

Criteria and Keys For Success

(Part 3)

“Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. ² The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. ³ When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, ⁴ Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. ⁵ From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. ⁶ So he left in Joseph’s care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷ and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!” ⁸ But he refused. “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. ⁹ No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” ¹⁰ And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. ¹¹ One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. ¹² She caught him by his cloak and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, ¹⁴ she called her household servants. “Look,” she said to them, “this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” ¹⁶ She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him this story: “That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. ¹⁸ But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” ¹⁹ When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. ²⁰ Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison, ²¹ the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. ²² So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. ²³ The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph’s care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.” (Genesis 39:1-23)

One of the important points that accompany success is a style of high discipline. Joseph was highly disciplined and knew his responsibilities very well and he kept his commitment toward God, toward his employer and toward the people and the society that God had placed him in.

11- Standing firm against temptations: We need to ask what are the temptations that Joseph had expose to and was able to exercise self-control and overcome.

A- Sexual immorality: Joseph was exposed to that through the temptation of his master’s wife, *Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷ and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!” ⁸ But he refused.* Joseph was handsome and well-built but he knew well that if God had blessed him with that, he should not use it in a wrong way. Sexual immorality is one of the common and dangerous temptations that man or woman would be exposed to. The question is how to overcome that? You must be a clear minded; God’s plan for you that one day you will have a family. God will provide for you

the right partner when you are ready and well equipped for marriage. Those who had prepared their minds in such a way will not find that difficult to resist temptations. The fear of God will impart wisdom and understanding in your life that you will be aware that premarital sex is an effective tool to destroy your life. Sex has a responsible aspect that God gave for reproduction. And reproduction will only be possible when the atmosphere ready for that; when the man is ready spiritually and well provided materially. The bible tells us the following: **“Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.” (Psalm 37:7)** Many they go for dating and many they go for courting because they don’t fear God and they don’t wait upon His perfect timing. But they will fall in sin and they will carry the consequences of their sins. Don’t be envious of those people who do such. As well as there is no enjoyment in such style of living, sure they will pay the costly prize. Wait upon God and be patient, He has a good plan for you; he is preparing you and is going to bless you with a family life. What Joseph did to overcome that temptation? *First:* He refused to go with the woman. You need to prepare you mind for action, to refuse and to say ‘No’ to such things. *Second:* He refused to be with her or near her. It is not enough to say no, but also you need to go away. Because intimacy reduces self-control, in fact intimacy is an indicator of reduction of self-control. *Third:* He was diligent to attend his duties. One way to overcome temptation is to be yoked and get involved in doing your responsibilities. Fear God, submit fully to Him and Devil will go away from you. **“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)** *Forth:* Change the atmosphere and be away from the opposite sex. As much as you can walk and live with godly people. Avoid watching moving and other TV programs that will ignite your feelings and emotion with the opposite sex. Be with your bible and listen to God and obey Him.

B- Money: As Joseph was in charge of the house and the field then sure there was money affair circulating under his care. And it was not reported that he stole money. One important aspect and key for success is your honesty in regard to the money of others that put under your care. Don’t be tempted to steal or to use some of it for your personal benefit, that money is not for you, it was only put under your care to manage it well. You need to fix your eyes on Jesus who will provide you with all your needs and give you your food at the proper time. Don’t look to the people or put your eyes on their money that will not help you. Trust God, work hard and be diligent and God will provide for you. As well as a good steward for money you need to tithe your income faithfully and keep good record if your work involves money transactions.

C- Abuse of power: As Joseph was in charge then different people would be under his authority. It was not mentioned that Joseph used his authority to abuse and to take advantage of those who are under his care. The word of God tells us the following, **“And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.” (Ephesians 6:9)** You do the same, as the Lord is lifting you up don’t be tempted to abuse and exploit those who are under your supervision.

My dear and beloved: ⁸**Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” (1Peter 5:8-9)** As you agree to pray.

My prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to serve you and live my life for you. Lord gives me self-control to overcome all the temptations and help me to fix my eyes unto you. This all I ask and pray in Jesus name, Amen.*