genesis 45:5; Genesis 45:7–8; Romans 8:28; Isaiah 55:10–11 (NIV)

3. Discover your gift and your direction.

Romans 12:4–8

Motivational Gifts

- 1) **Motivator** – Desires to motivate people to serve God
- 2) **Servant** - Desires to meet needs of people on a practical basis
- 3) **Teacher** – Desires to study and present truths to people
- 4) **Encourager** – Desires to admonish and encourage people
- 5) **Giver** – Desires to meet needs of people on a financial basis
- 6) **Administrator** – Desires to lead people through organization
- 7) **Sympathizer** – Desires to identify and empathize with people

4. Determine your direction and be faithful.

Proverbs 18:16

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me through this message?

All scripture is from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.



Lesson Notes

Date: [7-1-12]

Subject: [From Dream to Destiny]

Session type: [The Purpose Test]

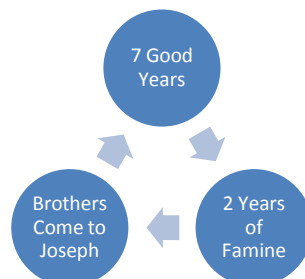
Notes

I. Introduction – *Genesis 45:3-8*

- So we've been making our way from dream to destiny. We've looked at the life of Joseph, how God gave him a dream and a destiny. We talked about some character tests he went through to get from his dream to his destiny. Today is the last lesson, the last test. It is the PURPOSE TEST!
- How can we know God's purpose for our lives? How do we know His purpose and fulfill His purpose?

God's Purpose for You

- How can you know God's purpose for your life?
- We are going to back up a little bit chronologically from last week. Last week we talked about Joseph's brothers coming to Egypt when their father, Jacob, passed away. In Genesis 45, this is the **first time Joseph has seen his brothers** since they sold him into slavery. He is now 39 years old. They had 7 good years, from the time Joseph was 30 till 37, and now they have had 2 years of famine. His brothers have come to Egypt to try and buy grain.



- **Genesis 45:3-8.** Remember the words "**God sent me**".
- Joseph has finally discovered his purpose in life. So how can we know and discover God's purpose for our lives?

II. Believe that You Have a Purpose – *Ecclesiastes 3:1*

- In order to know God’s purpose for your life, you first **have to believe** that He in fact has a purpose for you.
- God is a purposeful God. Everything that He has created was created for a specific purpose.
 - **Ecclesiastes 3:1**. Everything has a purpose. There is a purpose for trees, for animals, for people, for, well I don’t know what the purpose for **flies or mosquitoes** are...

God has a
purpose for
everything

- The best way to discover God’s purpose for your life is to look at **how God designed you**, because God made each of us unique.
 - I went to the store yesterday and bought something and I’m trying to figure out what its purpose is. Maybe you can help me. I’m thinking if we could just look at it then we can determine what it is made for. **So let’s look at it to see if we can figure out what it’s designed for...**
 - I’m thinking if we stick it on the ground like so we can stand back and toss rings around it. Or if you put it in the ground like this it could be a hummingbird bird bath. Possibly. I don’t know why or what it is but something makes me want to do this with it so maybe it’s a giant cookie cutter. Would ya’ll like for me to make some cookies? What is the name of this? A plunger. The point is, you can look at it and see that the designer had a specific purpose in mind when He designed the plunger.

The Plunger

- Toss rings around it.
 - Hummingbird bird bath.
 - Cookie Cutter.
- Listen to me guys. The Designer had a specific purpose in mind when He designed you. We need to figure out what we look like **spiritually!**

III. Understand that God is in Control – *Genesis 45:5, 7-8, Romans 8:28, Isaiah 55: 10-11*

- The 2nd thing we must do is to **understand that God is in control**. In order for you to get to your destiny, to achieve your purpose, you have to go through some hardships and struggles. You are going to face some setbacks, people may not agree with you or even like you, and they may even start rumors. But you must understand that God has a purpose for your life and that He is always in control.

