

God's Calling Requirements Part 50

Criteria and Keys for Success

"1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. 2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3 And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. 4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. 5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. 6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. 7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. 11 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. 21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper." (Genesis 39:1-23)

When we read *Genesis 39* and proceed to read the following chapters of *Genesis 40-45*, we can clearly see that God was with Joseph and prospered him, for God had given him

success in whatever He did. But also for sure that God would not be with Joseph and give him success unless there are good characters in Joseph who responded to God's grace and love.

As you know the background and history of Joseph, that he was betrayed by his brothers who have being jealous of him and hated him. They thrown him in a well and they were trying to kill him. But later on they took him out and to make money out of him they sold him to the Ishmaelites who took him and sold him again to Potiphar. From what we read in *Genesis 39* we can conclude the good characters and the criteria that helped Joseph to be successful person.

1. Forgiving: Joseph did not carry bitterness and anger and nurse grudges in his heart toward those who harmed him. He did not focus on those who harmed him and he did not put in his heart and mind to revenge and pay back those who did evil against him. His forgiveness to them opened his eyes to see what the good things that God had prepared for him to do. Forgiveness toward those who hurt us will heal our wounds and grant us the progress forward to achieve what God wants from us to achieve. Check yourself if you have that?

2. Humble: Joseph was willing to restart his life as a slave, as a worker and maid in a house. Joseph as he humbled himself in God's hands the Lord lifted him up, then he became attendant and later on he was put in charge of Potiphar household and over all that he own. Many are unwilling to start from low position or less income job, but in such way they are missing God's provision and His grace for them. Even after Joseph was well established in Potiphar's house he was betrayed by Potiphar's wife and that spoiled all what he had build. But even when he was put in prison he still did not give up but he started from the beginning. Be like Joseph willing to start from the scratch.

3. Willingness to be humiliated: Joseph was humiliated by his own brothers when they thrown him in the well. He was also humiliated when his brothers used him to make money. He was also humiliated when the Ishmaelites sold him as slave to Potiphar. He was humiliated when he was accused falsely by Potiphar's wife and he was humiliated when he was thrown into prison and stayed there long time. Such kind of humiliation we may pass through and the Lord will allow that to happen. God wants us not to focus on the hurt we receive but on His grace that can sustain us and support us in days of troubles and in times of need. Many who pass through humiliating circumstances they don't accept that and for them such things should not happen. Instead of accepting that as normal they react and go into grief, and they withdraw themselves and become unwilling to adjust and allow God to heal their wounds. People who are unwilling to be humiliated you hear from them such expressions,

'I don't think I can forgive!'

'I cannot forget what had happen!'

'How they can say that _____ or how they can do that?'

'I don't think I can recover!'

If you among such people and react as they react your healing will delay and your progress in life will be far from you. Be like Joseph, forget what had happened and don't look to your wounds but look to the healer our God and look forward to the new way and the road that the

Lord had paved for you, the way of success and look forward to the prosperity that is waiting for you.

4. Loyal and submissive to his master: By virtue and criteria, being the son of Jacob and a believer and worshipper of God Joseph is higher than Potiphar and even higher than the jailer. But as he was put under them he was willing to listen and obey their instructions. ***“13 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” (Romans 13:1 KJV)*** Arguments and quarreling with your boss will not serve you or help you. It will just make life more difficult. If your master is cruel and non-understanding the best thing you do with him is to keep calm and silent and continue to do your work in a proper way and pray for him as Jesus advice us, ***“28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.” (Luke 6:28)***

5. Diligent: God would not grant Joseph the success unless he was diligent worker and active in doing all his duties and responsibilities. God will not bless lazy people with success. ***You need to be diligent and active in your work, and God shall bless the work of your hands.*** Joseph would not be successful unless he was punctual and keep time and appointments. ***Be the same like Joseph as a person who know well his job and what he need to do.***

The Word of God it teaches us the way how to live our lives in a successful way. There are commands the Word of God declares and dictates we need to heed and follow in our lives so that His grace will have its full effect and impact in our lives. From the real story of Joseph we can learn more important spiritual truth and facts, and in applying them we will find ourselves prosperous and successful.

