

Confidence in God
Despite Circumstances
Genesis 41:40-42

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Some of us here are optimists, others here are pessimists. Some never see as issue that will stop them; regardless of what happens it will work itself out. Some never see a mole hill they can't turn into a mountain. None of us have ever been through all that Joseph experienced in his life. In this passage Joseph woke up as a slave in prison and was promoted to the second in command of all of Egypt.

Wherever we fall in the optimist/pessimist chart it affects our outlook. All of us would agree that our society has taken some extremely negative turns and we are off track as a society. We hear the news and can't tell if they are giving us the truth or just making some kind of spin to further their agenda. Societal issues are much worse than is being reported; scandals have hit political leaders, business leaders, financial leaders, and sports heroes. All of us have been affected by some of this to one degree or another.

Can we trust the Lord no matter what the circumstances happen to be? Are God's promises true? Does He give strength and grace to His children? Is God's Word enough? Is His grace sufficient for our needs or not?

1. The pattern

A. Cycles of life

a. Our text shows cycles of life

i. Planting, harvesting, summer, winter, etc.

b. Joseph's life shows some incredible cycles

i. Sold into slavery

ii. Sold into 2nd in commands home

iii. Lied about for doing what was right

iv. Sent to prison for doing what was right

v. Elevated to the #2 person in the land

B. Cynical look at life

- a. Problem
 - i. Think that the good or the bad times will last forever
- b. Person
 - i. That mindset never prepares for the lean years

C. Cautious look at life

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, v. 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

2. The perspective

A. Present

- a. For some things look OK, for other things look bad
 - i. Our attitude should be the same regardless of circumstances
- b. Current situation in America
 - i. Economy
 - 1. Stabilizing somewhat
 - 2. Not growing
 - ii. Housing
 - 1. Up and down
 - 2. Stabilized somewhat

B. Past - depression

- c. Unemployment rate was officially 25%; most believe it was closer to 33%
- d. Foreclosure rate was 50%

3. The principle It's easy to fall into a trap of trusting riches.
Christians will go through tough times.

a. 1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

b. There is a fragile trust which is forbidden

a. Danger comes when we have money/possessions and think we are all right.

b. Determination should be to trust the Lord for our needs

i. Psalm 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

B. There is a Father we can trust to be faithful

a. Psalm 37:25 I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

b. Don't trust riches

c. Don't trust people

d. Don't trust society

e. Don't trust circumstances

C. There is a future trust which is faithful

a. God expects us to be wise in dealing with our possessions

b. God expects us to help others when needed

4. The promise

a. Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

A. The priority

- a. Proverbs 3:9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:
- b. Widow at Zarephat made Elijah a meal before feeding herself and her son

B. The provider

- a. Psalm 121:1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. v. 2 My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

5. The pointers

A. We need to be careful to whom we listen

- a. Jeremiah 29:8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. v. 9 For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.
- b. Do we trust God or do we trust a financial planner?

B. We need to focus on what is truly important

- a. The Word of God and souls of man are eternal
- b. Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep gaining what he cannot lose."

C. We need to be careful

- a. In our spiritual life
- b. In our financial life
- c. In our social life
- d. In our church life