

JUNE 9, 2024 FPCPH PASTOR ROXIE, SERMON: JOSEPHS WITH HOPE

SCRIPTURES: Joseph, Son of Jacob Genesis 39: 19-23; Joseph., Husband of Mary Matthew 1: 18-24; Joseph of Arimathea Luke 23: 49-53; Joseph(Barnabas)Early Church Acts 11: 22-24

INTRODUCTION

As many of you know, the new Preaching Series in June is: Names: Same but Different. There are people in the Bible who have the same name but a different role in God's purposes. Sometimes we get those names all mixed up and it can be very confusing! Last Sunday—We talked about Mary (There are 14 different Marys in the Bible, not counting the Miriams in the Old Testament) I only talked about 3 of them. Mary, Mother of Jesus; Mary Magdalene, first to see the Risen Lord. and Mary (sister to Martha and Lazarus, who was raised from the dead). **Today**—We are going to look at the Josephs in the Bible. There are 16 Josephs in the Bible—9 in the New Testament—all with the same name—but different roles in the story of God in Jesus Christ. All the Josephs have qualities that we would be wise to emulate and some traits that we might want to avoid.

The four Josephs that I have chosen to refer to-- all hold on to Hope, which comes through their confidence in Almighty God... No matter what happens, they trust that God will lead them into the future. **Thus, God is more important than they are**—They worship and follow God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and for the three Josephs In the New Testament, they believe in Jesus Christ, God's Only Son. **We will start with the JOSEPHS in the New Testament: Joseph, Husband of Mary; Joseph of Arimathea at Jesus' Death; Joseph (Renamed Barnabas), in Early Church.** (which I have already told you about—and you can read about him in the Book of Acts). As I said, the presence of God in Jesus Christ, in their lives is paramount in their common experience. as Josephs. But each has their own role in God's movement of salvation. They are gifted, differently They have unique personalities—They have attributes and they have their faults. They come to God—"Just as They Are" which is echoed by each of us, as we say and sing: "Just As I Am, I Come, I Come." The Josephs, along with the Marys, try to fulfill the words that Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer, which we say every Sunday: **"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."**

FIRST, JOSEPH—MOTHER MARY'S HUSBAND

There are many good and faithful qualities That we might want to adopt, which are seen in Joseph, the husband of Mary and the earthly Father of Jesus. **Joseph is a good man, showing kindness:** especially to Mary in trying not to disgrace her by divorcing her quietly, because she is pregnant—He assumes, by another man. **Joseph is a good listener—to God**—In this case an angel is sent to him who says: Take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Joseph is Obedient to the Will of God. It says: “When Joseph woke up from his dream, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.” Joseph is also obedient to God as he gives **the name of “Jesus”** to the child (meaning, “God Saves.”)

Joseph is a Good Husband He has no union with Mary until she gives birth to Jesus. He also is the caring—perhaps frustrated husband, finding a place (in a stable) for them in Bethlehem, as they must be counted in the census of that day. Joseph is also the guiding force, taking Mary and Jesus out of Nazareth and into the foreign land of Egypt when king Herod is out to kill the child.

ONLY A FEW MORE TIMES

Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father is only seen a few more times in Scripture. Joseph is seen at the **8th day Blessing and Circumcision of Jesus.** Again, he is seen at the **Passover Festival** where Mary and Joseph loss Jesus in Jerusalem. **Then we never see Joseph again.** We know that Joseph and Mary had four other sons who are named in Scripture and some daughters who are nameless. But Joseph is not mentioned with the family—when they are present to hear Jesus preach. Joseph is not with Mary at the Wedding at Cana, at the Crucifixion, or in the Early Days of the Church. It is assumed that Joseph died before Jesus started his 3-year ministry. **Joseph, Husband of Mary, Earthly Father of Jesus: He is faithful. Shows kindness. Listens well to God. Obedient to the will of God. A good husband and father, taking care of Mary and Jesus. Good traits for all of us to emulate.**

SECOND, JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

The only time we see Joseph of Arimathea is after the Crucifixion of Jesus and Jesus is dead on the cross. If we were to characterize Joseph of Arimathea **(We might want to adopt some of his faithful qualities); He is Courageous and Loyal to Jesus**
Some details about Joseph of Arimathea: Really the location of Arimathea is not well known but traditionally it has been identified with several hill towns north and ear

Jerusalem. From Matthew 27: Joseph is a **rich man**. We also learn that Joseph of Arimathea is a secret but loyal **disciple of Jesus**, Joseph, along with Nicodemus (described in the Book of John) take Jesus' body down from the cross, wrap it in clean linen cloth and place it in Joseph's own tomb, newly dug out of stone. Joseph is the one who rolls the stone in front of the entrance. **Joseph of Arimathea is not only rich but he is strong. And not only that**, but in the Gospel of Mark, we find out that he is a **very prominent member of the Council—better called the Sanhedrin—** Sanhedrin is a religious, political and judicial council which served as the court of Jewish law. Even though he was a prominent member of this privileged council—he was not there when they decided to crucify Jesus, and as revealed in Luke 23, "Joseph was a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action to crucify Jesus. We are also told that Joseph was **waiting—And I would say "hoping" for the kingdom of God—**which would be in the person of the Messiah. No wonder he was a secret disciple of Jesus!! Now where the **courage** comes in—Is that Joseph of Arimathea goes to **Pilate**, the Roman governor of Jerusalem, and boldly asks for the body of Jesus—to accomplish a proper burial for God's Son.

