

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Investing for Life

SERMON REFERENCE: Genesis 37

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) We need to learn how to make our lives count for the Lord.
- b) Life is not lived in length; it is lived in depth.
 - i) One of the greatest tragedies in life would be to discover that we have lived a shallow life.
 - (1) A life perhaps of many years but not of depth.
 - (2) A life in which we never laid hold of that for which God had for us.
 - (3) A life in which we say that youth was a struggle, maturity a blunder, and old age a regret.
 - ii) Some people are born into this world with so little, and yet, they achieve so much.
 - (1) Others are born with so much and accomplish so little.
- c) In today's message, we will study the life of Joseph, one of the most noble young men in the Bible.
 - i) Through this study, we will learn some things that will help us invest in life and learn how to live life in depth, not merely in length.

2) LEARN TO DREAM (GENESIS 37:1-11)

- a) Dare to be a dreamer.
- b) Genesis 37:1-11
 - i) This was not a mere daydream or some ambition.
 - ii) God had given to Joseph a dream.
 - (1) It was a God-given dream that one day the world rulers would bow at his feet, and the world's resources would be in his hand.
 - iii) When Joseph shared this dream, he was not boasting or bragging because this dream was for God and for the benefit of other people.
- c) If you want to invest your life, then you need to get a God-given dream.
 - i) This is not something that you scheme up or dream up.
 - ii) Jeremiah 29:8
 - iii) This is not about idle daydreams but about finding God's will and plan for your life.
- d) Jeremiah 29:11
 - i) As God loved His ancient people, He also loves us.
 - ii) There is a divine destiny for every one of us.
- e) Joel 2:28
- f) God doesn't promise to fulfill our fantasies, but He does want to give us a divine aspiration, divine inspiration, and a divine inclination to be what we ought to be.
- g) Sometimes people have inclinations that are not of God.
 - i) They have unrealistic expectations that are not of God.
 - (1) Don't deceive yourself and think that God has a certain plan for you that He doesn't have.
 - (2) For instance, some may daydream about being the Chairman of the Board of General Motors.

- h) Test your dreams.
 - i) Luke 2:19
 - (1) When God spoke to Mary and told her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, she believed God.
 - (2) She also turned this over and over in her mind.
 - (a) She began to ponder how this would come to pass.
 - (b) This was not unbelief, but wise scrutiny.
 - ii) Proverbs 4:18
 - iii) If you think God is speaking to you about something, then do what Mary did and ponder it in your heart.
 - (1) Ask the Lord to keep on speaking to you.
 - (2) Be ready to do His will, whatever it is.
- i) Romans 12:1-2
 - i) Presentation plus transformation equals realization.
 - (1) Presentation
 - (a) "Present your bodies a living sacrifice."
 - (b) A sacrifice has no plans of its own.
 - (c) You can be a living sacrifice.
 - (d) Put everything on the altar.
 - (e) Give yourself to the Lord Jesus.
 - (i) If you have not done this, then you have no right to expect to know the will of God.
 - (2) Transformation
 - (a) "Be not conformed to this world, but by ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."
 - (b) Transformation comes about by God renewing your mind.
 - (i) You're to think with this new mind.
 - (ii) You have the mind of Christ and are transformed.
 - (c) You no longer have the old ambitions, the old desires, or the old standards of right and wrong.
 - (3) Realization
 - (a) "Then you will know what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God."
 - (b) The will of God speaks to you through the renewed mind as He brings opportunity to you.
 - (i) You begin to assess things in the light of God's wisdom as He speaks to you.
 - (ii) It is not mystical, though it is miraculous.
- j) Get a dream and let God speak to you.
- k) God did not tell Joseph that he would one day be Prime Minister of Egypt.
 - i) He did not spell it out with specificity.
 - ii) But Joseph had a dream, and he knew that he was set apart.
 - (1) He knew that God had His hand on his life.

- 3) REMEMBER YOUR DISTINCTIVENESS (GENESIS 37:3-4)
 - a) The “you” you see is the “you” you will be.
 - b) God made you very special.
 - c) Genesis 37:3-4
 - i) Joseph stood out from his brothers.
 - (1) He dared to be different.
 - d) There was a great contrast in the life of Joseph and the life of his brothers.
 - i) The beautiful coat that he wore symbolized his distinctiveness.
 - (1) That coat of many colors was the kind of coat that royalty would wear.
 - (2) It was the sign of noble birth.
 - (a) If there is anyone who ought to stand out as distinctive because of a noble birth, then it is those who have been twice-born and are deeply loved children of the Father in Heaven.
 - ii) When we display our nobility, not arrogantly but boldly, the world will resent that nobility and try to squeeze us back into its mold.
 - (1) This is what Joseph’s brothers tried to do to him.
 - (a) They tried to make him conform, but Joseph had been transformed and would not conform.
 - iii) Joseph’s brothers resented him for his distinctiveness.
 - e) When we move forward in the things of God, there will be people who will resent it.
 - i) There will be those who will tell us that we’ll never make it, or that we could make more money doing something else.
 - ii) Joseph was surrounded by negativity.
 - (1) We live in a negative society.
 - (2) We have to be careful not to become negative ourselves.
 - f) It is not pride to see yourself as special.
 - i) Romans 12:2-3
 - (1) In this passage, we find the word “think” three times.
 - ii) We are to think with our renewed mind.
 - iii) We are to assess ourselves.
 - (1) This is not sinful exaggeration or false humiliation.
 - (2) This is sober estimation to see who you are.
 - iv) God made you special.
- 4) LEARN TO TURN YOUR PROBLEMS INTO POSSIBILITIES (GENESIS 39-40)
 - a) All people have problems.
 - b) Joseph had problems.
 - i) Genesis 37:8
 - (1) Joseph was scorned by and hated by his brothers.
 - ii) Genesis 37:18
 - (1) Joseph’s brothers conspired against him.
 - iii) Genesis 37:24
 - (1) Joseph’s brothers tied him up and threw him into a pit.

