

Joseph: Trusting God in the Dark

Faithful & Grateful: Hope in the Midst of
Hardship – Part 1



Life does not always make sense, and sometimes faithfulness in hardship feels impossible. Joseph's story shows us what trusting God in trials truly looks like. From betrayal and injustice to waiting and restoration, his journey reveals how God works behind the scenes even when everything around us feels dark. Discover how you can walk in gratitude and unwavering faith no matter what you face.

Introduction

There are seasons in life when everything feels dark, unfair, or uncertain. Many of us have experienced moments when it seems as if we are doing everything right, yet everything still goes wrong. We pray, we remain faithful, we do our best to follow Jesus, but circumstances continue to spiral in directions we never expected. It is in those seasons that trusting God feels the hardest and gratitude feels almost impossible.

The Bible gives us many examples of people who faced overwhelming trials and opposition yet remained faithful and grateful to God. One of the clearest and most powerful examples is Joseph, the son of Jacob. His story, found in Genesis chapters 37 and 39 through 45, takes us through betrayal, false accusations, abandonment, injustice, and years of waiting. Yet through it all, Joseph never stopped trusting God, and God never stopped working behind the scenes of Joseph's life.

Today we begin our Advent season series, *Faithful and Grateful: Hope in the Midst of Hardship*, by looking at Joseph and learning how he continued trusting God in the dark. As we journey toward Christmas, we remember that God often works His greatest miracles quietly, slowly, and in ways we cannot see at first. Joseph's story prepares our hearts to recognize those same patterns in the coming of the Messiah.

Let us walk through Joseph's life and discover how we too can remain faithful and grateful even when life is confusing and difficult.

Faith in the Midst of Betrayal

Joseph's story begins not with success, but with deep pain in Genesis 37. He was loved by his father but despised by his brothers. Their anger and jealousy grew until it became violent hatred. They plotted against him, stripped him of his robe, threw him into a pit, and sold him to passing traders. Joseph was taken far from home to Egypt, alone, frightened, and unsure of what the future held.

Everything familiar was gone. Everything he had known and loved was stripped from him. But Scripture never records Joseph blaming God, turning bitter, or losing faith. Instead, even in the darkest moment of betrayal, we see the seeds of trust taking root.



Betrayal is one of the most painful experiences a person can endure. It cuts deeply because it violates trust. Many watching or reading this have experienced betrayal in one form or another, perhaps by a friend, a spouse, a family member, or a coworker. Betrayal can leave us feeling abandoned and unvalued. It can make us question everything, including God's goodness.

Yet Joseph's story teaches us an important lesson: God is still present even when others fail us. No betrayal can remove God's hand from our lives or cancel His purpose for us. The hatred of Joseph's brothers was real, but God's purpose for Joseph was stronger.

Joseph's faithfulness began right there, when everything seemed lost. He had no explanation, no answers, and no idea what God was doing. Still, he trusted. That kind of faith prepares our hearts for gratitude even when circumstances do not make sense.

As we move toward Christmas, we remember that God's greatest work often begins quietly in the dark, long before people can see it.

In the comments below, share about a time when God was faithful to you after someone else hurt or betrayed you. Your story may encourage someone who is struggling today.

Faithfulness When Life Is Unfair

After being sold into slavery in Egypt, as we read in Genesis 39, Joseph was purchased by Potiphar, an officer in Pharaoh's army. Joseph worked hard, honored God, and God blessed everything he did. Potiphar recognized Joseph's integrity and promoted him to oversee his entire household.

Just when things seemed to improve, Joseph faced another injustice. Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of wrongdoing, and Joseph was thrown into prison without a trial. Once again, Joseph lost everything he had worked for. Once again, his life was turned upside down through no fault of his own.

This is an important truth for every believer: faithfulness does not guarantee an easy life. Doing the right thing does not protect us from every hardship. Sometimes honoring God will cost us something.

Yet even in prison, Joseph remained faithful. Genesis 39 says that God was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love. Joseph's attitude, work ethic, and devotion to God never faltered, and soon he was placed in charge of the other prisoners. Joseph did not allow injustice to turn him bitter.

We live in a world that often treats people unfairly. Many who follow Jesus suffer because of their faith. Others suffer simply because we live in a broken world. When life is unfair, we are tempted to complain, give up, or question God's goodness. But Joseph teaches us that gratitude is not based on circumstances; it is based on God's presence.

