

Quiet Time Guide For Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Greetings:

Everybody loves the underdog. That's why so many baseball fans want to see the Chicago Cubs win the World Series. We all want to see Charlie Brown kick that football. As Christians we wanted to see David defeat Goliath, not only because it was good verses evil but it was the "little" guy against the giant.

If a movie were made about life, what underdog hero would you like to be: Rocky, Indiana Jones, Jason Borne, Dumb and/or Dumber (sorry, I had to add this option just in case) or James Bond? Let's face it we all want to be identified with the underdog.

My point to the above preamble is that in a lot of ways we are the underdogs. The world we live in can be pretty tough at times. Some days don't you feel like the world is cruel and all of the cards are stacked against you. It's at times like these that we truly are the underdog. My question is, how do we succeed and overcome adversity when to do so would be considered a great upset?

Scriptures For Today:

Genesis 37: 1-4: Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of the Canaan. These are the records of the generations of Jacob. Joseph when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his fathers wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to his father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a varicolored tunic. His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

Genesis 39:7-9, 19-20: It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge."

There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God? Now it came about when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, "This is what your slave did to me," that his anger burned. So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in the jail.

Life Applications:

Meet Joseph, one of the truly good guys of the Bible. Joseph seemed to understand that he was a man of purpose. He also knew that he was God's man. He had an inner drive to do the right thing. And it wasn't because his life was easy. It started that way but quickly turned into a series of catastrophes. Eventually, Joseph landed on his feet and was second only to Potiphar among the Egyptian people. What can we learn from how Joseph overcame his adversities and triumphed over his circumstances?

1. We must not allow bitterness to capture our soul. Humanly speaking, Joseph had every reason to develop a bitter spirit. Surely he had moments when he was angry. After all, he was human. But there is a difference between getting angry and letting “the sun go down on our anger.” That means we must deal with our anger and we must get God involved. He alone can be our source of divine strength and help.
2. Don’t blame God for what has happened to us. A God that loves us as Our Father in heaven does, is not the author of our problems, He is the solution.
3. In some situations, we must wait patiently for God to vindicate us. This must have been the most difficult thing for Joseph to do. He had already spent about 11 long years in Egypt, and most of that time was spent in prison. The greatest temptation we face when someone mistreats us is to seek revenge. Joseph overcame this temptation, and in doing so he was not conquered by evil.
4. Learning to wait patiently strengthens our confidence in God. Men and women of God forced to live in circumstances beyond their control emerge knowing even more than ever that, without God, they can do nothing.

Spiritual Exercise:

Don’t let your adversities get you down today. When “the world” delivers a nasty punch and you begin feeling like the underdog, just remember how much God loves you. Think of how much you would have to love someone before you would offer up your Son as an atonement for them. Yes, He loves us that much. Sounds like we can go to Him for help and comfort.

Thought For The Day:

With God in our daily lives, we are no longer the underdog. *Isaiah 41:10: Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; I will help thee. I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* Enough said.