

Moral and Doctrinal Courage

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Introduction: Our commitment to see and do what is right will affect everything we do.

A. How do we build a character like Joseph's? (**Gen 39:7-12**)

1. This kind of character is constantly being built. What is in your hand right now?
2. There is no doubt that Jacob and Rachel instilled such a faith in their child.
3. This was done even when great mistakes were made in the home. The greediness of Laban created a divided home for Jacob.

B. When we have a proper understanding of God then we will have a proper view of this world. We are but stewards!

1. "A steward is an exalted slave given temporary authority over the master's possessions."
2. How blessed we are if we can see like this! (**Ps 24:1; 1 Tim 6:7**)

I. Joseph lived a lifetime as a steward

A. Jesus was also a steward in all of His life. (**Isa 53:10**)

1. How many of you know others that you would entrust your life savings? My dad found an older man to run his hardware store – Buck Abbott.
2. How did Joseph handle Potiphar's household? (**Gen 39:3-5**)
3. The best employee you can find is a faithful Christian!

B. How does a steward think? God can give us proper thinking!

1. Pride is a common temptation when we are given gifts from God! (**1 Cor 4:7**)
2. We can become great bible students and fall to pride. (**1 Cor 8:1-3**)
3. If we can keep God in view then such arrogance can be defeated.
4. We need to see that we are rich now and have been entrusted with great opportunity and blessings. "What is in your hand?" (**Rom 1:14; 1 Cor 9:16-17**)

C. The concept of stewardship covers all things both doctrinal and moral!

1. Joseph would not take any physical possessions of Potiphar. He also would not take his wife.
2. He also regarded his body as from God set aside for holy use! (**1 Cor 6:18-20**)
3. This kind of faith and courage cannot be limited to just one part of our lives!
4. Every future step in Joseph's life involved degrees of stewardship. There were great tests at every step!

II. Disappointment and suffering can sharpen and build courage

A. Consider the rollercoaster of Joseph's life.

1. He was given dreams by God that produced conflict and separation in the home.
2. He was sold into slavery by his own brothers. Imagine what that would mean?
3. He was exalted by Potiphar and then imprisoned by false charges.
4. He again was exalted (in a prison!) but was forgotten by those who could help.
5. How many would have found an "excuse" to quit?

B. God uses suffering to help us see!

1. Consider *the turning point* in Jacob's life. **(Gen 32:9-12)**
 2. *What will it take* to help us see what really is important? *What will it take* for us to trust God and stand on what is true?
 3. Until we are crushed *we can deceive ourselves* and "talk a good fight" but will sell out the Lord's way when it conflicts with *our real priorities*.
- C. Courage brings *an unstoppable purpose and energy!* **(Rom 5:3-5)**
1. Joseph could have said "I did right and seemed to be punished for it." But he *knew God and how He works!*
 2. There is an optimism (hope) and leadership that comes from one who knows God. *How did Jesus stay on the cross?* **(Ps 22:3-5)**
 3. How do you do *any task that is given by God?* Do we do something half-hearted? **(Col 3:22-23)**
 4. What does the world think about half-hearted quitters? How does the Lord think of them? What *do you I and think of ourselves?* **(Lk 14:28-30; Rev 3:15-16)**

III. Does doctrine have the same significance as morals?

- A. Some have created artificial distinctions *that are easily exposed*.
1. What is doctrine? *It is teaching!*
 2. What are morals? *The application of God's teaching!* This is defined by God's holiness! Doctrinal compromise *leads to moral compromise!*
 3. Is marriage, divorce and remarriage *a doctrinal or moral issue???*
- B. Jesus handled all the words of God *as a steward!* **(Jn 8:28-29)**
1. How did Jesus stand on morals? He opened hearts to God's word *without compromise!* He did the same on "doctrinal" matters! (Ex. Cleansing of temple)
 2. How do we think when we are *given God's words as a steward?* **(Jn 7:17-18)**
 3. He would not take one step outside of His word. Could He have rationalized His way *out of going to the cross?* **(Jn 12:26-28)**

IV. How can we build this courage in ourselves and others?

- A. It can be *built in the home*. Consider the potential conversations between Jacob and Joseph! **(Gen 48:15 NASV)**
1. Fathers build this knowledge of God *in your life and speak to your children*. **(Prov 1:7; Gen 18:19)**
 2. Joseph was tested in the home in speaking a God-given dream! Our children often will see things that we do not! *Courage is born in conflict!*
- B. Joseph learned to *put away bitterness* and look for God's way. **(Eph 4:26-27)**
1. His vengeful brothers had a real problem in understanding this! Look at *how they built their lives!*
 2. Joseph saw God in all things and had *both the peace and courage of God!* **(Gen 50:19-20)**
 3. The *next generation* would now have to learn these things! **(Gen 46:33-34)**

Conclusion: How are we building?