

The Wreckers

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- [0 : 01] Genesis chapter 39, you know, life is full of ups and downs, curveballs, and life experiences that jump out at you and scare you, and if you don't feel like that's the case for you, you just hold on a few days, it'll come.
- We all feel like that. And I feel sure that Joseph felt like that as well. Well, God gives us an account at the end of Genesis of Joseph's life to help us through the twists and the turns of our life.
- Remember that Joseph's jealous brothers were going to leave him for dead, but instead to sell him into slavery and cover his beautiful coat with animal blood and try to allude to their father that he was attacked and killed when in reality they sold him into slavery.
- Those that bought him from his brothers then sold him to a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was the captain of the Egyptian guard.
- A modern-day equivalent to that would be the head of Homeland Security and the Department of Corrections. Potiphar had seen a lot and no doubt worked with top-shelf guys that could manage well.
- [1 : 27] However, he thought so much of Joseph that he entrusted this foreign slave to be in charge of his whole household. Scripture says that all he was concerned about was what he had to eat.
- We looked at this a couple of weeks ago, so I'll be brief, but what Peter also saw was the Lord's hand upon Joseph. He saw him blessing Joseph.
- Now, why would a pagan notice such as that? Because that's how God works. Never doubt the power of your steady walk with God.
- Never doubt the power of a solid testimony. God uses such as that. And Potiphar had so much confidence in him that he only concerned himself, it says, with the food that he ate.
- However, I want you to understand this morning that every time God is doing a good work, the devil likes to throw a snare into it. And I want you to notice what happens next.
- [2 : 30] It's in Genesis chapter 39, beginning verse 6. It says, now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.
- And it's interesting, the archaeologists believe that they found images of Joseph. And I want you to look at these very carefully.
- Just making sure you're all paying attention. I think I'll hear about that at lunch. And after a time, his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, lie with me.
- Because he refused and said to his master's wife, behold, because of me, my master has no concern about anything in the house. And he's put everything that he has in my charge.
- He's not greater in this house than I am. Nor has he kept back anything from me except you because you are his wife. How then could I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

[3 : 45] And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.

But one day when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, she caught him by his garment and said, lie with me.

But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house. And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, she called to the men of her household and said to them, see, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us.

He came to me to lie with me and I cried out with a loud voice. And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house.

And then she laid up his garment by her until her master came home. And she told him the same story saying, the Hebrew servant whom you brought among us came in to laugh at me.

[5 : 07] But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house. One of the devil's key forces in spiritual warfare, if not the top one, is sexual temptation.

Sexual sin is a big deal and it can cause absolute devastation. And that's the reason why Satan uses it so very often. I want you to notice what the Apostle Paul says about it.

In 1 Corinthians 6 verse 13, he said, the body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. He goes on in that in verse 18 to say, flee from sexual immorality.

Every other sin a person commits is outside his body. But the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own. You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. It's a big deal, folks. And the devil loves to downplay it.

[6 : 20] It's kind of like quicksand or at least the quicksand that I used to see when I watched TV growing up. I would have thought that quicksand would play a large, a much larger part of danger in my life based on the television programs that I watched growing up.

Because inevitably, if they went in the woods, they ran into quicksand. But I have never known a soul that's ever told me they actually ran into quicksand and couldn't get out. But based on my evidence from watching sorry TV shows when I was growing up, it seems like that it would have been a major deal.

That and tarantulas. Those two were a big deal. But based upon those television programs, in quicksand, the further you wander in, the harder it is to get out. The more you strive to get out, the harder it is.

So it is with sexual sin. The best route out of sexual sin is found in Genesis 39. Just do what Joseph did and get out. Wherever it is, get out.

Get out of the car. Get out of the room. Get out of the relationship. Get out of the situation. Just get out. Turn the channel. Put the phone down.

[7 : 33] Delete the app. Get out. As the apostle says, flee. Tuck. Tail. And run. It's not worth it.

It's addictive. Don't do it. Sexual temptation, any temptation, is not as it appears to be. And it's not worth it. It's bigger than it appears.

