

St Martins C3 – August 10, 2025

The Coats of Joseph – Rise Above It

Sermon Notes:

Joseph has been through a lot. His life has been filled with disappointment, mistreatment, and rejection. Fear and false accusations with slavery and abandonment. Every new coat has contained the hope that something good could happen. But now he wears the clothes of a prisoner.

Life is tough; we all have seasons where things are just hard. The question for Joseph (and for us in these moments) is this: is he a victim or is he the victor over his circumstances?

Read Genesis 39:20-23

Insight: Openness – Joseph is open to God

God has not abandoned Joseph. He has given Joseph His presence and shows him *faithful love*. When God revealed himself to Moses and outlined his character one of the key words he said was that He is a God of *faithful love*.

When you are going through trials don't reject God. Instead, cry out to Him for more of His presence and love. It is what will see you through.

Read Genesis 40:1-7

Insight: Others – Joseph Cares About Others

This is remarkable! What growth in Joseph. When he was 17 he was full of self-importance, blind to others feelings. Now he is tuned in to their feelings and wants to help them. He could have been stuck in self-pity but instead chose service.

Read Genesis 40:8-15

Success is not the position you stand but the direction in which you look. Joseph looks to God in all things and so must we.

It's amazing that Joseph never gave up on God. He's still connected to God, he still relies on God. He still has faith and will trust God's sovereignty.

Read Genesis 40:10-15

Insight: Honesty – Joseph is real about his situation

Suffering is real and it sucks. It is okay to be real and to ask for help when we need it. We can do this in our prayers and in talking to other people around us.

The consistent Biblical witness is that we will face hard times. We should not deny this reality and think we can live free of difficulty, but use it as a tool to turn us towards God.

Read Genesis 40:23, 41:1-14

Insight: Overcomer – Joseph gets changed

Joseph has been beaten down, but he is still standing and when his moment comes, he is ready. This is his moment of transformation, from the pit to the palace, from prisoner to prime minister. We too can have the attitude of an overcomer.

Read James 1:2-4

Times of difficulty are not an evil that God wants to remove from us. In fact, God will use times of testing to grow us into those ready for His purposes. Let's hang onto him and use these times for all that they can be in our lives.

Questions for Connect Groups:

Key Point

Joseph rose above his circumstances and showed he was a victor and not a victim.

Questions

What stood out to you from this week's message?

What does this message tell you about God and humans?

Imagine you were in Joseph's position in prison:

- What would you have felt?
- What questions would you have for God?
- How would you respond?

Share a time when you have been in a Joseph like situation and how you responded?

What lessons do we learn from Joseph's response about how we can act when we are in the same situations?

What other verses in Scripture talk about facing suffering (hint: devotions)? What do they tell us about its purpose?

How have you experienced God's presence and his faithful love in difficulty?

If there was a spectrum from victim through to denial, where would you usually sit? How can you move to a place where you are real about your struggles but rise above them?

How can we pray for you in your difficulties right now?

Monday Devotion: Job

Read Job 23:3-12

This week, we look at how we as Christians can respond to difficulty through the guidance of scripture and the examples of characters who suffered. Let's start with Job. Ten of his children died, his home was destroyed, he lost everything he owned, including his health. He didn't even have the comfort of caring friends. He had nothing.

In this passage, Job says, "I wish I could find God. I wish he and I could just sit down and talk openly about my situation, and I could ask him why I'm going through these things. I want to have all my 'why?' questions answered. I want to have all my 'how long?' problems solved.

We can see that Job is struggling with God in this moment. But verses 10 to 12 show that he has not given up on God. Job knows that God's test and trials don't necessarily lead to an easy life, but he knows that his trust in God will lead to an internal contentment and character that is beyond anything that he currently experiences.

We can see this is the case in Joseph's life. God refined him to become a character of note. Reflect on the hard things that you have faced in your life. Can you see how God has used them to make you into the person that you are today?

Pray and ask God to reveal what he has done in you through your suffering.

Tuesday Devotion: David

Read Psalm 34:19; 1 Samuel 24:19

One of the great scriptural examples of dealing with suffering and maintaining faith in God is David. David was hounded by a jealous king. Saul hated him because of the success that he had and because he was destined to replace him.

Things got so bad that David had to escape from Saul and headed into the wilderness. While he was there, he gathered a group of 400 men around him and helped to protect the land.

