

Women of The Word, 1

2017 Women's Seminar

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Okay ladies, settle down. Patty, turn around.

This year is going to be a little different than all our other years in that each week is going to build on the other. So if you somehow miss a week, it would be a good idea to listen to it on Sermon Audio so that you can keep with the order of things. So it's going to be like one study that it's going to take four weeks. Okay, it might be my book. So let's just start with prayer.

Heavenly Father, I just thank you for everything because everything comes from your loving hands. Father, I just ask you that your perfect will will be executed tonight in all our hearts and in everything that is said and that you would plant seeds that would grow into fruit that would bless other people. I pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Everyone got their little book and this is just the Scriptures we are going to be using during the seminar so you don't have to switch through your Bible, but I do have our little lady here, our sad little lady, and this is how we are going to start the seminar and this is how we are going to end the seminar with rainbows and sunshine and flower fields. Okay, so this is where we are today and we might have been here today because it's real easy to get here because the main subject or theme in this seminar is going to be what governs you? Are we women of the word or women of the world? What governs you? And like this poor lady, you think, with a cloud over her head, what was on your mind today? What did you think about and what occupied your mind most of the day? Was it work? Was it money? Was it your kids? Was it worry? Was it relationships? What governed you? Whatever you think about the most, that's what governs you and Satan is out there and he is trying to make our little kingdom his. He is a thief and he wants to rob our life and he wants our kingdom. He doesn't want us to rule and reign with Christ, he wants to rule through our thoughts, and we know from Ephesians 2:2 that he is the prince of the air and he projects thoughts all the time and we either receive those thoughts and end up with a cloud on our head and we can't sleep at night because you get one of those thoughts and it doesn't go away, and there is nothing you can do about it. You can lay there and worry and think and decide what you might do or what happened or what did they say and what you should have said or what you did say and you shouldn't have said it, and you go back and forth in your head and you watch the clock and it's 1 o'clock, then it's 2 o'clock, and you think, "I've got to get some sleep. I've got to get some sleep." But

the whole problem was the wrong thing was governing your thinking and at night when you are the tireddest and the weakest, you don't have the resistance you have in the daytime. When you are in the light, walk in the light so when the darkness comes it won't overtake you.

So we're going to hopefully learn how to walk with authority over our thoughts, over our emotions. You know, Satan, he projects a thought to you and then he validates that thought with emotion or feelings. For instance, he'll tell you, "Oh, what are you going to do about...? Or this thing is going on at work. You're going to have problems. You're going to have problems with your in-laws." He just projects all these thoughts to us that are lies, usually half-truths. He might say you're going to have problems with somebody because you know that person is a problem so he just takes it and he multiplies it and exaggerates it, but then he validates his thoughts with feelings so you get worried, fearful, depressed, despondent, anxious. So his thought becomes a reality in your life and he validates it with the way you feel. "It has to be true, you know? Look how it made me feel."

You know, I was thinking about do you ever, it's a trend today about validating your feelings. I know you've heard it. People will say, "How does that make you feel? Angry? Tell me about it. Oh, is that what they did? Oh, you have every right to be angry." Or, "You're worried. Oh, I understand. What are you worried about? Let's validate your feelings." And I looked it up and said what does it mean to validate someone's feelings. It says first of all, you accept them as real, as substance; then you try to understand their feelings and why they feel that way; and the third one, this will make you choke, you nurture them, you let your feelings grow, you embrace them, you rock them to sleep. It's insane but this is the way we are being taught to think.

Now the word of God, God can't lie. The word of God tells us God can't lie. He has never told a lie. If you have read anything he's ever written, it's always the same and it's always true. He can't lie. God can't lie and do you know what I like about that? The first thing he lets me know is that he loves me. God loves me and he gave himself for me and he can't lie so I might not feel loved by God but he can't lie and the book says he loves me. Even when I'm not where I should be, he still loves me. So God can't lie but he gives us the truth in the word of God and he validates the truth with hope. So faith produces hope in us.

You know, most people, not everyone, but Jeremiah 29:11 says God has plans for you for good and not disaster, a future and a hope. Now that's the total polar opposite of what Satan has for us because every thought that Satan will project into your mind whether it be about family, finances, children, whatever, work, it's always disastrous. He always tells you something horrible is going to happen and then your emotions will validate his lie. But God expects us to believe him by faith without feelings so he says, Romans 8:28, God works all things to the good. That's what the word says. Do I feel like that at all times, that this situation is going to be worked out to the good? It may not look that way and maybe my feelings aren't validating that but I believe what he said is true. So I have hope for the future because he is going to work it out for the good. He said to me, "Seek

first the kingdom and I will provide everything you need." He said that. That's true. I believe that. So I have a lot of needs maybe right now, maybe you have a lot of needs but if we are seeking first the kingdom, he said, "I will meet those needs," and it gives you hope, hope for the future. So faith produces hope. Satan's lies produce despair, depression, anger, worry, fear. They are the opposite of the promise that God has for us, not for disaster but a future and hope.

