

The Call of God
The Response
of the Faithful

October 19, 2008
Genesis 45:4-7 and 50:15, 19-21
The Call to Fully Engage in Unexpected Places

Portrayals of the story of Joseph:
Disney movie *Joseph – King of Dreams*, Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*, or the comic book *My Brother’s Keeper*?

“Joseph’s story offers us so many gifts if we take the time to slip past the dance tunes and caricatures to the real story in Genesis... a story that lays out the remarkable call of God in the life of this man Joseph... a call I believe is a call engage fully in unexpected places.”

- Kevin Finch

Our deepest call will never be location dependent. It will never be job dependent. Our deepest call is simply God dependent. Over and over again in the story of Joseph we read that “the Lord was with him” wherever he was and God blessed him as a slave, God blessed him in prison, God blessed him as he ran the land of Egypt.

- Kevin Finch

But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

To Get Started . . .

Did you learn about the story of Joseph as a child? What highlights stand out? What is the source of your knowledge of the story? Is it similar to some of the examples Kevin shared?

Dig into the Scripture

Using a bible with headings, look through Genesis 35-44 and summarize the story of Joseph’s life.

What do you notice about Joseph’s character and his location in life through this early part of his story?

How would you describe the relationship between God and Joseph?

Read Genesis 45:4-7 and 50:15, 19-21

In what ways do you see a different Joseph in these verses?

What do you suppose enable Joseph to respond the way he does in these verses?

What aspects of God does Joseph portray throughout his entire story?

Apply It

In the sermon, Kevin suggested one thing we can learn from Joseph is to respond to God’s call to be fully engaged where we are.

Read the first quote to the left.

What does it mean to you to be “fully engaged?”

A second thing we can learn from the story of Joseph is that our call is not location dependent; but it is God dependent.

Read the second quote to the left.

Where or in what circumstances are you having trouble trusting that God is with you?

What might be God’s deepest call to you?

That call that draws on your passions and gifts so fully that no matter where you find yourself... like Joseph... things begin to change.

Do you know what God’s deepest call in our life is?

If so, what are you doing or what will you do about it? How have you come to realize this call?

If not, take a guess. Consider your passions, gifts and even your pain.

How might other people of our church (or your small group) best help you explore your call or live it out?

Pray Together!

Ask God to help you discern how to be who he is calling you to be wherever you are.

Live It

Watch for places where what is intended for evil can be used by God to save

Genesis 45:4-7 and 50:15, 19-21 (New International Version)

Genesis 45:4-7

Joseph Makes Himself Known

1Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, “Have everyone leave my presence!” So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. 2And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

3Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still living?” But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

4Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me.” When they had done so, he said, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! 5And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. 6For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. 7But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

Genesis 50:15, 19-21

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?”

19But Joseph said to them, “Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.