



## **Amazing Race Series**

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### **Week 1- Getting Out of the Maze**

God designed us with purpose to bring fulfillment in our lives. Purpose is only revealed as we walk with God and let Him lead us.

Joseph's favor and dreams. **Gen. 37:1-11**

### **Week 2 – Overcoming Roadblocks**

People will not be excited for you. You must hold fast to your dreams and be around non-toxic people.

Joseph's brothers (hatred, jealousy), Potiphar's wife (accusation), fellow prisoners (selfishness) **Gen. 37:12-36**

### **Week 3 – Detours to Destiny**

Though the vision delays wait it will come to pass. Do not cast away your confidence.

Delays are not defeats, they are only detours. Sometimes we need these character shaping experiences to prepare us for responsibility and leadership.

Joseph in slavery and prison endured by trusting God. **Gen. 39**

### **Week 4 – Winning Strategies**

Having the right attitude of trust in God and loving people causes us to win.

Joseph is honored because of his servant's heart and diligence. **Gen. 40-45**

## Part 1 – “Getting Out of the Maze”

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Series to start things off. I don't watch much TV but having traveled extensively around the world I love to see people in the same predicament I often found myself in, Lost in a foreign country where you don't know anyone and don't speak the language. The premise of The Amazing Race is for teams of people to follow clues, travel around the world, overcome roadblocks and detours, and try to win the prize of \$ 1 million.

I will draw from this TV series and a young man's life who lived some 6,000 years ago who also had an amazing journey and faced many of the obstacles the people in the TV and you and I face on our journey. His name was Joseph.

God has designed each of us with a specific purpose.

**Video: What is Your Purpose?,** Note: One guy, *“I'm scared to think about it.”*

More and more people today are not finding fulfillment and purpose. They are seeking fulfillment in careers, relationships, hobbies, sports, intellectual pursuits, or finally escaping when the answer is just too elusive. People are in a maze of activity living from piece of cheese to piece of cheese but never finding anything more.

Two people who have reached pinnacles of success and worshipped by fans.

"Those who are sick are in need of a doctor." And the sad thing is we're all sick. It's part and parcel of the human condition, and of living in the United States in the 21st century. We're all deeply unhappy, disconnected, unwell people. We need each other, and we need God. And if God made the universe and if God made us and if God made the world, it just makes sense to invite God into our lives and ask him, "You made me—what should I be doing?"  
– Rock artist Moby

**Video: Tom Brady 60 Minutes interview Nov. 6, 2005**



But with all Brady's fame and career accomplishments, Kroft was surprised to hear this from him: "Why do I have three Super Bowl rings and still think there's something greater out there for me? I mean, maybe a lot of people would say, 'Hey man, this is what is.' I reached my goal, my dream, my life. Me, I think, 'God, it's got to be more than this.' I mean this isn't, this can't be what it's all cracked up to be."

"What's the answer?" asks Kroft.

"I wish I knew. I wish I knew," Brady replies.

"Which of the rings do you like the best? What's your favorite ring?" Kroft asks Brady.

"My favorite ring? I've always said, you know, I always said the next one. The next one is the best," Brady says.

How do we find the way of the maze, how do we find a sense of destiny and fulfillment?

We must come to believe...

## **We were created on purpose with a purpose.**

**Illustration:** Hold piece of Kevlar. Ask: Anybody know what this is?

First of all because it exists we assume it does something. It has some purpose and value or otherwise someone would not have gone to the trouble of making it. That is a logical assumption we all make. Why is it we do not have that same assumption or belief about ourselves or every person for that matter.

If you want to know the purpose of something you go back to the creator of it. The person who created it knows better than anyone why it exists.

It is God who gives us the dreams in us.

