

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 51

Dearest Grandchild,

Joseph is one of my favorite Bible heroes. In particular, I am impressed by the fact that he was not bitter in spite of enduring years of mistreatment and abuse. Consider this chronology:

- Joseph was 17 when God gave him dreams about his future (Gen. 37:2 - 11).
- His brothers hated him because he was the favorite of his father. When he told his dreams to his brothers they hated him all the more (Gen. 37:5).
- His brothers sold him as a slave into Egypt (Gen. 37:23 - 28).
- Joseph was purchased by Potiphar, one of the Pharaoh's officials (Gen. 39:1).
- Joseph worked hard to please his master, but went to prison because his master's wife lied about him (Gen. 39:6 - 20).
- God was with Joseph, even in prison and blessed whatever he did (Gen. 39:23).
- Joseph interpreted dreams for two prisoners, and one of them promised to remember him before the Pharaoh. That man forgot that promise for two full years (Gen. 41:1).
- Finally, Joseph's opportunity for fame arrived. God enabled him to interpret dreams for the Pharaoh, and because of this, Joseph was made the second most powerful man in Egypt. Joseph was 30 years old at the time (Gen. 41:46).
- At this time Joseph had been mistreated and abused for 13 years.
- After 7 years of plenty, Joseph was 37 years old when the famine came (Gen. 41:57).
- After 2 years of famine, Joseph made himself known to his brethren. Thus he was 39 at the time (Gen. 45:6). 22 years had gone by since they sold him into slavery.
- Joseph was not angry about all of the hardship he endured. Quite to the contrary. He realized that God had used all his years of suffering for a purpose. Note: **"Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt" (Gen 45:4-8)**

Perhaps you have seen this list of failures and set backs experience by Abraham Lincoln.

- 1816 - His family was forced out of their home. He had to work to help support them.
- 1818 - His mother died..
- 1832 - Lost job.
- 1832 - Defeated for state legislature.
- 1833 - Failed in business.

- 1834 - Elected to Illinois state legislature.
- 1835 - Sweetheart died.
- 1836 - Had nervous breakdown.
- 1837 - Became law partner of John T. Stuart.
- 1838 - Defeated for Speaker.
- 1839 - Admitted to practice law in U.S. Circuit Court.
- 1840 - Argues first case before Illinois Supreme Court.
- 1841 - Established new law practice with Stephen T. Logan.
- 1843 - Defeated for nomination for Congress.
- 1846 - Elected to Congress.
- 1848 - Lost renomination.
- 1849 - Rejected for land officer.
- Declined appointment as secretary and then as governor of Oregon Territory.
- 1854 - Defeated for U.S. Senate.
- Elected to Illinois state legislature (but declined seat to run for U.S. Senate).
- 1856 - Defeated for nomination for Vice President.
- 1858 - Again defeated for U.S. Senate.
- 1860 - Elected President.
- 1865 - Shot by an assassin and died April 15, 1865.

Just received the Aug. 3, 2015 flyer from Our Daily Bread Ministries. It features the inspirational story of Jim Ryun. He and his wife Anne, have been married for 46 years and form a dynamic duo to tell the world about Jesus.

Jim achieved national acclaim on June 5, 1964 when he broke the 4 minute mile as a high school student. He also participated in 3 Olympic Games winning a silver medal in 1968 in the 1500 meter run. Our Daily Bread notes: "Not bad for a kid who was cut from every other sports team and prayed every night, 'Dear God, if you've got a plan for my life, I'd appreciate it if you'd show up sooner or later, because it's not really going very well' "

So, here we have 3 inspirational stories. The story of Joseph, Abraham Lincoln, and Jim Ryun. All of them faced hardship, set backs, and rejection. All of them overcame those obstacles and became great successes. What about you?

Here is a poem that Grandpa memorized many years ago. I don't know who wrote it.

The tree that never had to fight for sun and air and space and light.
That grew out in the open plain and always got it's share of rain.;
It never became a forest king, but lived and died a grubby thing.

The man who never had to toil with hand or mind mid life's turmoil.
Who never had to win a place for sun and air and sky and space.
He never became a manly man, but lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow in ease. The rougher the storm, the tougher the trees.
The further the sky the greater the length, the rougher the storm the greater the strength.
So, though rain and heat, through cold and snows, in trees as in men, good timber grows!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce