

Life has detours, I have them & you have them.

There is not a person here today or listening that has not come from a detour, in a detour or will have a detour; because life is full of detours.

- Things that don't go straight –
- Things that God causes or allows to happen that confuse us and don't seem to fit the plan that we think He should be having for us!
- But there is a **Pattern to the detours**- a rhyme and reason in the mind of God, yet not clear to us as to why He takes us around and about the long way to get us to where He wants us to be – **“The Place.”** Remember: **Place** is used 21,835 times in the Bible referring to a location – destination – destiny God has for us.

Joseph is the greatest example of how detours are meant to bring us to our destiny.

Today, we discover in Joseph's life there were **Patterns** to the detours bringing him to his destiny fulfillment with God.

There are three things to know about the Patterns that detours take:

1. **Detours always involve TESTS:**

2Chron. 32:31: God withdrew from Hezekiah – “In order to TEST him that He might know all that was in his heart.”

The purpose of a TEST is to reveal what is in your heart!

God already knows what is in your heart; but the TEST is designed to reveal it!

Jer. 17:9- “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

- God wants to see what is really deep down inside and it comes out with a TEST!

- A TEST is adverse circumstances.

- He is in a pit, no water, sold into slavery by his own brothers, now

Gen. 39:1- “Taken to Egypt and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.”

Joseph is in a TEST – now he is a slave in a situation he never planned to be in.

He has been bought and sold like property.

Last week we started in Gen. 50 which is the end of the story where Joseph said-
“God brought me to this place.”

When you are going through a TEST, not a test that you have created due to your rebellion or disobedience; but a TEST God puts you in:

- 1. Don't mistake the hand of man for the hand of God.**
- 2. Or don't mistake the hand of God for the hand of man.**

If you only see what people are doing and you will miss what God is doing – you will miss the Divine purpose of the Detour.

People were used by God to move Joseph from where he was to the next step of where God wanted him to be.

So don't think: because it's people – it's not God – It's only not God if it's sin.
But if it's not sin – then look for the hand of God even though it's coming through the hand of man.

God uses people, even people in your family, to move you to your destiny by creating a detour.

Joseph had many reasons to believe God had abandoned him:

You have those feelings too when you are in a deep pit:

1. Why has God allowed me to be in this pit?
2. Why won't He hear and answer me now?
3. Why won't He get me out of here, or why did He get me out of here and now this is happening?
4. Now I'm out of the pit, but nothing more than cheap property for sale to the highest bidder.

God is silent when we are in the Pit.

Remember: “The purpose of the TEST is to develop you.”

III: Some of us ironed our shirts or blouses to get the wrinkles out to wear today.
Joseph has some wrinkles – he was a tattler on his brothers, he flaunted the coat in front of his brothers, he made them aware he was the favorite son who would get the first born birthright.

God had to put Joseph in a situation to iron out some wrinkles.

Why do you iron out the wrinkles? – Because you plan to put it on and you want to look good when you wear it.

So what God does is He puts us in TESTS to iron out the wrinkles by applying the steam and heat allowing the heat to iron out the wrinkles.

It's not that He is trying to burn us – but He is planning to wear us and wants to look good when He puts us on.

So He allows the fire of TESTING to get the wrinkles out. Its' not that He is being mean or mad – He just wants to iron out the wrinkles so He looks good when He identifies with you.

The first aspect of the detour that God takes us all on – and NO ONE ESCAPE THIS – who wants to be in God's will and destiny is a **TEST!**

An adverse circumstance that God creates or allows!

Joseph is now living a life he didn't plan on; his daddy didn't raise him to live the life of a slave.

2. The next part of the Pattern of Detours is TRAINING:

- We are expected to learn through the TESTING times.
- **TESTING** is designed to provide **TRAINING!**

v. 2-4 “The Lord was with Joseph, he became a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master **saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand.** So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all he had he put under his authority.”

Training # 1 – Spiritual Training-

“The Lord was with Joseph”

- He was with Joseph as a slave.
- He was with Joseph when he was bought and sold.

Joseph did not let his circumstance compromise his spiritual relationship!

- It's easy to get mad at God in a trial!
- When actually, the trial is the occasion to draw closer to God.

The Lord was with Joseph when everything appeared to be going in the opposite direction of his destiny dreams.

Joseph had cultivated a spiritual relationship as his priority – God was with him, yet his life was going to regression! He was a slave now!

The Key for Joseph and us during the trial is:

He became a successful man “Because the Lord was with him.”

- Not because of who Joseph knew!
- Not because of his contacts.
- Not because of his name or notoriety.
- Not because of his bank account.

If the Lord is not with you – it doesn’t matter who you know – what contacts you have or power you have – the reason he was a successful man is because [as even a slave]

THE LORD WAS WITH HIM.

v. 2 – The Lord was with Joseph.

v. 3 – His master saw that the Lord was with him.

v. 5 – The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Jacob’s sake...

v. 21- The Lord was with Joseph and gave him favor.

v. 23- The Lord was with him, so the keeper of the prison trusted him.

There was a relationship between the Lord and Joseph!

This wasn’t religion, this was relationship!

There must be a spiritual relationship that drives you – particularly when life has gone the opposite way for you!

- The Lord blessed him as a slave, so that Joseph climbed the ranks as a personal assistant that everything in Potiphar’s house under Joseph care prospered.