### **Gen. 27:2-19**

*Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them.*

*<sup>3</sup>Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. <sup>4</sup>When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.*

*<sup>5</sup>Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: <sup>7</sup>We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."*

*<sup>8</sup>His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.*

*<sup>9</sup>Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."*

*<sup>10</sup>When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" <sup>11</sup>His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.*

This is one of the core values that drives our church. Every person is important every person has a purpose to fulfill. The Apostle Paul uses the example of a body to show how Christ's body the church functions. Each part is needed and when parts are missing

or not functioning other parts have to work harder. The body can still function but it functions better when every part is doing its part.

We have process we have developed to help you find your place and discover where you can best serve God. We also want to help you be a better father, husband, wife and mother. We want to teach you how to be free from the past that keeps you from moving forward and walk with you.

This type of discovery and change is best walked out with other people. Not just any people. Some of you are involved with people that are keeping you down, tying you to your past. You need to find people who have found the way out of bondage and a free to help you.

We are inviting you to become part of the greatest adventure in life. To discover God and to understand the incredible plans He has for you and to find a people who will cheer you on to victory is the best way to live.

Today we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ because it is a message of hope and victory for every person. No matter how much you have been beat up, no matter what is in your past, God has a message of hope for you.

You are loved, you were designed for a great purpose. Sin and failure do not have to hold you back. Your past does not have to hold you back. People and circumstances do not have to hold you back. It is a new day, it is a day of resurrection. It is a day to break hold of all of that death and grab hold of eternal life.

## **Week 2 – Overcoming Roadblocks**

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### **Video: Amazing Race - Roadblock**

Last week we saw the best way to find about the purpose for anything is to go to its creator. God created us on purpose with a purpose. Only through a relationship with Jesus Christ can we begin to walk in the purpose or direction God has for us.

This is my model when I am sharing with people. “There is something in you...”

Why in public I refer to myself as a Life Coach. I am helping people pursue and fulfill their dreams.

Tom Landry: “I make men do what they don’t want to do to become the men they want to be.”

### **Back to our hero Joseph.**

Last week we talked about the dream put in his heart, a dream that some day he would rule over his entire family. We also learned this did not go over well with his brothers. If you read the story this week you saw that Joseph’s brothers wanted to kill him but instead they sold him into slavery for 20 pieces of silver, similar to Judas betraying Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. Sold as a slave (humiliated) advances, accused of rape imprisoned, still advances. Interprets dreams for two men and is ignored. Then is remembered when Pharaoh has a dream which he interprets.

Joseph has this dream from God. He gets no support and even gets attacked and seemingly stopped in his plans.

Lets see what kind of lessons we can draw from Joseph’s life and apply them to the dreams we have.

#### **1. Dreams have a cost attached to them.**

**“For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.  
Hab. 2:3**

A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for.

#### **2. People will not always encourage you in your dreams.**

Responses to Joseph’s dreams: Joseph’s brothers (hatred, jealousy), Potiphor’s wife (accusation), fellow prisoners (selfishness).

Sometimes it is because your dreams challenge people who by comparison may not have any.

ILL. – Cooking crabs in a pot in Florida. Every time one would try to climb out the others would reach up and pull them back down.

**Mark 10** – James & John wanted to sit on Jesus right and left hands when He came into His kingdom. He asked if they were willing to “drink the same cup” or go through the same sufferings to get there. They said they were. Immediately the other disciples were jealous of them.

People will not be excited for you. You must hold fast to your dreams and not be around non-toxic people.

Woman to friend who is attending college at 62, “Mabel you will be 66 before you graduate.” Mabel responds, “I’ll be 66 anyway”.

**Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” I Cor. 15:33**

Need godly people who will encourage you.

**But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. Heb. 3:13**

### **3. Roadblocks must be anticipated and overcome.**

Every episode of Amazing Race there is a Roadblock. The goal is to get past the roadblock and stay on your journey to your destination.

People have faced horrific roadblocks and moved on. Abandonment, divorce, accident, cancer, loss, disappointment, financial ruin, all are roadblocks.

**Jesus said, “In this life you will have trouble. But be of good cheer I have overcome the world.” John 16:33**

How many people have given up just before victory.