Because when we're tempted, it's really just, we really just see the tip of the iceberg. I want you to look at our situation in this passage. A good-looking married woman walks up to a young man.

Now, remember, Joseph is estimated to be between the ages of 17 to 20 in this situation. She compliments him.

She toys with him. And then passionately invites him to have his way with her. I got news for you. There's a lot more going on than just that.

[8 : 31] Now, that's a bunch. That's quite a lot. But there's a lot more going on. And the same wicked one that led those brothers to displace his brother is the same wicked one that is attempting to thwart the success that had come upon Joseph.

It's an evil scheme that's taking place. And she is just playing a small part in what the devil's trying to destroy in Joseph's life.

A few hundred years ago, on the island of Cape Hatteras, off the shores of North Carolina, there were men who made it their business to make ships run aground on the shoals just off the island.

These men were called wreckers. And they would lead a ship astray and then make their living off gathering the parts and the cargo of that ship that washed ashore.

Now, how would they do that? They would take an old nag, a horse, and they would fasten a lighted lantern to its head. And they would walk that horse back and forth up and down that shore.

[9 : 46] And from the ships that were out at sea that saw that light bobbing on that horse's head, it looked like a stern light of a ship that had found safe passage through.

And that would lead the ships that were out to sea to follow the path of the bobbing light, which would lead them to run aground due to a light on a nag's head, which is where the North Carolina village got its name.

And the morning after the wreckers would, if necessary, kill the remaining crew, collect the wood, collect the utensils, and the money that washed ashore, and make a big business of it.

Even today, if you tour that area, they can show you on cottage row houses that were built by the material that was collected by 2,300 ships that ran aground on the shores, either by accident or by deception.

When temptation of any kind, but especially that of a sexual nature, is flaunted before you, it is nothing more than an old nag himself enticing you to run aground and to be sabotaged.

[11 : 10] And we have to watch out for wreckers as well. I want to give you three wreckers to watch out for this morning. The first one is found in 1 John 2, verse 15, when it says, Do not love the world or the things in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The first wrecker we have to watch out for is the world. Now, please understand what it means when it speaks of world here.

What it speaks of is the mentalities and the atmosphere, the spiritual patterns in which we live that we have to watch out for. But that word world, cosmos in the Greek, is used several times in the New Testament, and it's used in various ways.

It can describe the earth itself. It can describe the people of the earth. Or it can describe, as the Apostle Paul put it, the powers and principalities of the air.

The atmosphere of the world. The spiritual battle in which we are in. And people have abused the fact that that word can use three different things.

[12 : 21] Megan Basham wrote a book called *Shepherds for Sale*, where she talked about leftist environmental groups with names like George Soros pumping millions into evangelical Christians to get them to support leftist causes in the name of, quote, creation care.

And in such an effort as that, John 3, 16 is read like this. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son. And they believe that means that he loved the world, he loved the earth so much.

And creation. And the trees and the whales and the owl. That he gave his only son. That that's the world that Jesus died for.

I want to be clear today. He didn't die for the humpback whale or the rare red spotted frog deep in the woods. He died for the sins of the world.

He died for the people of the world. But world in scripture may speak to the cosmos, the earth as God created. Or that we live in.

[13 : 33] Or it may speak to the people. But here it speaks of the mentalities and the atmospheres, the patterns in which we live. We are in a spiritual war.

And there are sinful patterns of our culture that run counter to the ways of God. And we need to not let that direct our course. And if we're not careful, we'll be like a frog in a kettle.

You put a frog in hot water and a kettle on a stove and it will jump out immediately. But if you put it in cool water and raise the temperature slowly, that frog will boil to death and never have the sense to jump out and save its own life.

And we can become the same way when we get enticed by the world. The world can be a wrecker. I'll tell you another wrecker and that's the flesh. He goes on to say in 1 John 2 verse 16, Listen folks, if nobody else was messing with us, and they are, but if nobody else was messing with us, we have enough within us to cause enough problems.

Why? Because what's in the world is too often within us. What drives us to get off track is defined as three different facets of the same problem in 1 John 2 verse 16.

