

When Doing Right Ends Wrong

Remember when Quaker Oats had the promotional theme, "It's the Right Thing to Do"? Wilford Brimley appeared as the kindly grandfather type saying, "It's the right thing to do."

We may think that doing right will always bring good things. As a general principle, that is so. But sometimes, doing right doesn't always bring an immediate blessing. Obedience to God does not shield us from pain. We look to Joseph's experience in Genesis 39:13-20, so that even when Joseph did right, he still had some difficult experiences.

1. Doing right will not make you popular or liked. Joseph endured a false accusation because he was obedient to God and faithful to his earthly master. He then was unjustly imprisoned.

2. Recall God's promises. In Genesis 37:5-11, God gave a word in a dream, showing Joseph what his ultimate future would be. We know that God always keeps His word. It may not be according to our time schedule. Philippians 4:13 says that God will do what He says, and that we can do everything necessary through Him.

3. Trust in God's providence. Joseph was never punished for doing wrong, but for doing right. We sometimes assume that if something bad happens, it is because a person has done wrong. It may be because of a person doing right. Close to the end of his life, Joseph told his brothers, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20). We also take to heart Romans 8:28. Don't ever despair of God accomplishing His work. We believe that God works through the events of life to bring us through faithfully and with great joy.

4. Joseph rested in God's presence. When you think of the men God has used in human history, you see men who endured great challenges. Yet these men also had a great sense of peace about them, because they knew they were in the presence of God. There's Noah, who preached for 120 years without much result. There are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who went through the fiery furnace because of their obedience to God, yet were confident of God's blessing. There's Daniel, who went about his daily habit of prayer, knowing he would go to the lions.

5. Cultivate the fruit of the Spirit which is patience. Joseph's suffering proved he was God's man. It showed the strength of God when man was quite weak. There's the truth of Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;" Joseph was in prison because of jealous brothers, a lying woman, and an ungrateful butler. But he never became bitter, never held a grudge, and never took revenge.

Why do *you* do right? Do you do right only when things are right? Martin Luther wrote, "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my little apple tree and pay my debts."

Craig Alan Myers, Executive Board member

Weekly Prayer Request

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15-16
NIV

YOU are called to evangelism! Maybe you aren't a preacher or teacher, but by your life ... every single day ... you are to be a witness to Christ. If an unchurched person asks you for prayer, or asks about your faith, are you ready to give a gentle, respectful answer? Pray for yourself that the Lord might give you witness opportunities and the courage and right ways to respond.

Please pray for these congregations and pastors

Sunnyside Congregation in New Creek, WV and Pastor Randy Shoemaker
Tearcoat Congregation in Augusta, WV and Pastor Thomas Rowan