But I would go even further, He was courageous to go against the Established Sanhedrin and to remain and reveal Himself as a Loyal Follower of Jesus. Joseph of Arimathea; Hopeful—Waiting Patiently for the Messiah. Faithful to the call of God; And Righteous in his decision making. He is a Loyal follower of Jesus and Courageous. We can learn from him. Because: It takes courage to be loyal first and foremost to God— Not to some human leader or institution which may not be respectful of and loyal to God. **Courage, Loyalty, Keen sense of Discernment** are all good qualities for us to imitate. They are all played out in the life of Joseph of Arimathea. **We have to ask ourselves:** Will I be loyal to Jesus who shows us God in the form of love and forgiveness and reconciliation? Will I decide to follow Jesus and model what Jesus represents?

JOSEPH, SON OF JACOB IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Now let us go **back in time**, long before Jesus, Long before King David; Jacob, father of Joseph, is counted as one of the Fathers of the Faith: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Early on in the Biblical Story. Found in Genesis Chapters 37-50. Jacob, (also called Israel), father of Joseph has 12 sons, given to him by two wives: Leah gave him 6 sons—not counting the one daughter, Dinah—of course; Rachel—favorite Rachel-- gives him 2 sons—Joseph and Benjamin; 2 sons by Bilhah (Jacob's concubine) and 2 sons by Zilpah (Slave girl). When we pick up the story about Joseph, we are in **Genesis Chapter**

37 to Chapter 50 which I highly recommend that you read. I read all of it in preparation for this sermon.

I know you probably saw the play or the movie: **Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Coat**. And perhaps you think, “that is enough.” But take it from me—Read the Story from the Bible (The Message). You will get a whole lot more detailed nuances of the story. You learn far more about its application to your life, if you read Joseph’s life journey, from the source—the Bible.

JOSEPH—NAME Here is a Summary of the Journey of Joseph’s Life. Joseph is the Favored Son of his father Jacob because Rachel, his mother is deeply loved by Jacob but she is barren most of her life. In fact, Joseph—the name means: “God shall add” inferring that God has added a son to Rachel’s life. It comes from the Hebrew name Josef. Genesis 30: 24 Unfortunately Rachel dies before Joseph’s story, really begins in Genesis 37 where he is a teenager at the age of 17. He is gifted in dreaming dreams and telling what they mean, which is rather annoying to his older brothers because the dreams always show that he reigns over them (which is exactly what happens).

Not only is he a bit haughty, but he is favored by the Dad. He comes to check on them as they work and he wears this beautiful multi-colored robe, which shows how special he is. The brothers are deeply jealous of him. Their jealousy turns into hate. (Jealousy is not good for us humans—it always ends badly). They (most of them—one is sympathetic towards Joseph) devise a plan. They plan to kill him—too much blood on their hands. They throw him in a cistern—(well); but soon decide to sell him to a bunch of merchants (Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt). He is sold as a slave.

The brothers lie to their father. A pretty elaborate lie—you need to read it! Their lying is the first of many missteps which lead to their undoing. Lying is never good. Joseph is taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard. It is said many times in this journey of Joseph: “The Lord was with Joseph.” Potiphar saw that the Lord was with Joseph and that God gave him success so Potiphar puts him in charge of his whole household except his wife, of course.

But his wife is **devious—seductive. And wants Joseph to go to bed with her** (remember the words in Lord’s Prayer—**“lead us not into temptation.”** Joseph holds his moral ground and runs for his life. Unfortunately, she grabs his coat; lies about him trying to seduce **her**; Potiphar gets angry—throws Joseph into prison. Again, we have

the words: "The Lord was with him; God shows Joseph kindness and grants him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. He is again put in charge of everything. His talent—gift of interpreting dreams comes into play with two of the Pharaoh's workers who also were in jail. He reminds one of them—When you get out, remember me. He doesn't. Joseph stays in jail for another two years. He doesn't get out until the cupbearer in Pharaoh's court remembers him when Pharaoh has dreams to be interpreted. The dreams tell about 7 fruitful years and 7 years of famine. Joseph interprets those dreams and saves 1000s of people from starvation, including his whole family—his brothers who travel to Egypt for grain during the famine.

Joseph emerges triumphant as a Respected leader greatly favored by the Pharaoh. When his brothers arrive in Egypt, asking for grain, The story gets a bit Dicy—Intriguing—Emotional—(look at watch) . Am I going to tell it to you. No, you have to read it. I hope I have left you at the cliff.

But I do want to say a few words about LESSONS LEARNED FROM JOSEPH, JACOB'S SON by asking some questions: What is blessed by God— What will people see in us, And say: "The Lord is with them." **Being Haughty or Being Humble? Telling Lies or Telling the Truth? Caving in to Temptation or Standing firm on moral ground? Taking Revenge or Speaking Forgiveness** I just want to comment on the last one: "Taking Revenge or Speaking Forgiveness" Joseph, in the end, has "power".as the second in Command in Pharaoh's Court. There were lots of people who had wronged him. His brothers—certainly! Potiphar's seductive wife and Potiphar himself. The Cupbearer whose dream he interpreted in jail and He doesn't remember until he needs him. Joseph has every right to plan revenge against All of those people. But he doesn't. Instead, he knows God is love and God forgives. He chooses to alien himself with God.

Lessons to be learn from Joseph, Jacob's Son.'

Lessons to be learned from all the Josephs.

They are faithful and hopeful—In God—"Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done."

They take to heart the words: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

They avoid temptation: "Do not lead us into temptation. But deliver us from evil"

They believe with all their hearts: "for thine is the kingdom, And the power,

And the glory forever." Amen. And Amen. Just as They Are, they and We Come! (Sid

LaFrance sings solo: "Just As I Am"