[15 : 00] One is our yearnings. That's the desires of the flesh. Some cravings don't need to be fulfilled. God gave us appetites.

And then the devil manipulated and led us to take those things off focus. And we become driven by our yearnings. And Satan wants us to answer our every yearning because it leads to destruction.

Not only is our yearnings, but it's also our wants. The I got the habits. The desire of the eyes is what scripture calls it. And that's that deep desire to always want more.

We get something new and the luster runs off of it. And so it's time to get something else. We got to have something more. We like what we see that somebody else has got. And not only do we want what they got, but let's get a little bit better than they got.

It's called the desire of the eyes. And then it speaks of the pride of life or our pride. We got to look better than everybody else.

[16 : 03] He wants you to think that you are what is most important about your life. And when pride leads, we have to be a little bit better than everybody else.

And if we don't feel like we're better than everybody else, we got to hate them a little bit. Because we ain't quite matched up yet. Folks that are better and richer and prettier than us, can't stand them.

That's the pride of life, folks. And it will wreck you. Somebody's always going to be stronger than you. Somebody's always going to be richer than you. Somebody's always going to be prettier than you. It's just the way it is.

And so it just always will wreck you. It will stir your world. And if we're not careful, it will steer us the wrong way. And the key wrecker and the third wrecker is the one behind the other two.

And that's the evil one himself. The devil don't want to give you a headache. He wants to destroy you. John 10.10 says the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

[17 : 06] And that's his mission. 1 Peter 5.8 says, Be sober-minded, be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

He's a prowler. He's a lurker. He's looking for an opportunity. And that's just the third wrecker, the wicked one and his army. If you add that back to the pattern of this world that we so easily conform to, and then you put in that the problems that we have within ourself, which is the flesh, we're a messed up people and we're in the midst of a battle.

So what do we do? I am so thankful. And the reason why I spend so much time talking about people whose lives, 14 chapters are invested in Joseph's life.

It's worth our time. And the reason why is God gives us these examples for us to learn from them. So how do we respond to this? One, we state the truth. In the midst of the situation, we state the truth.

Jesus was put, excuse me, Joseph, not Jesus. Joseph was put in a compromising position, but he refused to compromise. Jesus did the same, by the way, but I wasn't talking about him.

[18 : 20] But Joseph was put in a compromising position, but he refused to compromise. And he stated why he wouldn't compromise.

In verses 8 and 9, he states, I'm not going to betray somebody who's entrusted so much to me. I'm not going to compromise. And then he states his commitment to God.

He says, how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? Sometimes you need to tell somebody, my commitment to God is greater than my yearnings.

And no matter what your situation or your pattern in the past, friend, it is not too late to change your stand on a matter. The devil loves to convince us that we've messed up before, so now it's too late to fix it.

There's a Greek word for that, malarkey. You can change today the pattern of your life, the way you were going, and change it to go in a way that honors God with your life.

[19 : 22] And what Joseph said about his owner and his Lord can relate to all of us. If you're single today, state it. I'm not going to ruin my testimony. I'm not going to compromise my relationship with the Lord.

If you've never married, state it. I'm not sacrificing my future marital fulfillment for today, and I'm not betraying the Lord. And if you're married, say it. I have a spouse that I'm committed to, and I will not be a part of this.

It dishonors God, the Lord that I've committed my life to. State that. And you know who needs to hear it more than anybody else sometimes? Ourselves. You might need to say it to yourself.

If you've got addictions, state this to the Lord. I'm not going to do this. Lord, pull me out of this situation. Lord, guide me. You need to state the truth.

But the second thing you need to do is flee the situation. Joseph left his coat in her hand, and the apostle Paul tells us to flee.

[20 : 28] It means tuck, tail, and run. I stated at the beginning. I'll state it now. There's no justification for sexual sin. It does not matter what has been done to you or what's expected of you.

It is never justified. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13 says, No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.

We all deal with the same thing. God's faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. But with the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it.

