

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

April 16, 2010—The Jesus Way—Joseph

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts—Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” —Jesus (John 14:6)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ways of Jesus <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Abraham—A faith life b) Jacob—A man who wrestled with God c) Joseph—From slave to ruler 2) The Players <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Jacob b) Two wives, two concubines, and thirteen kids (Genesis 35:23-26) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Wife 1: Leah—Rachel’s sister <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Ruben (first-born) (2) Simeon (3) Levi (4) Judah (lineage of Jesus) (5) Issachar (6) Zebulun (7) <i>Dinah</i> (daughter) ii) Wife 2: Rachel—Leah’s sister <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Joseph (Rachel’s first-born) (2) Benjamin (youngest) iii) Concubine 1: Bilhah—Rachel’s maid <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Dan (2) Naphtali iv) Concubine 2: Zilpah—Leah’s maid <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Gad (2) Asher 3) Family Dynamics <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Intense rivalry between Rachel and Leah (30:1-24) b) Sons prone to treachery and violence (34:1-31) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) God moves the family to Bethel (where Jacob had seen the ladder—28:11-19) c) Rachel (love of Jacob’s life) dies giving birth to Benjamin (35:18)

- 4) Joseph's Brothers
 - a) Capable of violence (above)
 - b) Undoubtedly hurt by dad's favoritism toward Joseph (37:3-4)
 - c) Hurt was fed by Joseph's arrogance (37:5, 11)

- 5) Joseph: The Teenage Jerk
 - a) Was Jacob's favorite (37:3)
 - b) He was that most hated thing: a tattle-tale
 - i) He ratted out his brothers to dad (37:2)
 - c) He was arrogant and insufferable
 - i) Had his dad's egocentricity without the subtlety
 - ii) The two big dreams—tactlessly told to his brothers:
 - (1) Sheaves (37:5-8)
 - (2) Astronomy (37:9-10)

d) Joseph as *The Star*¹

Our egocentricity can be blatant and obvious, at least to everyone else, or extremely subtle. The ego is a great cheat, and, if clever enough, is capable of posing successfully as a saint when in fact a great deception is in progress. The ego, of course has great resistance to seeing its own egocentricity, for while such insight would not by itself free us from our own egocentricity it would make us uncomfortable with it and would be a harbinger of its eventual destruction. This we fear because we don't believe that we could survive without our castle. We suppose that nothing will hold us up if we surrender our egocentricity.

The Star [one of four forms of egocentricity posited by Fritz Kunkel] wants admiration. She wants to be on the center of the stage, the admired and glorified person.

[Joseph had a] Star form of egocentricity, in inordinate desire to shine, and receive adulation and homage from others...we will find as our story progresses that this great Star of a youth suffers the ironic fate of becoming a complete nobody—a slave without even a name to himself.

- i) We will see that it is Joseph's reaction to the exposure of his egocentricity that allows God to transform him.

- 6) The Circumstances
 - a) Joseph and his brothers do not ascribe the dreams to God
 - i) Brothers seem to take it as a further sign of Joseph's arrogance
 - ii) Could they be worried the Joseph, as Jacob's favorite, will jump seniority and receive "the blessing" over them, after all:
 - (1) He was Jacob's favorite
 - (2) Jacob was no respecter of birth order (see his treachery against Esau)
 - b) Where was dad in all of this?
 - i) Jacob keeps the dream "in mind" (37:11)
 - ii) Why didn't he warn Joseph from his experience that inheriting God's promise means a hard road!

¹ *The Man Who Wrestled With God.* 48, 129, 130.

	<p>7) The Plot is Hatched</p> <p>a) The violent nature of Joseph’s brothers explodes against him (37:18-20)</p> <p>b) Rueben, the oldest, prevails against a plot to kill Joseph outright and they throw him in a pit until they can decide what to do (37:21-24)</p> <p>c) Rueben leaves and Judah conceives the plan to sell Joseph as a slave (37:26-28)</p> <p>d) All the brothers engage in a cover-up for the sake of dad (37:30-35)</p> <p>8) Sidebar on Judah</p> <p>a) An unsavory character:</p> <p>i) Participates in the slaughter of Hamor, Shechem, and their entire city (34:1-31)</p> <p>ii) Comes up with the plan to sell Joseph (37:26-28)</p> <p>iii) Conceives twins with his daughter-in-law, believing she was a harlot (38:1-30)</p> <p>(1) From one of the twins, Perez, Mary will be a descendent (Luke 3:33)</p> <p>iv) Undergoes his own transformation: he is now willing to give his freedom for Benjamin’s (44:1-34)</p> <p>b) After all this, then he receives the prophetic blessing of Jacob (49:8-12)</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer
7:00 – ??	If you would like prayer, please come up front and one or more of us will remain to pray with you.

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Au, Walkie and Noreen Cannon Au. (2006). *The Discerning Heart: Exploring the Christian Path*. Paulist Press.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. (1995). *The Cost of Discipleship*. Simon & Schuster.
- Ciardi, John & Williams, Miller. (1975). *How Does a Poem Mean?* Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Ginzberg, Louis. (2003). *Legends of the Jews*. V1 & 2. The Jewish Publication Society.
- Haase, Albert. (2008). *Coming Home to Your True Self: Leaving the Emptiness of False Attractions*. IVP Books.
- Martin, James. (2005). *Become Who You Are*. Hidden Spring.
- Nouwen, Henri. (1981). *The Way of the Heart: Connecting with God Through Prayer, Wisdom, and Silence*. Ballantine Books.
- Ortberg, John. (2010). *The Me I Want To Be*. Zondervan.
- Payne, Leanne. *Restoring the Christian Soul*. 1991. Baker Books.
- Peterson, Eugene H. (2007). *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways that Jesus is the Way*. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Rohr, Richard. (2004). *Adam’s Return: the Five Promises of Male Initiation*. The Crossroad Publishing Company.
- _____. (2002). *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*. The Crossroad Publishing Company.
- Sanford, John A. 1987). *The Man Who Wrestled With God*. Paulist Press.
- Shelley, Bruce L. (1995). *Church History in Plain Language*. Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Tozer, A.W. (1986). *Men Who Met God*. Christian Publications.
- Yancey, Phillip. (2002). *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Zondervan.