

What Would You Say? Roger Marini

Towards the end of the book of Genesis, we meet a character named Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob. He was the favorite son of his father and hated by his brothers because of that. And, although we can fault Jacob in his parenting skills, we certainly cannot find fault with how his son Joseph turned out.

When approached by Potipher's wife for a little "extra-curricular" activity, not only did he maintain his purity but gave good reason for his rejection of her...and his reason was God. § He could have said "How could I do this to Potipher who has treated me so well?", but what he said was: Gen. 39:9 (NASB) "There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?"

While in prison, his cellmates had dreams that needed interpretation. They turned to Joseph. § He could have said "I've been interpreting dreams since I was a kid", but what he said was: Gen. 40:8 (NASB) Then they said to him, "We have had a dream and there is no one to interpret it." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it to me, please." When he appeared before Pharaoh, who needed to know about his dreams, § He could have said "I'm a professional. I can give you an answer", but what he said was: Gen. 41:16 (NASB) Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."

When he heard the dreams that Pharaoh described, they were strange visions of beasts and vegetables. § He could have said "I've seen these kinds of dreams before and I can tell you what the future holds", but what he said was: Gen. 41:25 (NASB) Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do. When his brothers came to Egypt to buy grain, Joseph hid the fact that he was the brother who they had sold into slavery so many years before. God had been good to Joseph and he knew it. § He could have said "I worked my way up to this position of power with blood, sweat and tears", but what he said was: Gen. 45:5 (NASB) "Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. His brothers expected that Joseph would want to take revenge on them for what they did. § He could have said "I was lucky to get where I am after you abandoned me for dead", but what he said was: Gen. 45:8 (NASB) "Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

When his brothers got tired of competing against the "favorite" son, they thought they'd get rid of him. But Joseph saw the hand of God in everything, the good and the bad. It had been really bad for a while...sold into slavery, unjustly accused, thrown in prison. And then, really good...second in Egypt only to Pharaoh and in charge of the greatest kingdom in the world. § He could have said to his brothers "I turned the tables on your plan", but what he said was: Gen. 50:20 (NASB) "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

The great lesson of Joseph's story is that God is always in control. Joseph knew this and it showed in his actions, his words, and his eternal perspective on life. I wonder...if I met you on the street, today... if I told you my life story and you told me yours...would that same perspective come through in our words and our actions? What would you say?