It's never justified. There's never an excuse. You flee! And third, honor the Lord. Let me tell you the rest of this story, at least for now for Joseph.

Scripture says, As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, This is the way your servant treated me. His anger was kindled. And Joseph's master took him and put him into prison, the place where the king's prisoners were combined.

[21 : 34] And he was there in prison. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison.

Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. The keeper of the prison, see if this sounds familiar, paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge because the Lord was with him.

And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed. Joseph was treated unfairly. He was locked up for crimes he didn't commit. What do you do if you're in a situation where you have been treated unfairly?

Sexual sin devastates too many people around a situation. So you may be a victim. And because you're a victim, you feel like whatever your action that you do is justified.

What do you do when you've been treated unfairly? I'll tell you what you do. You honor the Lord. You honor the Lord. The Lord was with Joseph even in the rough times.

[22 : 45] The Lord blessed him even when he was treated unfairly. He was still being blessed. The Lord showed favor to him in the eyes of others. The Lord allowed him to bloom in the midst of his tragedy.

The Lord caused him to be trusted and to succeed. The Lord was with him. And he was with the Lord. And God blessed him beyond measure.

I don't know what your circumstances are this morning. But I want to encourage you this morning to honor the Lord. No matter what your circumstances are, you honor the Lord. And you honor him when you're tempted.

You follow the pattern of success that he's laid before you. Honor him when you're mistreated. God knows your circumstances.

He sees your circumstances. He's intimately involved in your circumstances. And so you honor the Lord and stop doing what you're doing. And stop going where you're going. And stop thinking what you're thinking.

[23 : 46] Honor the Lord. The Lord will walk with you all the way. But when I read a story about Joseph's life and see something like this so laid out in Scripture so clearly, it's a wake-up call, folks.

It's a wake-up call. We need to state the truth to the Lord, to ourselves, and to others. State the truth.

Flee from temptation. And honor the Lord. The blessings of the Lord follows those who honor the Lord.

And when you can't see his hand in your life, you just trust him. You trust him. Life can get foggy sometimes.

Hard to ascertain which way to go. But he's laid it all out there for us to follow. We just have to trust him. Honor the Lord.

[25 : 01] With every head bowed and every eye closed, I want to ask you this morning. Is there a possibility that there's someone here who's never committed your life to Christ?

The Word of God says that we're slave to those sin patterns. That we can't find our way out of it. Outside of God. But with the Holy Spirit of God that indwells us upon our salvation, we are empowered.

And we have to rely upon that. We have to fall back on it. We have to trust it. We have to honor him. But we get an ability that we wouldn't otherwise have.

Not only do we get that in salvation, but we get forgiveness. He washes our sins away and he removes them. As far as the east is from the west, thank God, they're gone.

Amen. So today, if you've never given your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ, say, Lord, I'm a sinner and I want you to forgive me of my sins.

[26 : 09] Come into my life and to change me. Save me and empower me and bring victory in my life. If you've never done that, I encourage you to come when we stand to sing.

We'd love to guide you in what it means to give your heart and love to the Lord. Maybe you're here this morning and you have done that, but you've never publicly acknowledged that. It's been a private thing for you.

You've never publicly acknowledged that. Christ, by his example and by his commission, tells us to publicly acknowledge that through baptism. If you've never been baptized as a believer, I encourage you to come and we'll set that up.

Maybe you're here and God's leading you to be a part of Pickens First Baptist Church. You've visited with us and you've felt like this is home for you and you feel like God's calling you here. I encourage you to come. I'll be happy to guide you through that.

Or maybe you're just here and you need to take care of some stuff with the Lord. You need to make some commitments to the Lord. And you can do that where you stand. You can do that while you're sitting.

[27 : 15] You can do that at this altar. I'll be happy to pray for you. I have no idea what God's told you. I just know what he told me. And I encourage you to be obedient and follow him as he leads you today.

Lord Jesus, I love you and thank you that your Holy Spirit not only guided us to this place, but will guide us right now. I just pray that you'll help us to be obedient and follow your lead in all that we do.

In Jesus' precious name, amen. Amen.