

Unexpected (2 of 4) Small Group Discussion Questions

SUNDAY WORSHIP DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The global pandemic COVID-19 has forced us to adjust and adapt how we do church and stay connected to one another as a congregation. We're not closed as a church, we're just doing church differently! So, please stay connected to the body at Grantham Church. Join our congregation for worship online at 10:30 am each Sunday morning. Follow the worship liturgy and watch our [Vimeo](#) videos at granthamchurch.org/liturgy.

As usual, the sermons will be posted to the [recent sermons page](#) on our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for engaging with us online!

Sunday, December 6th 2020



Sermon Title: The Way of Downward Mobility

Scripture Reading: Genesis 37:1-36; 39-40; 41:39-43; 45:1-11; 50:20; Romans 8:28-29

Sermon Focus: God may give us insight into the future about his plans for us, but how we get there is often not at all what we expected. Joseph experienced that firsthand. He had dreams, but his brothers sold him into slavery, he was sent to prison for a crime he didn't commit, and then he was forgotten by those who could help him. However, what the enemy meant for evil, God used for his good. Listen as Pastor David encourages us to trust that God will give meaning to our pain.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person, by phone, or video call! Use the following questions to guide your small group discussion:

1. Read Genesis 37:3-4 together. Notice how Jacob's favoritism caused problems for Joseph and the entire family. Have you ever experienced being the favorite like Joseph, or being *unfavored* like his brothers? Why do you think that favoritism is such a problem for Israel throughout the Old Testament? Now take a look at Romans 2:9-11. God doesn't show favoritism. Why do we?
2. Pastor David said that Joseph's mistake wasn't that he had dreams, but it was that he *naively* shared them with his brothers thinking that they would be as excited to hear them as he was in having the dreams. Have you ever regretted sharing something that God had revealed to you with people who were not ready or able to hear it? What did you learn through that experience?
3. Think about what happens to Joseph. He lost his mother when Benjamin was born. His dad favors him, provoking the wrath of his half-brothers. He is thrown into a pit and then sold into slavery, where he is then taken to a foreign land. Things are looking up in Potiphar's house, but then he is falsely accused and thrown into prison. Imagine what he must have felt! How do you think you would have handled these events? What can we learn from the way Joseph responds?
4. Pastor David mentioned how Edmond Dantès in the *Count of Monte Cristo* is wrongly accused, thrown into prison, and it's there that he plots his revenge. Of course, later on Edmond will see that retribution is not the way to God's justice. Read Romans 12:17-21 together. How have you experienced this to be true? Why do you think it's so hard to *not* want to get even with those who've hurt us?
5. Read Genesis 45:1-11 together. It's amazing how Joseph rose above deep hurt and saw how God used the harm that was intended him. He could only respond this way if he had been humbled, was trusting in God's justice, and had truly forgiven his brothers. How might God want you to forgive someone and let him right the wrongs in your life? What do you need to do to forgive them?
6. Read Genesis 50:20 together. Think about the harm that has been intended for you, or that has simply come about through the brokenness of others and our world. How are you seeing God do what he promises in Romans 8:28-29? How do you think God wants to give your pain meaning this year? How might God want to use the events of this year to bless Grantham Church?