

NOTHING IS WASTED

WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK TWO

Our current message series is called Nothing is Wasted. We are seeing how God has established patterns of using our trials and tears to bring about God's purposes. God worked in the story of Joseph to provide salvation to his still-forming people. Through a complicated story of betrayal, jealousy and imprisonment, God provided for his people during a famine. Nothing in the story is wasted. If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group go to www.prov.church/signup and click on Small Groups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this prayer together:

God who leads with a cloud by day and flames at night, guide us in our times of wilderness wandering. Take our hurt and pain and re-story our lives. Please make beauty out of the ashes we may be walking through right now. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: GENESIS 37.5-8

⁵ Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. ⁶ He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: ⁷ We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

⁸ His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

- Joseph was bold to share his dream. You might even say he was reckless. His brothers already despised him and were envious of the love their father lavished on him. Was Joseph bragging or just being honest? Maybe both? Have you ever had a dream you didn't share because it seemed too big? Has resistance ever caused you to doubt that dream? Describe.
- *Pray for discernment in paying attention to dreams and knowing when to share them.*

TUESDAY: GENESIS 45. 4-7

"I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!" ⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no

plowing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

- Many years later, after being thrown in a pit and then sold into slavery, Joseph is in a position to save his brother's lives. Even after all he has been through, Joseph is able to put everything in the context of God's plan of rescuing his people. What do you think you would do if you were in Joseph's position? When have you had an opportunity to offer forgiveness to someone who didn't deserve it? How does it feel to offer or withhold forgiveness? Have you seen God work good through your difficulties?
- *Pray for relief from any current struggles you are facing, and ask God to show you the bigger picture.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 16.33

³³ *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

- Jesus spoke these words to his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. He was offering them words of comfort in a world that had plenty of troubles. Do you know people who seem to have peace even in the middle of a storm? The peace comes from knowing that Jesus (not us) has conquered the world. Whatever trouble you are experiencing is manifest in the world, but your peace comes from above!
- *Pray for the peace of Christ that comes when you put your troubles in the context of eternity.*

THURSDAY: MATTHEW 9.6-8

So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home."⁷ Then the man got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

- Jesus performed many miracles. This is one of the quickest ones. The secondary audience of this episode in Matthew 9 were the teachers of the law whose concerns Jesus silenced by telling a paralyzed man that his sins were forgiven and that he could get up and walk. Have you ever gone so quickly from a low place to a sense that you had a new lease on life?
- *Pray to receive forgiveness through Jesus Christ and to experience his healing power.*

FRIDAY: PSALM 27.12-14

*Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,
for false witnesses rise up against me,
spouting malicious accusations.*

¹³ *I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.*

¹⁴ *Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD.*

- David wrote this Psalm while experiencing attacks on his life. His confidence though, was in a God who would reveal his goodness now. This confidence brought him patience when waiting for God to move. Where in your life do you struggle with patience?

- *Pray for patience in your current difficulties, and look for the goodness of God around you today.*

SATURDAY: JEREMIAH 29.11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

- These words from God were given to provide perspective in the middle of a really long story of exile--during which God's people were taken away from their homeland. This story mirrors Joseph's as he was taken away from his home, only to find himself in a position to be God's instrument. Have you ever had to leave what felt like home in order to go somewhere that seemed less hospitable? What does it mean for you to consider these words might be directed at you--"I have for you plans to prosper you and not to harm you..."?
 - *Pray to be filled with hope for the future that only come through God's plan.*
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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- Pastor Jacob shared the story of Joseph. He pointed out that it wasn't a one dimensional story. Joseph had a dream story, a bottom of a pit story, a bondage story, a falsely accused story, a prison story, a forgotten story, a leadership-in-crisis story, and a redemption story. Your story isn't one dimensional either. How would you describe chapters in your story? Can you see how your life is pointing you towards redemption in Christ?
- A key line from the message was, "Don't let the crisis lead you to a breaking down, but a breaking open." Why would we resist breaking open? What benefit could there be to opening yourself to the possibility and promise of God's redemption even in your pit, bondage, falsely accused, prison story?