Joseph had to get through prison, slavery, accusation, being humiliated, no support, neglected, no resources, every excuse you could imagine.

Some people settle into mediocrity because they have found their excuse.

Sitting in front of the TV or in some bar or just giving up, you can always find reasons, some of them are good ones.

I tell my children all the time: A REASON IS NOT AN EXCUSE.  
Is your excuse for not pursuing the dreams God put inside you enough to comfort you.

Dave Roever talking about friends sitting on bar stools mad at God mad at their country always having an reason but a reason is never an excuse.

**Video: The Rookie** – wife telling her husband to go for it as a model to his son.

It is selfish to not dream of making the world better for yourself and others.

I'm at the age of life where I am less concerned about my personal success and more about the legacy I am going to leave. I believe my legacy will be the people I have influenced.

Illustration of WWII mountain pass France to Spain.

I love the movie Field of Dreams just because this guy was willing to do what seemed foolish because he thought he heard a voice. If Christians were more attentive and responsive to the voice of God what Fields of Dreams could we build for families, neighborhoods, communities?

“Do not oppress the foreigners living among you. You know what it is like to be a foreigner. Remember your own experience in the land of Egypt. Ex. 23:9

## FAITH UNDER PRESSURE

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.

If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. James 1, The Message Bible

## Week 3 – Detours to Destiny

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### Introduction

Week 1 talked about the dream in each of us and the unique purpose God created each of us for and to find that purpose we must walk with God and let Him lead us into that purpose.

Last week we talked about the costs associated with fulfilling a dream. People will not always be supported, circumstances might not always be the best, you may not have everything you need but God does and if we trust Him He will lead us.

Roadblocks we can tackle, press through, overcome we can do something!

But detours? You try, move from one lane to the other only to have slow down. Then you curse the guy who drive up the lane they are closing and then tries to sneak in. You pull up to the car in front as close as you can and cut him off and then give him a dirty look (and then repent because it was somebody you go to church with).

This week we are going to look at the detours, how Joseph our hero for this series handled the detours to his destiny and some practical ways to handle detours in our lives.

### Detours – Gen. 39

#### 1. Detours of Discouragement (no courage, hope or confidence)

Joseph is accused of rape, thrown in prison, forgotten, ignored and taken advantage of after he helps other kings servants out. Yet... he never seems to question God. He never gives up. Don't you know his friends had to be telling him to forget about that dream. The guards probably mocked him as he prayer. Yet, he still advanced.

He had to ask, "what's wrong with me, why is everyone blessed."

One of writers of the Psalms contemplated this.

*So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! Then one day I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I thought about the destiny of the wicked. Psalm 73:16-17*

But he never does even with rejection seemingly forgotten.

#### 2. Detours of Disappointment (to frustrate plan, not be appointed.)

*If God is for us why has all this come to pass, that was Gideon's question to God. The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup>When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior." <sup>13</sup>"But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian." Judges 6:11-13*

You never hear Joseph complaining, griping to God, shaking his fist in God's face and saying, this is unfair, I didn't deserve this.

### **3. Detours of Delay**

What do you do when your dreams aren't coming true? Do you wait patiently? Do you give up throw in the towel and quit?

*Since a king's word is supreme, who can say to him, "What are you doing?"*

<sup>5</sup> *Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm,  
and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure.*

<sup>6</sup> *For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter,  
though a man's misery weighs heavily upon him. Eccl. 8:4-6*

**Let's talk for a minute how not to respond:**

**Frustration** is a sign that I want my way, now! We start by blaming other, circumstances, and ultimately God for the circumstances we are in.

**Bitterness** consumes people who lose perspective and feel they have been abused, neglected, and didn't get theirs.

**Selfishness** becomes the main motivation for those who look out for number 1.

All of these responses are result one thing. We do not trust God.

## **How should we Respond to Delays?**

We must trust God. God is willing to direct you to your destiny, are you willing to let Him lead in His way and in His time.