God is in Control

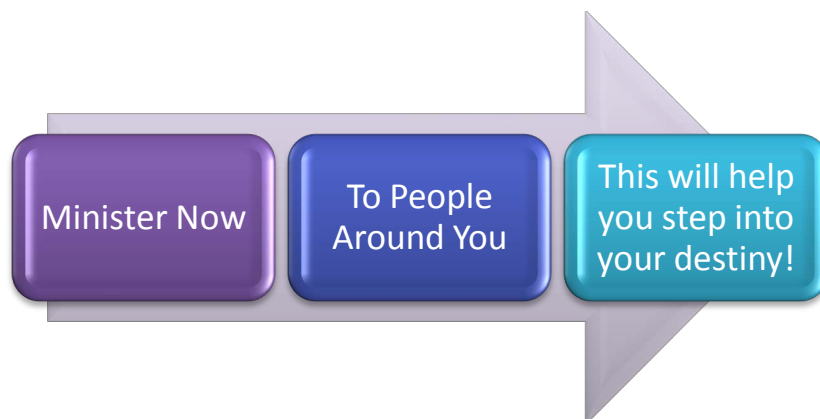
- Hardships
 - Struggles
 - Setbacks
 - Disagree, Not Like You, Start Rumors
-
- **Genesis 45:5, 7-8.** Joseph constantly says that **God sent him**. He was sold into slavery by his brothers and was sent to prison for something he didn't do, yet Joseph **still believed** that God sent him and that He was in control. God had a plan for Joseph's life.
 - No one can **derail** you from getting to your destiny but you. Stop believing that you will not be able to fulfill your purpose because of what someone did or said, or whatever reason it may be. Joseph didn't let anybody derail him.
 - **Romans 8:28.** God has a purpose for your life and even though things may go wrong, He orchestrates everything for our good.
 - **Isaiah 55:10-11.** God is saying that when He speaks, His word will never return to Him without accomplishing what it was sent to do. God has spoken a word over you. You have to let the word develop your character so that you can fulfill your destiny. And even if you get derailed and fail a test, you can take it again. God wants to get you to your destiny.

IV. Discover Your Gift and Your Direction – Romans 12:4-8

- The third thing we must do in order to understand God’s purpose for our lives is to **discover our gifts and our direction**. God has given us all gifts and we need to find out what those gifts are if we are to fulfill the destiny God has for us.
- Flip over to **Romans 12:4-8**. These verses go over spiritual gifts and are ways that you look at life. Paul lists 7 gifts and they are:
 - **Motivator** – the person with the gift of prophecy is a motivator. They desire to motivate people to serve God. That’s the motivation in their life.
 - **Servant** – this is the person with the gift of ministry. A servant desires to meet the needs of people on a practical basis. This is the person at the restaurant who at the end of the meal starts gathering all the plates together to clean up.
 - **Teacher** – A teacher desires to study and present truths. They have bible software on their computer, they like to read books, and they ask deep theological questions. These are the people who always have 3 points to every message and they always begin with the same letter.
 - **Encourager** – this is the person who desires to admonish and encourage people. They are always encouraging people. You could tell them you lost your job and they will tell you that God will give you a better one. You could tell them that your house burnt down and they would say well it was old.
 - **Giver** – These are people who desire to meet the needs of people on a financial basis. They love to give people money. They don’t want to help people who don’t obey the Bible though. They do want to give wisdom.
 - **Administrator** – This is a person who leads people through organization. This is a very organized leader, a very organized person. *This is Tabitha. She has to have things organized or it drives her crazy. All the hangers in our closet are either black or white, and none are both.*
 - **Sympathizer** – this person desires to identify and empathize with people, this is someone who has mercy.
- You can see these gifts come out of people when you work on a team. And remember that all these gifts have to deal with people. **They deal with helping and serving people**. God is all about people.
- Joseph’s gift was leadership. His gift worked everywhere he was in life. He didn’t wait to get into a place of authority to lead. He administered in Potiphar’s house. Then he went to prison and became the chief administrator there. But before all of this, he was in a pit, remember? **We don’t know this for sure, but I bet that pit was the most organized pit you’d ever fall into.**



- Many people say that when they get a position, then they'll minister their gift. But the way you get a position is by **using your gift now!**
 - Listen to me describe a person and then I'll uncover who this person really is:
 - At 22 he failed at business.
 - At 23 he was defeated for the legislature.
 - At 24 he failed at business again.
 - At 26 his wife died.
 - At 27 he had a nervous breakdown.
 - At 29 he was defeated for speaker of the house.
 - At 31 he was defeated for elector.
 - At 34 he was defeated for congress.
 - At 39 he was defeated for congress again.
 - At 46 he was defeated for senate.
 - At 47 he was defeated for vice president.
 - At 49 he was defeated for senate again.
 - At 51 he was elected president of the US.
 - This guy was **Abraham Lincoln**. He led us through the only civil war this country had had. God put him in the right place at the right time. He didn't wait to be elected to lead, he knew his gift was leadership and kept moving towards the purpose God had for him no matter how many setbacks he experienced.
- You have had setbacks in your life, just like everyone else. Please just keep being faithful and minister your gift. What if Joseph was too consumed with his own problems that he didn't have time to minister to the butler and baker? He'd probably still be in jail. No matter what you are going through, be conscious of the people around you and minister now. **Your ministry now will help you step into your destiny.**



