

Kindness

Genesis 39:13-26

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+39%3A13-23&version=NIV>

“The Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.” (vs. 21)

What is kindness? What does it look like? What does it feel like to receive kindness? Perhaps a door held open, a smile and kind greeting, a cup of coffee brought to the office for you just the way you like it, or other gesture of good will. What do we expect of others, what do we expect of God when we expect kindness?

Joseph was attacked by his brothers, thrown in a pit, overheard his brothers plot his murder, sold to slave traders instead of murdered, served as a slave in a foreign land, nobly resisted temptation, was falsely accused, and landed in prison. AND scripture says God showed Joseph kindness. Would we consider imprisonment God’s kindness, especially imprisonment after so many ordeals already? Yes, Joseph found favor with the warden and that was a kindness of sort, but if we were Joseph, would we see that as kindness. I would be tempted to be ungrateful, angry, frustrated, desperate, sorrowful, and hopeless. I would be tempted and perhaps give into the temptation to tell God just how unkind God is being toward me. Yet this is NOT the posture of Joseph. Joseph seems to take all of his trials in stride making the most of them. AND he experiences God’s kindness. He is able to see God’s kindness in the middle of troubling times. Joseph is able to behold God at work even in horrible life altering circumstances.

Joseph reminds us that it is easy to see and experience God’s kindness when our posture toward God is one of gratefulness, expectation, and hope. When we find life challenging and find ourselves in places of hopelessness and anger, we can take that hopelessness and anger to God. And we can be reminded of Joseph and look for glimpses of God’s kindness at work.