

EXTRAORDINARY DREAMS #4: EXTRAORDINARY RELATIONSHIPS

(February 2010 – Beausejour Church – Pastor Chris Jordan)

OPEN ILLUSTRATION: Making donuts: I took a shortcut, didn't let dough rise as long as it said, they were heavy, not as good. We're used to Tim Horton's, drive-thru, instant mentality. Today we will look at the most important missing ingredient from extraordinary relationships:

REVIEW JOSEPH'S STORY FROM THE LAST THREE WEEKS: (Gen. 37-44)

Joseph had a dream that God was calling him to be a great leader. Joseph's brothers hated him, threw him in a pit, and sold him as a slave. As a slave, he was accused of rape and ended up in prison. While he was in prison, Joseph became a dream releaser. Because of Joseph's integrity and faithfulness, the Lord promoted him to the second in command in Egypt. As a famine ravaged the world, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food.

THE BIG IDEA: God wants us to pursue peace and walk in forgiveness towards all people. This is the key to experiencing extraordinary relationships.

JOSEPH'S STORY:

"**1** Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. **2** And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. **3** Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. **4** And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. **5** But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life." (Genesis 45:1-5).

1. Joseph pursued peace in his relationship with his brothers:

- *Joseph said: "Please come near to me." (v.4).*
- He could have taken on the victim mentality and written off his brothers.
- Joseph rather pursued PEACE. He chose to FORGIVE them.

"Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled." (Hebrews 12:14-15).

- When we don't walk in peace and unity, it affects our relationship with the Lord.
- When we get bitter, it causes trouble and defiles many people.
- Don't hang around with bitter, unforgiving people, they will defile you!

"You should also know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will... be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others... They will betray their friends... They will act as if they are religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. You must stay away from people like that." (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

- QUOTE: "Notice that they will have a form of godliness or "Christianity," but they will deny its power. How will they deny its power? They deny that Christianity can change them from being unforgiving to forgiving. They will boast of being followers of Jesus and proclaim their "new birth" experience, but what they boast of has not been allowed to pierce their hearts and bring forth the character of Christ." (John Bevere, Bait of Satan).
- God's Word makes it abundantly clear that He doesn't want us to hang around with people who are unloving, unforgiving, or slandering gossips!

- This is not talking about an unbeliever, but someone who calls themselves a Christian.
- If an unbeliever can't forgive, we can be friend with them. Because they don't know God's love and forgiveness, they can't forgive others.
- But when a Christian says they won't forgive someone, that's a choice to rebel against God's commandments, and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.
- We need to forgive all people, but we don't have to be friends with all people.
- The Pharisees / legalists were the only people Jesus didn't forgive or extend grace to.

2. Joseph trusted God's sovereignty even in His suffering:

"But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life." (v.5).

- He could have sought revenge for what his brothers had done to him.

"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:18-21).

- We won't be able to live peaceably with everyone.
- Don't seek revenge – God is the judge, and it's His job to render judgments.

3. Joseph forgave His brothers.

"Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him." (Genesis 45:15).

- Joseph knew the love of his father, and that made it easier for him to be forgiving.
- When we know God's love and forgiveness, we will be able to love and forgive others.
- Joseph ended up giving them grain for no charge, and then they were given the best land of Egypt for their families. Joseph blessed those who had cursed him and did good to those who had hated him, like Jesus told us to do (Matthew 5:44).

"And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil... Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live... Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior." (Ephesians 4:26-31, NLT).

- Words are powerful! When you gossip or slander someone, those are word-curses!
- We are ONLY allowed to speak words that will encourage and build up people.
- Otherwise, we grieve the Holy Spirit.
- When you gossip, slander or accuse someone, you are acting like Satan, the Accuser of the Brethren (Revelation 12:10).
- When people get into strife or offenses, they are caught in *"the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."* (2 Timothy 2:26).

ACTION STEPS: Are you hanging on to an offense towards someone? **FORGIVE THEM!**

Beausejour Community Church Website: www.beausejourchurch.ca

Pastor Chris Jordan's Blog: <http://thelandofpromise.blogspot.com/>