- iv) Genesis 37:28
 - (1) Joseph was sold as a slave and carried off to a foreign country.
 - v) Genesis 39:7-20
 - (1) Joseph was falsely accused of rape and put into prison.
 - vi) Genesis 40
 - (1) Joseph was forgotten in prison.
 - (2) The chief butler, who was supposed to remember Joseph and help him to get out of prison, forgot him.
 - c) Problems do not mean that God doesn't love you.
 - d) Problems do not mean that you can't attain in life and maximize your life.
 - i) Genesis 50:20
 - (1) This passage is an Old Testament statement of Romans 8:28.
 - e) God doesn't want you to have an easy life but an exciting life.
 - i) God was training Joseph through all of his troubles.
 - ii) If you're experiencing difficulty, remember that God is still working in your life.
- 5) LEARN TO PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF GOD (GENESIS 39)
- a) There is one sentence that is repeated over and over again that epitomizes why Joseph was such a great man:
 - i) "And the Lord was with Joseph."
 - (1) Genesis 39:2
 - (2) Genesis 39:3
 - (3) Genesis 39:23
 - (4) Acts 7:9
 - (a) This is what Stephen remembered from the life of Joseph.
 - b) Joseph was put in a pit, sold to an Ishmaelite caravan, put on the slave block, and sold to Potiphar.
 - i) Joseph served Potiphar without rebelliousness or a sullen look.
 - ii) Colossians 3:24
 - (1) This verse describes the life of Joseph.
 - (2) This passage is talking about slaves, and the Apostle Paul tells them to serve the Lord.
 - c) Genesis 39:3
 - i) Potiphar took notice of Joseph's testimony.
 - (1) He saw that the Lord was with Joseph and that everything he touched prospered.
 - (2) He saw how hard Joseph worked and how wise he was.
 - (3) He saw that Joseph served Jehovah.
 - d) Joseph learned to serve Potiphar and was faithful in small things before he was faithful in big things.
 - i) God makes servants before He makes rulers.
 - e) God was with Joseph not only in this mundane servitude, but God was with him when he faced the great moral issues of life and self-control.

- i) Genesis 39:6-21
 - (1) Potiphar's wife began to lust after Joseph.
 - (a) In order to keep himself pure, Joseph distanced himself from her.
 - (2) Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, and Joseph fled, leaving his coat behind.
 - (3) Potiphar's wife lied, accusing Joseph of attempting to assault her; and Joseph was thrown into prison.
- ii) Genesis 39:9
 - (1) What kept Joseph from sinning was God.
 - (a) God was with him.
 - (2) He knew that this sin was against God.
- iii) The Bible says that there is a way to escape temptation.
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - (2) Sometimes that way of escape is two legs and a hard run, and that's just what Joseph did.
- f) God was with Joseph when he was suffering.
 - i) Genesis 39:21-23
- g) If God gives you a hard job to do, do it as unto the Lord.
- h) If you're in a situation where you're tempted to compromise, to steal, to commit adultery, to lie, etc., then practice the presence of the Lord and determine not to do this thing against God.
- i) If God gives you an opportunity for leadership, do it as God enables you to do it.
 - i) Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all of your might and practice the presence of the Lord.
 - ii) Ecclesiastes 9:10

6) CONCLUSION

- a) The wisest thing anyone can do (whether they are seventeen, fifty, seventy-five or ninety-five years old) is to make a full surrender to the Lord and ask Him to help you make up for any wasted years and to give you a dream.
 - i) Ask the Lord to help you to dare to be different.
 - ii) Ask the Lord to help you to practice His presence wherever you are.
 - (1) Whether the Lord makes you the Prime Minister of Egypt or keeps you in prison, it makes no difference.
 - (a) Being in His will is really all that matters.
 - iii) The highest place is the center of God's will, wherever it is.
- b) Life is not lived in length but in depth.
- c) Ask the Lord to help you dream big dreams because we serve a big God.
 - i) Don't aspire to carnal ambition, but lay hold of what the Lord has for you.
- d) You'll not know the will of God for your life until you surrender to the Lord.
 - i) Surrender your life to Him today.
 - (1) Give Jesus your heart and soul.
 - (2) Trust Him to save you.

- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16