6. Faithfulness and living in the fear of God: Joseph was faithful to God in keeping the commands of God alive and true in His life. He showed his responsible behavior to keep his identity as a Hebrew person belong to God by keeping himself pure, refusing to sin against God, ***“11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” (Psalm 119:11 KJV)*** As well as he showed his faithfulness to God by working hard and in a responsible way in his assignment in the house and in the field. He was a trust worthy person, he knew his responsibilities and he was doing them. He showed he is responsible and dependable person following what God’s Word says, ***“22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; 23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.” (Colossians 3:22-25 KJV)*** ***You do the same in your lives; to fear God and refuse to do wrong, and be faithful in your work by being disciplined, punctual, effective and fruitful in your service.***

7. Trusting God: Joseph trusted the Lord and His Word. He showed that by his willingness to continue to do right and obey God’s Word and commands even when things went wrong or in opposite direction. ***You also do the same during trials and struggles. Trust God and continue in this life to fully obey Him and walk in His ways.***

When things go wrong continue to pray and cry to God, trust Him that He will do something good to you to uphold you with His grace.

8. Capability to adapt: Joseph brought from Hebrews family and brought in Egypt to live in an Egyptian house. There are lots of things different that Joseph faced in his new atmosphere like the difference in the language, dress, type of food, and other differences in culture and habits. Joseph was able to adapt to the differences but when it comes to sins Joseph did not adapt himself with people ways in living in sin. ***Capability to adapt with the new culture and atmosphere that God is bringing you is a key for success. But be aware that adaptation to the new atmosphere does not allow you to sin as the people of the world sin and live away from God.***

9. Be a good steward: Joseph was a good manager to what had been entrusted to him. To be a good steward he was a man of wisdom. He knew how to handle people and knew how to speak to each and every person. Joseph, even he spoke well to the woman who kept on tempted him to follow her in bed and sin against God. He told her these wise Word, ***“ ... Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:8-9 KJV)*** He spoke the truth in love to her; he preached to her the gospel by showing her the sin clearly and directed her to obey God. ***You need to be wise how to speak and how to present the gospel to each and every person put under your care.***

Being a steward, included under Joseph care finances, and for sure Joseph managed finances well. One of the important aspects of person’s life is finances, and to know how to manage finances is a key for success. It does not need you much money for success but rather wisdom how to handle what you have.

10. Skillfulness: Joseph used all his skills to manage the work in the house and in the field. Therefore as he was successful in that, he was put in charge of everything in the house and in the field. The Word of God tells us that his master ***“6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. ... “ (Genesis 39:6 KJV)*** Skill is needed to overcome difficult situation and will bring success, ***“10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.” (Ecclesiastes 10:10 KJV)*** ***The same to you if you want to be successful then be diligent and from this time on start to use all the skills that God had entrusted in your hand. Put in your mind that God had good plans for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Therefore obey God’s Word and apply what it says and you will be prosperous and successful.***

11. Standing firm against temptations: One of the important points that accompany success is the style of high discipline. Joseph was highly disciplined and knew his responsibilities very well and he kept his commitment toward God, toward his employer and toward the people and the society that God had placed him in.

We need to ask what are the temptations that Joseph had expose to and was able to exercise self-control and overcome?

A. Sexual immorality: Joseph was exposed to that through the temptation of his master's wife, " ... *And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. 7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused, ...* " (*Genesis 39:6-8 KJV*) Joseph was handsome and well-built but he knew well that if God had blessed him with that, he should not use it in a wrong way. Sexual immorality is one of the common and dangerous temptations that man or woman would be exposed to. **The question is how to overcome that? You must be a clear minded; God's plan for you that one day you will have a family. God will provide for you the right partner when you are ready and well equipped for marriage. Those who had prepared their minds in such a way will not find that difficult to resist temptations. The fear of God will impart wisdom and understanding in your life that you will be aware that premarital sex is an effective tool to destroy your life. Sex has a responsible aspect that God gave for reproduction. And reproduction will only be possible when the atmosphere ready for that. When the man is ready spiritually and well provided materially, God provide the right partner and he will have a family. The Bible tells us the following: "7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass." (Psalm 37:7 KJV)** Many they go for dating and many they go for courting because they don't fear God and they don't wait upon His perfect timing. But they will fall in sin and they will carry the consequences of their sins. **Don't be envious of those people who do such. As well as there is no enjoyment in such style of living, sure they will pay the costly price of their sins. Wait upon God and be patient, He has a good plan for you; he is preparing you and is going to bless you with a family life.**

What Joseph did to overcome that temptation?

