

## “ADD TO YOUR FAITH” (2 PETER 1:5-7) LOVE

The references to love in the Scriptures are extensive. Verse after verse could be cited to demonstrate love's importance in our lives. Yet, the true character of love may be best understood as it is exemplified in the lives of the godly. One such character is Joseph from the book of Genesis.

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and a series of discouraging trials followed. Yet, through God's providence, Joseph becomes Pharaoh's second-in-command during the days of a great famine (41:39-40). During his tenure, his brothers trav-

eled from Canaan to Egypt to find food and are forced to ask the brother they sold into slavery for help. Joseph's response teaches much about love.

**Love forgives.** Joseph was able to forgive his brothers of awful crimes seeing God's hand in the chain of events which followed (45:4-5).

**Love saves.** Joseph knew it was in his power to save his brethren from the famine. So, he acted on the opportunity (45:6-7).

**Love emotes.** The outpouring of emotion is seen as Joseph hugs and weeps openly (45:14-15).

**Love is kind.** Joseph, at Pharaoh's suggestion, brings his entire family to Egypt so they might weather the famine together. This act suggests a sincere love (45:16-18).

**Love will be blessed.** As Jacob nears the end of his life he offers a blessing to Joseph and his two sons (Genesis 48). Just as hatred has its punishment love has its reward. The reward for the Christian is an "entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11). *JRW*

## WHY MY FAMILY NEEDS THE BIBLE PERSPECTIVE

What are the traits of a successful life? How one answers that question often reveals much about the depth of their faith.

Some adult men believe their life will only end successfully if they meet all of their financial goals while retiring at a decent age. Many adult women do not feel successful unless they have a college degree and profitable career while settling down in their dream home.

On the flip side, many young women are led to believe true achievement is maintaining a healthy diet and being admired for their physical beauty. Some boys feel unsuccessful if they have not achieved celebrity status in their schools by their prowess in the world of athletics.

Yet, the one who is led by God's divine book does not see the standard of true success as being financial,

educational, physical or social. The Christian's perspective of success is rooted in achieving spiritual goals.

In eternity, God will not care how expensive your home was but it will matter whether or not you stayed faithful to your spouse in your home (Matthew 19:4-6).

Fathers, at the judgment, God will not care if you had a window office or washed the windows at the office. Yet, it will matter whether or not you brought up your children "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Mothers, God will not be giving out any awards to women based on their professional careers. Yet, her life will have been a success if her children "continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" (1 Timothy 2:15).

God will not care if boys play varsity or draw water for them. Because "bodily

exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8).

Further, outward beauty will not get young women into the gates of heaven because "the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit...is very precious in the sight of God" (1 Peter 3:4).

The person who reads the Bible will become much more conscious of God's view of success than the world's perspective. John contrasts these two perspectives saying, "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...And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:15,17). Does your family see life from God's perspective?

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