

SERM.SERIES: "Avoiding Politically-correct Christianity--Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield--3/25/2001

TITLE: "Integrity—does your walk match your talk?"

TEXT: Genesis 39: 1-23

Introduction: **Illus.: impressions of Hiroshima--how long will your impression on the world last**

THEME: The integrity of our Christian faith is not dependent on how God blesses us or in what circumstances we reside but in our Savior who has redeemed us to live a different way

### ***Integrity of Faith Even in the Darkest Times***

- **Often we compromise our integrity of faith because of difficult times (Print and read Genesis 39: 1-6)**
  1. The treachery of Joseph's brothers, harshness of slave traders, a foreign land, new living circumstances (vs. 1)
  2. The difficult marriage, oppressive work environment, manipulative teacher, friend, peer
- **We are not focused on what isn't happening but on what God is doing (2)**
  1. Yahweh--Joseph's savior--*was truly with him* as he is with us
  2. God *made Joseph succeed*--"accomplish what God intended for him"
  3. *"He was in his master's house"*--things weren't all that bad
  4. **ILLUS.: STATE OF MICH. SEAL--"If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look around you."**
- **Wait on God to do the honoring (4)**
- **We are "blessed to be a blessing" (5)----- our trial = another's blessing**

### ***INTEGRITY OF FAITH WHEN YOU ARE TEMPTED BY IT ALL (Print and read Genesis 39: 7-20)***

- **REFUSE**--like Joseph **give no quarter to Satan's temptation of desire**--deadly to our integrity of faith (7)
  1. **ILLUS.: OSCAR WILDE QUOTE--RESIST EVERYTHING--EXCEPT TEMPTATION**
- **RENOUNCE**--we must **repudiate Satan's lie ("I deserve this for all I have had to suffer")**
- **RECOUNT**-- what God had done and is doing **(Joseph's example!-8-9)**
- **RE-AIM**---- **make it your aim to be pleasing to God--alone (9)**
  1. Not to self; spouse, boss, friends, peers
  2. *"So we make it our goal to please him...for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Cor 5: 9-10*
- **REALIZE**— **count the cost of discipleship**
  1. Joseph's confession of faith cost him **IN EARTHLY TERMS (20)**
  2. **READ LUKE 14: 25-30**
  3. The integrity of our **WALK** is our witness to what Jesus means to me
  4. **ILLUS.: "THRESHER"--PRESSURE WITHIN OR PRESSURE WITHOUT**

### ***INTEGRITY OF FAITH NO MATTER WHAT YOUR CALLING IN LIFE IS***

- **Print and read Genesis 39: 21-23**
- **Because "the Lord is with you" (vs. 21)**
  1. **With his mercy (HELP FOR THE HELPLESS)**
    - a. Joseph in hopeless situation (death roll) but not without hope
    - b. Joseph in a helpless predicament but not without help
    - c. *"Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4: 16*
  2. **With his grace (UNDESERVED LOVE)**
    - a. Joseph did not have question God's favor at every bump in the road
    - b. *"If God is for us who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Romans 8: 31-32)*
- **Because the Lord can turn lowly service into glorious results (vs. 22-23--"whatever he did the Lord made to prosper")**

## **Impressions of Hiroshima**

It is said that in the aftermath of the atomic bomb explosions over Hiroshima, which ended WWII, it took months before the radioactivity subsided enough for crews to enter the remains of the city and begin the massive clean-up. To the horror of the initial crews ghostly images of the Hiroshima residents were burned into what few remaining walls were left standing. It appears that as the nuclear blast caught these people running for their life that their bodies served as shields of the heat and radiation and their shadows were burned permanently onto the wall. No matter how much effort was made to remove or wash the walls the images were not able to be removed. Eventually the walls had to be torn down.

## **Resist the Temptation**

The famous Irish playwright, Oscar Wilde once said, "I can resist everything except the temptation!"

## **Pressure from within or pressure from without**

Back in the cold war days of our country nuclear submarines were constructed in such a way to allow them to stay long periods of time under tremendously deep water. One such submarine was the USS Thresher. It was boasted that it could go deeper, longer than any other submarine of its day. On its maiden voyage it was taken up around the Arctic Circle to test it under the massive ice-fields to attest to its capabilities. However, on this voyage something went terribly wrong. Whether it was a fire or explosion within or the crushing pressure of the deep sea without, the Thresher was destroyed under water. Because of its position and depth rescue crews could not go to its aid or rescue. It is not known whether it was the pressure from within or the pressure from without which doomed and destroyed the submarine.

## **Genesis 39:1-23**

<sup>1</sup>Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. <sup>2</sup>The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup>When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, <sup>4</sup>Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. <sup>5</sup>From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. <sup>6</sup>So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome,

<sup>7</sup>and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" <sup>8</sup>But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. <sup>9</sup>No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" <sup>10</sup>And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. <sup>11</sup>One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. <sup>12</sup>She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. <sup>13</sup>When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, <sup>14</sup>she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. <sup>15</sup>When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." <sup>16</sup>She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. <sup>17</sup>Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. <sup>18</sup>But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." <sup>19</sup>When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. <sup>20</sup>Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison,

<sup>21</sup>the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. <sup>22</sup>So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. <sup>23</sup>The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.