**17 – Morals of Joseph**

*Genesis 39:7-12; 1 Corinthians 6:18*

*Morality – conformity to the rules of right conduct; moral quality or character; virtue in sexual matters; a doctrine or system of morals; moral instruction. – (dictionary.com)*

* Joseph made the choice to flee instead of committing sexual immorality with her. Why did he even have to make a choice? What were his thoughts based on?
  + *"Supposing there was no intelligence behind the universe, no creative mind. In that case, nobody designed my brain for the purpose of thinking. It is merely that when the atoms inside my skull happen, for physical or chemical reasons, to arrange themselves in a certain way, this gives me, as a by-product, the sensation I call thought. But, if so, how can I trust my own thinking to be true? It's like upsetting a milk jug and hoping that the way it splashes itself will give you a map of London. But if I can't trust my own thinking, of course I can't trust the arguments leading to Atheism, and therefore have no reason to be an Atheist, or anything else. Unless I believe in God, I cannot believe in thought: so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God."* —C.S. Lewis
  + The same logic follows with morality. If there is recognition of morality, then of necessity there is recognition of God.
  + **Morality and God cannot be separated, and so the boundaries and specifications of morality cannot be arbitrarily decided upon by man. They are defined solely by God. 🡪**

**Morality and God**

* Not even God arbitrarily decides – **James 1:13** (It is inherent in His nature.)
* God is wholly good, wholly light – **1 John 1:5-7**
* One cannot be of God without being as He is – **1 John 2:28-29**
* The fact that morality is completely related to God should cause us to search out His mind. Yet, some seek to establish their own boundaries. 🡪
* False Standards of Morality
  + Might makes right. (Those in power determine what is right and wrong)
    - *If it’s not against the law it’s not a sin? (****Romans 13:1-5*** *– Minister to God for good. If gov’t promotes evil, it doesn’t make it okay.)*
  + Right is determined by the group. (Values clarification, situational ethic, homosexuality, abortion as examples, toleration of different viewpoints, except for the intolerant).
    - *If the people I’m with are okay with it, then it must be right?*
    - ***“Evil company corrupts good habits” (1 Corinthians 15:33 – NASB “Morals”***)
  + Man is the measure. (“I will do as I please.” Cf. Judges 17:6; 21:25)
    - *It seems okay to me?*
    - ***“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” Proverbs 14:12***
  + Right is what brings pleasure. (Epicureans. Hedonism)
    - *How can it be bad when it seems so good?*
    - ***1 John 2:16; James 4:4*** *– Sin is enticing because of pleasure.*
  + There is no right. (Antinomianism. “I ought” should be replaced by “I feel”)
    - *It doesn’t matter one way or the other. It’s all relative?*
* All are subjective. Morality is not. (rules of right conduct; doctrine or system; instruction) Morality is objective.
* God defines morality. What does this mean for man? 🡪

**Morality and Man**

* **Genesis 39:7-12** – Joseph’s encounter with Potiphar’s wife, and reaction to it answer the question concerning morality’s relationship to man.
  + (**v. 3**) – Potiphar saw that Joseph was a man of God.
    - **(v. 4)** – Because of this Potiphar showed great confidence in Joseph.
    - Joseph alludes to this confidence when answering Potiphar’s wife **(v. 8-9a)**.
      * Joseph was a man of integrity, and fidelity toward his master. But a greater reason than this existed 🡪
  + **(v. 9)** – ***“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”***
* Man has a created purpose – **Genesis 1:26; Ecclesiastes 12:13**
  + This is fulfilled in becoming like God through obedience – **2 Peter 1:2-4**
    - We were created in God’s image and are to live accordingly.
    - We can do so because of the knowledge He offers us.
    - When we obey, and add to our faith, we partake of the divine nature.
  + ***“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children”* (cf. Ephesians 5:1)**
* Man cannot determine the specifics himself – **Jeremiah 10:23**
  + ***“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isaiah 5:20)***
* Instead he must transform his mind – **Romans 12:1-2**
  + Notice the concept of being conformed to the world. (This is a false sense of morality.)
  + **God determines what is right, and we must search out His word to transform our minds to think likewise.**
  + **Psalm 119:59-60 –** The psalmist saw the need to compare his ways to God’s and conform to God’s ways**.**
    - ***“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” (2 Corinthians 13:5*).**
* **Joseph was a man of God, and as such had the responsibility to live morally.**
  + **1 Peter 1:15** – holy as He is holy.
* Joseph fled from immorality.
  + **1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22** – We should flee immorality, especially sexual immorality.