God is transcendent and immanent.

### **Video: Bruce Almighty**

By putting our trust in God and letting Him lead He can lead us into victory.

If we resist God we are saying we don't trust Him or He is not capable of running our life, or He does not love us enough.

Because He made the world He has proven He is able.

Because He sent Jesus to dies for us He had proven His love.

*If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;  
<sup>20</sup> but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the  
LORD has spoken. Isa. 1:19-20*

*A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."*

<sup>41</sup>*Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"* <sup>42</sup>*Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.*  
*Mark 1:40-43*

*"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."*

<sup>43</sup>*An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.*  
*Luke 22:42-43*

Jesus prays this same prayer that others had cried out to Him and the Father did not answer Him. He did send an angel to strengthen Him for the purpose ahead.

God may not deliver you from all your circumstances but I GUARANTEE He will strengthen you to go through and come out on the other side a better person more equipped to help others.

Joseph came to the place where he responds to Pharaoh, when asked if he can interpret the dream, **"No, but God can."** **Gen. 41:6**

**Luke 22** – Jesus last night with disciples. They are arguing who's the greatest Jesus is washing their feet as a sign of the character He wants them to have.

Peter saying he will follow Jesus to the death and then denies Him.

Jesus forgives him and restores on the beach in **John 21**.

Asks three times do you love me. Peter responds yes and Jesus tells him what kind of death he will face for following Christ, crucifixion.

Peter say, what about him, referring to John. Jesus say, "that doesn't concern you." He is on a different plan.

That is the plan we want the **"John Plan** not the **"Peter Plan"** Peter plan leads to suffering crucifixion, the John plan you get to live out your days in comfort with lots of revelation and influence.

**Jesus was asking Peter to sign a contract, make a commitment.**

**One Problem: CONTRACT IS BLANK.**

The big question is will you sign-up not knowing what plan God has for you even if you walk with Him years by year and it seems to change.

Will you sign the blank contract?

Surrender your will, not just once when born-again, but daily and sometimes during temptation it is moment-by-moment as we echo the words of Jesus,

**"Not my will but Thine be done".**

## Week 4 – Winning Strategies

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### Video: Amazing Race – Winners

We've used this Reality TV show as a metaphor for the race we run in life.

This is a picture of life. You run around never really enjoying the sites in a rush to just to the next place constantly worrying about where we are in the race in relationship to other runners and worried about getting beat.

The Good News is this last scene shows a picture of the believer's life. Striving forward being cheered on by the saints and being declared winners. Only the prize we are running toward in life is eternity. The stakes are much higher.

We have also used the life of a young man in the first book of the bible, Genesis, as a model for how to handle life's amazing race.

Today we will examine what was probably the key principle in the life of Joseph that got him through all of the overwhelming roadblocks and detours to his destiny.

**Joseph understood the secret of God's presence.** We never really see Joseph praying or calling out to God but we see the impact of walking with God and later we see acknowledging that God was directing his life even in the most difficult times.

### Gen. 39:2-6

The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup>When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, <sup>4</sup>Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. <sup>5</sup>From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. <sup>6</sup>So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

### Gen. 29:20-23

But while Joseph was there in the prison, <sup>21</sup>the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. <sup>22</sup>So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. <sup>23</sup>The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

### Gen. 41:38

So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"

The most amazing thing to me is that Joseph never gave up trusting God. He was aware the principle Paul wrote to the church at Rome,

**Rom. 8:28**

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Understand this verse is predicated on the preceding verses.

**Rom. 8:26-27**

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.<sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

If we don't pray, if we don't acknowledge God and let Him lead us then things are going to work for our good. When we take back control and find ourselves complaining and frustrated we are saying we cannot trust God.

**God created man for relationship.**

**Gen. 1:27-28**

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Psalm 139** – A great Psalm to meditate on and understand Gods' thoughts toward you.

**God wants to walk with you.**

Bible starts with God walking with Adam in the Garden in the cool of the day (AM).