Saul gathered his fighting men to come after David, but, as we read, David had an opportunity to kill Saul. He chose not to, but even though he showed his loyalty to Saul, he still had to spend time in the wilderness.

It was during this time that David wrote many of his Psalms, like Psalm 34. He reflects that the righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all. Psalm 13 could very well have been written by Joseph it so closely echoes his journey.

When we face times of uncertainty and trouble, it might be tempting to walk away from God or to neglect our relationship with Him. What David shows is that we should do the opposite. We should come to God, bring our troubles before Him. He knows what it is to suffer, He cares, and He can help us.

What struggles are you wrestling with today? Bring them before God and watch Him make a difference.

Wednesday Devotion: Jesus

Read 1 Peter 3:17-18; Hebrews 12:1-10

R.T. Kendall writes:

Joseph is also a type of Christ. Jesus was never vindicated by those who sent Him to the cross. When Jesus was raised from the dead, did He go straight to Herod and say, “What do you think now?” Or did He go to Pontius Pilate? To the chief priests? No. Jesus did not go to anybody to clear His name.

At the crucifixion, Jesus could have so easily won that battle. At any moment, He could have stopped them or struck them dead. Even when they were driving in the nails or while He was hanging on the cross and the mobs were shouting, “Come down if You are the Son of God,” Jesus could have vindicated Himself. He could have “won” that battle, but He would have lost the war. He could have called ten thousand angels. God could have dispatched the angels and delivered Jesus from all that, but Jesus did not want personal vindication. He had a greater love for the kingdom of God. That is why He died—“the just for the unjust” (see 1 Peter 3:18).

When we are being mistreated in any way, we must realize that our suffering has profound and vast implications for the greater kingdom of God. There are unseen reasons for continual suffering. Who knows what God will do with your life if you can take mistreatment with dignity? What probably means so much to you—to be cleared right now—could well lose the war, should you get your immediate wish. Jesus could have come down from the cross. Thank God He did not.¹

¹ R. T. Kendall *God Meant it For Good*, p.69-70.

Thursday Devotion: Purify My Heart

Read 1 Peter 1:6-8; 5:6-10

We could tell many other stories of those who endured hardship for God. The story of Jeremiah, mocked, beaten, and imprisoned for preaching God's message. The story of Paul, imprisoned, beaten, shipwrecked, and eventually martyred. However, it would be useful for us to move onto the New Testament teaching about enduring suffering.

There was an [old song](#) that said:

*Purify my heart, let me be as gold and precious silver,
Purify my heart let me be as gold pure gold,
Refiners fire, my heart's one desire, is to be holy, set apart
for you Lord,
I choose to be holy, set apart for you my master, ready to
do your will.*

The truth in this beautiful song is found in the book of 1 Peter. Here it talks about us experiencing joy and the trials and tribulations that we go through. What a strange concept, to be joyful about difficulty. The reason, however, is because the difficulties that we go through are always used for a purpose.

God wants to purify our faith so that we are trusting wholly in Him, not on our own ability and strength. Today, take some time to consider areas where you rely on your own strength rather than God's. Determine to be someone whose faith is like pure gold, fully reliant on God.

Then see how He can turn your difficulty into joy!

Friday Devotion: The Truth About Trials

Read Romans 5:3-5; Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Corinthians 1:4-8

While God does not tempt anyone to sin, he will cause his people to go through trials. We may think this to be cruel and unjust. Surely, if God loved us, he would not want us to face moments of pain, fear, and uncertainty. Yet, he does it for a very good reason: to make us into people he can use for his purposes.

Once we have been through the trial of testing and refining, we can give Him glory and we can help others who are going through the same thing. In fact, one of the key ways for us to overcome the difficulties of our life is by surrounding ourselves with other Christians – meeting with them and encouraging each other. In short, head to a connect group this week!

Then an amazing thing can happen, we can help others who have been going through the same trials. We use the comfort we have received to inspire us to comfort others.

This is my 25th year working for a church, three years as an intern, two years part time and nearly twenty years in full time ministry. I have experienced a little bit in that time and now it is one of the joys of my life to bring comfort to others who are also working in this area.

R. T. Kendall says, *“You can be living the most godly kind of Christian life and quite suddenly be tapped on the shoulder by God saying, “I have a little trial for you.”* Don’t resist the difficult days but prayerfully dig into God so that he might prepare you for your purpose and to support others.