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INTRODUCTION

You'd like to think you could overcome anything—the pressures of work, relationships, money or even faith. Pressure is common, but overcoming it can require uncommon approaches. Joseph's life is a series of successful and not-so-successful attempts at overcoming pressure; learn from his attempts.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Read Genesis 37

1. How would you characterize Jacob's family? What caused the tension between the brothers?
2. Why did Jacob favor Joseph and how did Jacob make that known? (For background to the family dynamic see, Genesis 29-30).
3. Joseph has two dreams that reveal his desire and destiny. God appears to be missing from these dreams. How might this affect his actions and attitude?

4. Genesis 37:18-36 describes the malice Joseph's brothers have toward him. Think about the extreme measures to which they go. What caused them to act in such a way? Do these actions suggest anything about their relationship with God?

5. In the Old Testament, the rise and fall of individuals is often connected to their relationship with God (check out Deuteronomy 30:15-16; Psalm 37). Would you say that this is generally true today?

6. Joseph's life challenges us to depend upon God. How might dependence upon God in chapter 37 have altered Joseph's actions and attitudes? (cf. Genesis 45:7-8)

7. Define dependence? What does it communicate about your relationship with God? (Lamentations 3:22-26; Jeremiah 17:5-8)

8. Think about a challenge you faced this past week, could the situation have improved if you gave greater focus on dependence? What might have dependence upon God looked like?

MOVING FORWARD

Pressures and challenges will never cease, how you approach them will not only shape your perspective but can provide fulfillment. Dependence upon God is the starting point that changes everything. Where do you need to better connect with God?