Even in prison, Joseph recognized that God was still working. Sometimes God's greatest work is done in the seasons we would never choose.

As we move toward Christmas, we remember that Jesus Himself faced injustice from the moment He came into the world. Born in a stable, hunted by King Herod, misunderstood, rejected, and eventually crucified, yet He remained faithful to the Father through it all.

Comment below with something God has taught you during a difficult or unfair season in your life.



Gratitude in the Waiting

We read about one of the hardest parts of Joseph's story is the waiting in Genesis 40 and 41. After being imprisoned, Joseph faithfully interpreted dreams for Pharaoh's officials. One of them, the cupbearer, promised to speak to Pharaoh on Joseph's behalf. But once restored to his position, the cupbearer forgot all about Joseph. Joseph waited two more years before anything changed.

Waiting is rarely easy. Whether you are waiting for healing, restoration, direction, or a breakthrough, the silence can feel overwhelming. Waiting tests our patience, our trust, and our hope. It is in these seasons of waiting that we must cling to God's promises, even when we cannot see progress.

Joseph did not waste his waiting. He continued serving faithfully, honoring God, and growing in wisdom and leadership. God was preparing him for what was coming, even though Joseph could not see it at the time.

When Pharaoh later had troubling dreams, the cupbearer finally remembered Joseph. Joseph was brought out of prison, interpreted the dreams through the wisdom God gave him, and within a single day went from prisoner to the second most powerful man in Egypt.

Years of waiting led to one moment of divine appointment.

Here is the lesson for us: God's delays are not God's denials. When we remain faithful in the waiting, God strengthens our character and prepares us for the blessings ahead. Gratitude grows when we recognize that God is working even when nothing seems to be happening.

As we approach Christmas, we remember that God's people waited hundreds of years for the coming of the Messiah. Generation after generation held onto hope, trusting that God would fulfill His promise in His time. The birth of Jesus reminds us that God is never late.

Share below something you are waiting on God for. Let us encourage one another during these seasons.

Seeing God's Purpose in Pain

Joseph's journey culminates in one of the most emotional and powerful moments in Scripture in Genesis 41-45. Years after selling him into slavery, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt seeking food during a famine. They did not recognize Joseph, but Joseph recognized them. He had every opportunity for revenge, yet he chose forgiveness.

When Joseph finally revealed himself, he told his brothers something astonishing:
"You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Joseph could look back on betrayal, slavery, false accusations, imprisonment, and years of waiting and say, "God used all of it for His purpose." Joseph saw God's hand in every season of pain. What others meant to harm him, God used to save many lives, including his own family.

This perspective changes everything. When we believe that God is working all things together for good, even our trials can produce gratitude. We may not understand every circumstance, but we can trust that God wastes nothing.



Pain with purpose leads to gratitude. Hardship with meaning leads to worship. Joseph's life teaches us to look deeper, beyond the immediate struggle, and to ask, "God, what are You doing in me and through me during this season?"

As we move toward Christmas, we remember that God used centuries of trials, setbacks, and waiting to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus. The birth of Christ shows us that God's purposes are always redemptive, even when the path is difficult.

Comment below about how God has brought good out of a difficult season in your life.

Conclusion: This Week's Call to Action

Joseph's life gives us a powerful picture of faithfulness in hardship and trusting God in trials. From betrayal to false accusations, from waiting to forgiveness, Joseph models what it means to remain faithful and grateful through every season of life.

As we begin this Advent series, let us remember that God is always working behind the scenes. Joseph could not see God's plan until years later, but God was guiding every step. The same is true for you. Whether you are facing disappointment, betrayal, unfair treatment, or waiting for God to move, He has not abandoned you. Just as God prepared Joseph for a purpose far greater than he could imagine, God is preparing you, too.

This Week

Take time each day to thank God for at least one way He has been faithful to you in the past. As you intentionally remember His goodness, ask Him to strengthen your faith and gratitude in whatever you are facing now.

Next week, we continue our *Faithful and Grateful: Hope in the Midst of Hardship* series by looking at Hannah, a woman who shows us what prayer through suffering truly looks like. Even in grief, disappointment, and ridicule, Hannah demonstrated remarkable faithfulness in hardship. Her story reminds us that God hears our deepest cries long before we see His answers. Join us as we discover how heartfelt prayer can lead to gratitude, strength, and renewed hope.