V. Determine Your Direction and be Faithful

- I'm talking about God's purpose and destiny for your life. I'm talking about a gift and that is a **direction** that God wants you to move in.
- Here's what some of you are wondering, "I want to know the specifics of my purpose, my job, my position, can I know the specifics of my purpose"? YES!
- Your next question may then be, "Well how"? After you do them. You just **begin moving in the direction**, one step at a time, be faithful in what God has called you to do, and soon like Abraham Lincoln, you'll be president of the US because you simply stepped out and began moving in the direction God has for you.

Begin Moving in
the Direction
God has for you!

- Joseph moved in the direction God had for him and he stepped into his purpose of saving many, many people.
- **John Wesley** was a Christian theologian in the 18th century. He is most credited for founding the Methodist movement. Listen to these diary entries from John Wesley (these entries show that if you are faithful in your gift, God will move you into your destiny):
 - Sunday morning, May 5: preached in St. Annes. Asked not to come back anymore.
 - Sunday night, May 5: preached in St. Johns. Deacons told me to get out and stay out.
 - Sunday morning, May 12: Preached in St. Judes. Can't go back there either.
 - Sunday morning, May 19: preached in St. Somebody Elses. Deacons called special meeting and said that I couldn't return.
 - Sunday night, May 19: preached in street, kicked off street.
 - Sunday morning, May 26: preacher in meadow. Ran out of meadow because a bull was let loose during service.
 - Sunday morning, June 2: preached on the edge of town, kicked off of highway.
 - **Sunday night, June 2: preached in a pasture, 10,000 people came to hear me.**
- God has a specific purpose for your life. Find out what your gift is. Don't let setbacks hinder you. Fulfill your destiny!

FROM **DREAM** TO **DESTINY**
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

The Purpose Test

- Focus** God has a dream and a destiny for every person, but we must pass some character tests before we can fulfill our destiny. Great character supports great destiny.
- Open** What is the most motivating or encouraging life story you've ever heard? Why?
- Read** Joseph discovered his purpose when his brothers came to him in Egypt for help during the famine. He realized that God sent him to Egypt in order to save his family (Genesis 45:3–8). His dream became his destiny.
- To fulfill *our* purpose, we must first believe that we *have* a purpose. According to Ecclesiastes 3:1, God has made a time and a purpose for everything, including each of us.
- We also must understand that God *is* in control. There are circumstances that He *brings about*, some that He *allows*, and others that He *turns* for our good (Romans 8:28). We can always have hope when we know that nothing can supersede God's purpose for us.
- Romans 12:4–8 lists several “motivational” gifts—natural abilities that God has given each of us to help other people. There's a reason God designed us the way He did, and as we discover our gifts, we can also discover our purpose.
- The key to discovering our purpose is to be as faithful as Joseph was. Then we'll come to know the specifics of our purpose *after* we do them. As we, like Joseph, faithfully serve others using the gifts God has given us, we'll eventually find ourselves living our destiny.

Talk

1. The Bible says God made everything with a purpose. Would you say that it has been difficult or easy for you to truly believe that God has a specific purpose for you? Why?
2. Read Romans 8:28.
 - a. What does this verse promise us related to our destiny?
 - b. How does this affect your perspective concerning your failures, mistakes, difficulties or unfair circumstances in your life?
3. How can you know that something is a *gift* in your life? What's the difference between just being *able* to do something, and being *gifted* in that area?
4. God has given at least one gift to each of us that we're to use to serve and help other people (1 Peter 4:10). Read Romans 12:4–8.
 - a. What “motivational” gifts are listed here?
 - b. Which of the “motivational” gifts in this list do you relate to most? Why?
 - c. Why must our gifts be focused on serving others?
5. Why doesn't God share the specifics of our purpose with us very often?
6. What does it mean to be faithful? Why is faithfulness the key to discovering our purpose?

Live

1. What have you done, great or small, to help or serve another person that you found very fulfilling? What in particular made you feel that way?
2. Look around your group. Specifically, what have you noticed in each others' lives that you believe is a gift from God? Take a few minutes to tell each other what you have seen.

Pray

Pray for each other and ask God to help each of you rely on Him through each of the tests communicated in this series. Pray that each of you will take the next step of discovering and using your gifts to help others. Ask God to help you be faithful in both big and small things. Ask God to bless each of you and to keep you on your journeys towards your destinies.