

Feb 22nd – Sermon notes

Text: Ephesians Chapter 2:1-10

- God resurrected us, raised us up, and repurposed us for good works in accordance with His eternal plans

At our Bible study last Thursday, we primed ourselves for today's celebration by looking at God's Great Work reflected in the life of Joseph. His specific story is unique but **God's power to create amazing stories out of ordinary lives is not. The Bible is filled with them.**

And even today, the world is filled with them.

The eternal God is doing a great work all over the world – one life at a time. And each of our lives is included in that tapestry of wonders. He is doing a great work in our relationships and circumstances - even when they are turbulent and uncertain.

Main Idea: *If His purposes are bigger than my dreams, then I don't have to cling so tightly to the picture I drew. I can open my hands. I can trust His creativity. I can let Him write the story in ways I never would've imagined.*

As you consider your own life, I want you to bear these four things in mind.

1. With God you have no disadvantages.

- You are a living, walking, talking, thinking miracle. A new creation. Rebirth. Transformation. Filled with divine presence.
- A disadvantage is an obstacle that prevents you from accomplishing a desired end. Business. Education.
- Your presence in this day that the Lord has made isn't some cosmic clerical error. You didn't just blow in here like a random receipt from the grocery store parking lot. This day was entrusted to you – where you are and as you are.
- God used people who were fighting against His purposes. **Joseph:** You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

2. God's great work in you is greater than your dreams.

- **Critical Skeptics of our faith, willingly identify three major obstacles that they find difficult to explain away. The empty tomb. The conversion of the apostle Paul, and the conversion of Jesus' brother, James.**

- He was not a follower of Jesus when Jesus was on earth, in fact he was most likely among the relatives who came to pick up Jesus because they thought He was out of His mind.
- But that same James became not only a convert but the leader of the church at Jerusalem. That's a great work. Paul tells us why in 1 Corinthians 15. Jesus appeared to James after His resurrection.
- **James never dreamed he would be not just a follower but a leader for the cause of his crazy brother, Jesus.**

3. **You're never too old for God to do something new.**

- You're not behind. You're not past your moment. God's purposes for us don't expire when we hit a certain age. They don't require that we be what we were back-in-the day.
- Joseph was still a young man when he became 2nd in Command to Pharaoh. But he was a bunch of years and a lot of surprises further along in life than he originally imagined.
- Moses was 80 when God called him. Abraham was 100 years old when his promised son, Isaac was born.

4. **You can aim beyond our dreams.**

- As a young man Joseph's dream revolved around how his brothers would see **He** was the star. When the dream was fulfilled. He saw that God was the star: It wasn't just about me. You meant it for evil but God meant it for good, for the saving of many lives.
- How can we aim at a purpose that we don't see? That is hidden from us. We don't need to know what it is. We just to stay close to the One who holds it for us.
- The most amazing work He is doing is in our personal relationship with Him.
- Peter calls this life our "stay" on earth — a visit filled with beauty, laughter, challenges, and the good works God has woven into our days. And when our stay is finished, we go home.

God prepared good works for you before you were even born. They may not have the glam or the shimmer that makes the world take notice, but they have the satisfying substance and eternal value that no worldly accomplishment can ever provide: they deepen your connection with your Creator, who not only gives life, but who *is* the life.

