



CONNECTION QUESTION

What do you think Joseph did to maintain his hope during his time in prison? Which aspects of prison do you think were hardest for him?

SERMON REVIEW

This week, we learned that God occasionally allows us in prolonged periods of suffering we do not understand. In those times, it is easy to turn in on ourselves and focus exclusively on our needs instead of carrying about others. It is also easy to give up your confidence in God's plan and love.

It is also easy to put your hope in people for rescue. When we do, we often find ourselves disappointed. While people may not show steadfast love toward us (Hesed), God always will.

Share a time when God showed his faithfulness to you when people failed you. Share a time of prolonged suffering you didn't understand but now you see how God used it to mature and prepare you.

BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE

The story of Joseph in prison shows that God can take a jail cell and use it to shape a life. Joseph persevered in a tough situation and God built his character in the midst of it. Today we have several advantages and resources that Joseph didn't. Read the following passages and list the resources we have that can help us persevere in any circumstance.

- *John 14:25-26*
- *Acts 1:8*
- *2 Timothy 3:16-17*
- *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*



Joseph had every reason to be bitter and focused on his own miserable situation. Instead, this week's story showed him caring for his fellow prisoners. Read John 13:1-17 to see how Jesus showed that same willingness to help others despite the fact that in the next 24 hours Judas would betray him, the disciples would desert him, Peter would deny him, and he would be unjustly accused, tortured and killed. After reading the passage, write down the choices he made, the attitudes or actions he portrayed, and any challenges or opposition he encountered. Then answer the following questions:

- What clues do you find in the passage that give an understanding of why Jesus was willing to serve in this way?
- If you had been sitting around the table with the disciples, what do you think your response would have been to what Jesus did?
- Does this passage give you any insight into what Jesus thinks about you even in light of your sin and disobedience?

Joseph saw God use him to impact others despite his circumstances. Another person who saw the same thing happen in difficult circumstances is the apostle Paul. As you read Philippians 1:12-26, write down Paul's understanding of God's purpose for his life and how that influenced the way he lived and how he thought about life's difficult circumstances.

- How can Paul's perspective influence how you view your current life situations?

TAKE IT HOME

What is the most important thing to remember? What is the most important action to take?