

Christians: On a Mission of Salvation

We must bring salvation to others through humility.

(Matthew 23:11-12; James 4:6, 10; I Peter 5:5-6)

Joseph did not lift himself to a position of power – it was granted to him through humility. Jesus already had eternal power, but He humbled Himself in order to give us eternal life. So too we must humble ourselves in order to gain the high station in life – in Heaven – that God wants to bestow upon us.

Do you feel you need to humble yourself before God? How do we do that?

We must become like the One who saves us.

(I Corinthians 9:20-23, II Corinthians 7:18)

If Joseph and Jesus are models for us, then our lives should reflect their characteristics. God wants to change your life to be more like Jesus.

What changes can you make in your life in order to become the kind of person you want to be?

We must respond to Christ for salvation.

(John 3:16-18, II Corinthians 5:17-21)

No one comes to God on His own. He must be drawn by the Holy Spirit to inquire about salvation. God and Christ have done all they can do for our salvation. God wants all of us to be saved.

What must we do to be saved?

If necessary, we must make sacrifices.

(Ephesians 5:1-2; Romans 12:1-2)

It may be the sacrifice of personal desires or dreams. It may be even mean sacrificing our lives, as Jesus did for us. Salvation only comes through sacrifice. Jesus sacrificed Himself for us. We must sacrifice our lives for Him.

What kind of sacrifices are you willing to give to God to let Him have control of your life?

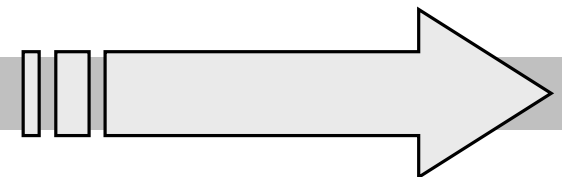
Joseph & Jesus:

Saving Others through Sacrifice

There are many people in the Old Testament who are said to be like Jesus Christ. Isaac was like Jesus in that he was offered as a sacrifice. Moses was like Jesus in that he gave Israel a law and way of life. King David was like Jesus in that he was a great ruler building God's kingdom. However, there is one person whose character is so much like Jesus Christ that we can see in him a model for who Jesus would be.

Joseph, the son of Jacob, led both a privileged and tragic life. He was loved by his father, but mistreated by his brothers. He was respected by his masters, but a slave in a foreign land. He became the Prime Minister of the most powerful nation on earth, but was still a foreigner, deprived of his family and cultural heritage. Yet it was all of these things that God used to make Joseph into a man who would save the known world from a great famine.

Unlike so many people who blame God, or blame others for their difficulties, Joseph saw all things as being opportunities from God to do good, and honor God on the Earth. Joseph took his difficulties and turned them into tools for God to use to save an entire nation. In this way he is like Jesus Christ, who took all of the difficulties that life threw at Him, transcended them, and brought salvation to an entire world.



Joseph: Savior of a Nation

Joseph saved a nation through humility.

(Genesis 39:2, 9, 21-23; 41:16; 45:5-8)

Joseph did not take credit for his blessings, but gave credit to God for the good accomplished by his hands. Joseph regarded his difficulties as opportunities given to him by God.

Think about your life. Do you have difficulties and struggles? Do you think that Joseph's God could turn them into blessings?

Joseph saved a nation by becoming like the people being saved.

(Genesis 41:38-49)

Pharaoh made Joseph *like an Egyptian* by giving him an Egyptian name, Egyptian wife, Egyptian home, and Egyptian authority. In this way, Joseph was endowed to save Egypt as one who had become like them.

Do you think God could use your life to help those around you in times of trouble?

Joseph saved a nation through initiative and responsibility.

(Genesis 37:1; 39:4, 21-22; 41:32-37)

Joseph was given great responsibility by his father, his masters, and Pharaoh; but he also *took the initiative* to take the responsibility to help others. Joseph offered to Pharaoh the idea of how to save Egypt though he had not been asked for it.

How are *initiative* and *responsibility* different? How do they compliment each other?

Joseph saved a nation through sacrifice.

(Genesis 41:50-52)

During the seven years of abundance, Joseph could have used his authority to have others do the work of collecting and storing the food tax in order to travel to Canaan, let his father know he was alive, and bring his family to Egypt. But instead of thinking first of his desires, he sacrificed all these things in order to save the nation that had mistreated him – Joseph's sacrifice and faithfulness eventually earned him great honor.

How have others made willing sacrifices for you? How have you made willing sacrifices for others?

Jesus: Savior of the World

Jesus saved us through humility.

(John 5:19; 7:16; 12:49)

Though Jesus did great miracles and delivered powerful words of encouragement and life, He gave all of the credit for his words and deeds to His Heavenly Father.

Men of the world believe they do great things by accumulating power. But Jesus, who had power as the Son of God, gave up that power to save us. Did what Christ did for us demonstrate that we are important to God? Explain.

Jesus saved us by becoming like us – the ones He was saving.

(Philippians 2:5-11; Romans 8:3-4)

Just as Joseph became like his Egyptian masters in order to save that nation, so too Jesus became a man so He could identify Himself with man, and save man from the spiritual famine of sin.

Look at the passages above. In what ways did Jesus become like us. Name as many as you can.

Jesus saved us through initiative and responsibility.

(I John 4:10; Romans 5:6-8; Isaiah 52:13-53:12)

No one asked the Son of God to become a man and die on the cross for our sins. God made these plans in advance. He took the initiative to take responsibility for the problem of sin that we could not solve on our own.

If God had not taken initiative to provide Jesus as the sacrifice for our sins, could we have been saved? Why or why not?

Jesus saved us through sacrifice.

(Mark 8:31; John 3:16, 6:51; Ephesians 5:1-2)

As Joseph gave life to the people of Egypt by sacrificing his desires for the nation's welfare, so too Jesus gave us eternal life by sacrificing His life for us on the cross – only to be raised from the dead three days later, never to die again.

Jesus made a willing sacrifice of Himself for us that we might be saved. How should you respond in order to honor what Christ did for you?

