

The Purpose of Detours

Genesis 37:1-11

Introduction

Detours are a part of God's plan. They exist for the purpose of developing us for our destiny. God has to prepare us for the destiny and prepare the destiny for us! Joseph's story in the Bible is a wonderful illustration of this principle. He came out of a bad family situation that occurred both because of the evil of others and his own immaturity. God had to allow a scenario that would move Joseph out of one situation and into another. While it was painful, Joseph's journey was necessary if he was ever going to realize his destiny.

The problem for most of us is that we don't *like* the detours. Detours are inconvenient, longer than we would like, uncomfortable, and sometimes very painful. But detours are also necessary. Joseph is not the only one in scripture to have experienced a detour. Moses, Abraham, Paul, and the nation of Israel also had detours, and we can be encouraged that what looks like a problem can actually be used by God to bring about His perfect plan.

While there are many things about our detours we cannot control, there are a few things we can definitely affect. We have the ability to control our perspective by choosing to look at where God is taking us to, not where He's taking us from. We can also remember how we respond to the detour can determine how long we stay on that detour.

A bad past doesn't have to deny you your destiny. You must look at the things that happened to you in believing faith of God's divine purposes, even if it is painful. Joseph winds up in a pit - a deep hole in which he couldn't climb out. But little did he know that the pit was a part of God's plan. Joseph's story should give YOU hope. God has a DESTINY for you!

Getting Started

1. *What one point resonated with you from this morning's sermon?*
2. *Do you feel that you are currently on a detour in your life? Share with your group.*

Let's Get Personal

1. *Prior to today's sermon, did you think that your background or life experiences have disqualified you for your destiny?*
2. *Joseph ended up in a pit in which he couldn't climb out. Have you had a similar experience where your detour started with a major, difficult event in your life?*
3. *How would you characterize your detour? Long? Painful? Has it created a great inconvenience in your life?*
4. *How are you handling that detour? Are you impatient? Are you struggling? Are you angry with God? Be honest. Share with your group.*

Take the Next Step

1. *In the areas in which you can influence your journey to your destiny, how will you make adjustments in your attitude or outlook?*
2. *How can your group come alongside you to help in the process? How can your group pray for you?*
3. *Do you have an encouraging testimony or scripture to share with your group that might give another hope? Please share.*

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*