The purpose of trials is to develop us and to train us:

- Joseph is now 2nd in command in Potiphar’s house.
- What Joseph didn’t know is that down the line, he would become 2nd in command of all of Egypt.
- He doesn’t know the details of his destiny yet; just like we don’t know the details yet.
- God gives him a job as a slave, makes him 2nd in command in Potiphar’s house so Joseph can get some experience in leadership and management and handling staff and dealing with crisis.
- God lets Joseph as a slave learn a skill set that equips him for his destiny fulfillment.

A lot of folks what to be over all of **this** – when they don’t know how to be over all of **this**!

And if you can’t handle **this** – God’s not ready to give you **that**!

So if you want **that** – you better take care of **this**!

So that when you wind up with **that** – you have enough experience with **this** to handle **that** the right way!

Joseph is working for a Non – Christian. Potiphar is a pagan-heathen worshiper of Egyptian gods.

- He's working in a non Christian company.
- V.5 – “The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field.”
- **The Christian was the best employee he had.**
- **That's the way you should be living with God!**

v. 3 “His master saw that the Lord was with him.”

Potiphar was a pagan man!

How is a pagan man going to see the Lord was with Joseph?

There's only two ways: **Word and Deed**

- Joseph was a witness with his mouth but he backed it up with his feet.
- **He didn't talk about Jesus and turn in sloppy work!**
- Nor did he do good work and skip the fact that his faith was the basis of how he worked!
- It was Word and Deed. He didn't talk about Jesus all day and get nothing done; but he didn't get stuff done and leave Jesus out of his conversation.
- He wasn't just working for a paycheck; he was working for a PERSON!
- And the Lord was with him – Is the Lord with you in your career?

His job was not his destiny!

- Many of us have made our jobs our destiny.
- He is actually getting ready to leave this job.
- In a few minutes, he's going to get fired – the pink slip!
- If he had put all of his hopes in this position of being 2nd in command to Potiphar, he was soon to be disappointed.
- So your job is NOT YOUR DESTINY – your job just may be preparation for your destiny because you are learning skills from your job you are going to use for the Kingdom.

3. **Temptation-** 3rd part of the Pattern of Detours.

Temptation “Is solicitation to do evil?”

- Solicitation to disobey God.

Temptation is not sin: Difference between TESTING and TEMPTING:

- **God does not tempt us** – James 1:13- “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone.”

- V. 14- “Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.”

Matt 4 Bible says “The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.”

Yet the Bible says “that Jesus was without sin.”

Being tempted is not equal to sinning!

Sinning is yielding to the temptation; not having the temptation.

So the Lord blesses Joseph, he is 2nd in command in Potiphar’s house and then he has a run in with Mrs. Potiphar. Gen. 39:6 – “Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.”
v. 7 – Potiphar’s wife looked with desire – lust at Joseph and said “Lie with me!”

- This is not a subtle sister – she is out to get him.
- v. 8 -9 “He refused and said: “Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house and he has committed all that he has to my hand. There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife.
How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

- **Solicited by Mrs. Potiphar for sexual relations.**
- **Day after day she propositions him.**
- **There is no place for him to go because he works there.**

Joseph says NO - **There are two reasons we say NO to Temptation:**

1. The Fear of Consequences – that’s the negative reason.
 - We don’t want to have the reprisal of what this would bring on ourselves, family, others.
 - Joseph knew that everything God had brought to pass so far would be jeopardized if he gave into temptation.
2. **V.9** – Joseph’s dominant reason for not giving in: “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”
 - We all need to learn this principle: “The reason we sin more is because we love God less. People who love God hate sin and hurt when sin happens to the point they are not comfortable and have to repent.
 - People who don’t love God get over their sin and just go on as if nothing happened and everything is alright.
 - Joseph did not sin because **HE VALUED HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD!**
 - He did not want to displease God; he did not want to unravel the circumstances of the God who had brought him to this place of blessing even though he was a slave.
 - One of the reasons God allows detours to become extended in our lives is development has not occurred enough for us to choose Him over the most enticing things in our lives!

- It is when we choose Him over the most enticing things in our lives it shows that we have grown in our love for Him and want Him more than we want this world.
- **Even the thing that calls our name the most:**
 - Abraham give ME your son Isaac. The one you love the most.
 - That's not easy; it's hard to do this every day.

So, if you are in this situation of being tempted – Cultivate your relation with God so that you love Him more, so that you hate that more!
Even when it is something that is appealing!

V.11-12 Joseph is accused of rape:

- She grabs his garment, he flees, when she sees his garment is in her had, she calls for the men of the house and accuses Joseph of rape.
- Joseph's situation: There is no way he can win in this!
 - He is accused of rape.
 - No one saw it: she has the evidence of his clothing, and she's the boss's wife.

Anybody here today – you've had somebody lie on you and they win?

Nothing you can say can get you out of this one – she's got the evidence even though she's the liar.

- Husband comes home v. 17 – reports what has happened accusing Joseph of rape.
- V. 19 - When his master heard these words, his anger was aroused.
- V. 20 – Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in prison.”
- **He got the pink slip and now he's fired.** And he was the best thing going in Egypt.

But remember – Joseph is on a detour to his destiny!

- Detours involve negative experiences that God either creates or let's somebody create.
- So, don't mistake the hand of God for the hand of man, because God was allowing the lie of a woman to move Joseph to the next layer of his destiny.

So what about you today: You're on this crooked path to your destiny and you can't figure it out and don't understand what God is up to. **What do you do?**

- You can prolong the detour by not cooperating with God's ways.
- But you don't have to prolong it; if you will draw near to God in the midst of it and surrender yourself to His process – Say **NO** to that which breaks God's heart and **YES** to that which brings God joy over your life.
- **Confess your failures of yesterday and commit yourself to His ways today!**