First: He refused to go with the woman. **You need to prepare you mind for action, to refuse and to say 'No' to such things.**

Second: He refused to be with her or near her. **It is not enough to say no, but also you need to go away. Because intimacy reduces self-control, in fact intimacy is an indicator of reduction of self-control.**

Third: He was diligent to attend his duties. **One way to overcome temptation is to be yoked and get involved in doing your responsibilities. Fear God, submit fully to Him and devil will go away from you. "7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7 KJV)**

Forth: **Change the atmosphere and be away from the opposite sex. As much as you can walk and live with Godly people. Be with your gender, boy with boys, and girl with girls to avoid temptations. Avoid watching movies and the TV programs and YOU tube that will ignite your feelings and emotion with the opposite sex. Be with your Bible and listen to God and obey Him.**

B. Money: As Joseph was in charge of the house and the field then sure there was money affair circulating under his care. And it was not reported that he stole money. **One important aspect and key for success is your honesty in regard to the money of others that put under your care. Don't be tempted to steal or to use some of it for your personal benefit, that money is not for you, it was only put under your care to manage it well. You need to fix your eyes on Jesus who will provide you with all your needs and give you your food at the proper time. Don't look to the people or put your eyes on their money that will not help you. Trust God, work hard and be diligent and God will provide for you. As well as a good steward for money you need to tithe your income and give to God your firstfruit and your offerings. Act faithfully and keep good record if your work involves money transactions.**

C. Abuse of power: As Joseph was in charge then different people would be under his authority. It was not mentioned that Joseph used his authority to abuse and to take advantage of those who are under his care. The Word of God tells us the following, **"9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."** (*Ephesians 6:9 KJV*) **You do the same, as the Lord is lifting you up don't be tempted to abuse and exploit those who are under your supervision. "8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."** (*1 Peter 5:8-9 KJV*)

My dear and beloved: Let us now review the criteria that we had expounded today from *Genesis 39* and let us check ourselves what we lack from the criteria.

Now let us ask God to deal with us so we can develop what we lack of these criteria:

- 1- **Being Forgiving person.**
- 2- **Being a Humble person:**
- 3- **Willing to be humiliated.**
- 4- **Being loyal and submissive to you master.**
- 5- **Being a Diligent person.**
- 6- **Being Faithful to God and living in the fear of the Lord.**
- 7- **Being a person who trusting God and rely fully on Him.**
- 8- **Being a person capable to adapt.**
- 9- **Be a good steward with time, finances and with people.**
- 10- **Having Skillfulness.**
- 11- **Being highly disciplined and standing firm against temptations of sexual immoralities, money and abuse of power with people.**

Allow God to mold you and work in your life. Humble down before Him and accept all the discipline, the trials and the hardships that He is allowing in your life so He can build you up in the way that you will be a successful person.

Repent from your sins. Repent of laziness, un-forgiveness, pride, carelessness, arrogance, anger, immoralities, worldliness, unfaithfulness, and repent of being bad in handling your money and wasting money. Repent of being abusing the people and not careful to handle

people in the light of God's Word. Repent of being choosy, obstinate and not willing to comply with the plan of God for you.

Now ask God to forgive you the sins that you confessed and ask him to start to mold you in the way that He desire to make you the person, that He wants you to be.

Let us pray

My prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that makes things clear to me and had showed me what are the things that causing me failure. Lord as I repent of my sins, Lord I ask you to help you to recover and to go back to the good plan that you have for me. Lord leads me and help me to live and do your will in my life. Lord give me one more chance and restore me. Oh Lord let the life of Joseph and what you did to him come also in my life as I repented of my sins. I commit myself to serve you and live my life for you. Lord gives me self-control, patience, long suffering, love, gentleness, kindness and perseverance so I can overcome all the temptations and to wait upon you till you fulfill your good plan for me.*

Lord I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who repented from their sins, that you will work greatly in their lives. Lord restore them and make them fruitfull and successful in their lives. Lord I pray that you will use them to serve you once again and to do what is good and right in your eyes.

Lord I pray for those who are weak among them that you will watch over them and help to overcome and be strong in your grace, and that they will start to obey and apply your Word in their lives.

Lord we pray for the church to grow. We pray for more evangelism and for more souls to be harvested. Lord we pray for more Bible studies to be planted. Lord we pray that our life testimony will be a good testimony to attract others to follow you. Lord bless us and enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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