

The Pattern of Detours

Genesis 39

Introduction

Detours have patterns. They typically have three components – testing, training and temptation. All of these components are a necessary part of the process. Testing involves negative circumstances that God either creates or allows in order to develop us. Joseph found himself in a pit. He had been treated like a prince and later found himself in the position of a slave. He was in a negative situation that he didn't create, and he had no idea that this detour was leading him to his destiny.

God allowed Joseph's negative circumstances and negative environment to train Joseph for his future. Joseph's difficulties served to develop skill sets that he would need in the future that God had planned for him. Joseph chose to believe God in each situation he was in, and God made sure that each circumstance trained Joseph for the next leg of his journey. Joseph chose to maximize his life no matter how hard that choice seemed to be. Many people want to advance but not develop. We should make the same choice Joseph made, and that is to maximize our time and place in which God has us until He takes us where He wants us to be.

Joseph had to overcome temptation when Potiphar's wife tried to convince him to sin. God allows temptation to see whether or not He can trust you. Training requires focus, and focus is tested when distractions come along. You may perhaps be tempted in many different ways, but the desired outcome is the same – you must pass the test to move on.

Getting Started

1. *What one point resonated with you from this morning's sermon?*
2. *Where are you "planted"? What would you like to change about your life that seems impossible? Share with your group.*

Let's Get Personal

1. Think about your life (home, work, family). *What are you learning? What good is coming from your hard place?*
2. *Are you guilty of complaining about your life situations instead of maximizing them?*
3. *What different choices can you make to advance in your situation instead of complaining about it?*
4. *Where are you being tempted? Are you passing or failing?*

Take the Next Step

1. *In some point in your life, have you experienced the victory of passing a test in life? Share your testimony with your group to encourage one another.*
2. Many times God does not take us forward because we keep failing the test. *Where are you struggling to pass a test? Share so that the members of your group can pray for you.*
3. For further encouragement from the Word, read from James 1:1-12 (testing), Hebrews 12 (training), or 1 Corinthians 10:13 (temptation).

Renew Your Mind

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28