It ends with God declaring in **Rev. 21:3**

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Now God's presence is with people, and he will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them and will be their God.<sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain, because all the old ways are gone."

God is a real romantic. He makes the wildest statements:  
"My heart beats faster with a single glance from your eye."  
"I have engraved you on the palm of my hand"  
"He rejoices over us with singing."

An older couple in a car see a younger couple cuddled up in the car in front of them. The wife turns and says to her husband, “what happened to us we used to ride like that in the car.” The husband responds, “I haven’t moved.”

God hasn’t moved. He is still waiting for us to come to Him. He is waiting to pour out His peace, and love upon our lives.

Most quoted promise of God in the Bible is not, “I will deliver you”, or “I will protect you”, but “I will be with you.”

### **Isa. 43:1-2**

Now this is what the LORD says.

He created you, people of Jacob;

he formed you, people of Israel.

He says, “Don’t be afraid, because I have saved you.

I have called you by name, and you are mine.

<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, **I will be with you.**

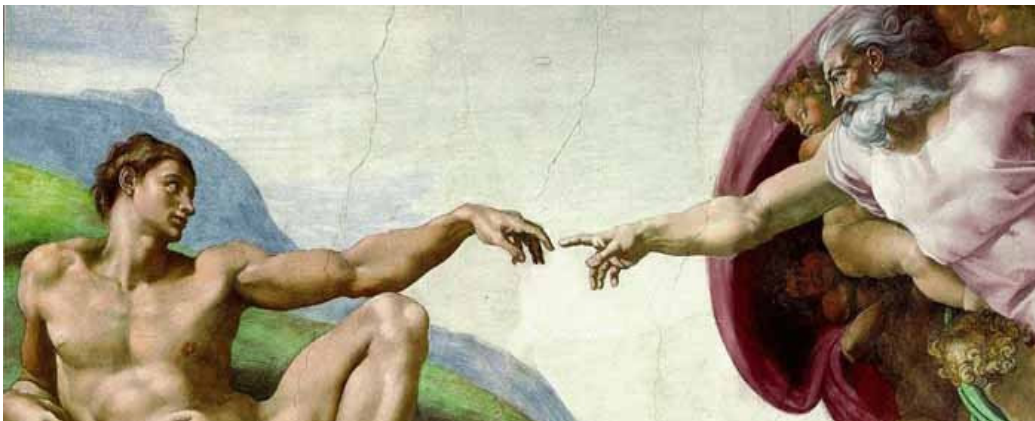
When you cross rivers, you will not drown.

When you walk through fire, you will not be burned,  
nor will the flames hurt you.

### **Matt. 28:18-20**

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. <sup>19</sup>So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you, and **I will be with you always**, even until the end of this age.”

### **Story of Michelangelo and painting the Creation of Adam in the Sistine Chapel.**



Took four years to complete this work. He painted everyday on scaffold bent backwards with paint dripping down on him from the wet plaster known as fresco.

Notice God’s posture, how He is stretching, extending His hand reaching out to Adam.

Notice how Adam lies relaxed looking away. Adam will barely “lift a finger” to connect with God.

Walking with God keeps you seeing things from His perspective and if you can't you can trust, It took years for Joseph to understand how God had orchestrated everything in his life to bring about His purpose.

**Gen. 45:4-8**

So Joseph said to them, “Come close to me.” When the brothers came close to him, he said to them, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold as a slave to go to Egypt. <sup>5</sup>Now don't be worried or angry with yourselves because you sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you to save people's lives. <sup>6</sup>No food has grown on the land for two years now, and there will be five more years without planting or harvest. <sup>7</sup>So God sent me here ahead of you to make sure you have some descendants left on earth and to keep you alive in an amazing way. <sup>8</sup>So it was not you who sent me here, but God. God has made me the highest officer of the king of Egypt. I am in charge of his palace, and I am the master of all the land of Egypt.