So Satan is the opposite of God and he wants to rob us especially of hope. You know, I see a lot of people that feel hopeless in their situation. They feel trapped. They have nowhere to go and they don't know what to do, and this hopelessness they feel makes them depressed and despondent. It's really one of the most painful mental situations you can be in is to have no hope; to look at your situation and say, "It can't be fixed. I have no hope." But if we are women of the word, we have hope, and not women of the world who are hopeless. And they are hopeless. And sometimes God will bring us, I think in our pre-salvation life to a place of hopelessness so that we will look to him and that's a good thing, and if we are walking and saved children of God and we're not walking in the word, we're not living by the word, and we're receiving the atmosphere's projections, we'll find ourselves in hopeless situations and God allows that so that we will look up to him because through him there is hope. There is no hope in this world. Jesus said this whole world is condemned so how could there be hope in something that God declared condemned? It's on a downward spiral. It's not getting better. The more you are alive, the longer you live, the more you realize it's not getting better. There is no hope here but there is hope in the kingdom

And we have to choose who we are going to serve: God or the devil. Those are our only two choices. There is no Switzerland, neutral. There is not my way, God's way, and the devil's way. Either you are going to serve God or the devil and if you look at the first Scripture on our sheet, it says, Deuteronomy 28:47 and 48, "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore you shall serve your enemies." You don't serve God, you are serving the devil. There is nobody in between. Matthew 6:24, so our next Scripture, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." And I think the similarities between these two scriptures is they both use the word "serve." You serve whatever you are under. You have authority over what is under you. So either you are going to serve God and be under God in his protective covering, in his grace, in the word of God, or you are going to serve the devil and you will be under his government, which never works out well.

So you have to serve someone. You just can't serve yourself because when you are serving yourself, you are serving the devil. But we are going to go to the beginning to Genesis and hopefully we are going to look at the government of God and how God works and hopefully with a better understanding and laying a foundation from the foundation book of the Bible, we'll see our position in God's order as women, women of the word, and we'll see how Genesis corresponds with the church that we live in today. Hopefully we can get some spiritual understanding. I think Proverbs 3:5 where it says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding," I

think people misquote that because they think we are not supposed to have understanding, we've just have to trust God. But it says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding," because if you look at things by sight, you think you know what's going on. You think you understand. You think you know what they are thinking. You think you know what they are going to do next. That's your own understanding. So we are not supposed to trust in our own understanding but we have to learn how to think with God and have spiritual understanding. If you try to build your spiritual life on your own understanding of things, it's going to crumble, but if you build it on the foundation which is the word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the finished work of Christ, you're going to grow, you're going to grow spiritually.

Now, we're going to look at creation and we're going to look at the four gifts of creation. I hope to get through two of them today and two of them next week. The first gift of creation is creation itself; that God made this universe for man. The second gift is dominion or authority; that God gave Adam dominion and authority over the earth. The third gift is free will; that they had the ability to choose. And the fourth gift was marriage. So we're going to look at these four gifts and we're going to start with creation itself because I love it that it's the first thing, the first thing God shows about himself, because what God did in creation was make and create everything that man needed for his sustenance and his pleasure. Okay, it was all made before man was made. The provisions were there as a gift. Man didn't have to work to attain it, it was a grace gift, everything he needed.

I think, you know as I get older I think I should have planned better for my retirement, if I would have worked harder when I was younger than I would have more when I'm not working anymore, but that's the way the world looks at things. But God, like, Adam and Eve started in retirement. They started in this most beautiful garden of rest. They didn't have to work. They ate from trees. Trees don't require a lot of maintenance. They weren't life and insects like we have today. I mean, a tree kind of takes care of itself. All you've got to do is pick the fruit and eat it. So everything they needed to live and be healthy and happy was given to them.

That's grace, and do you know what? It's the same for us in our spiritual life and the new creation. Everything we need to live in the spiritual life has already been provided for us. Sometimes we have this wrong idea that we have to work and if we get to a certain point then we will find peace with God or grace with God or the fruit of the Spirit will become part of our life. I hear people say, "I'm just not there yet," and that statement, "I'm just not there yet," means you are working towards something instead of receiving something from God.

Let's look at our next Scripture which is 2 Peter 1:3 through 4. It says, "seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness." Back up a bit, "granted." You know what that is, that's a grace word. Did you ever get a grant? If the government gives you a grant, what's so great about it? You don't have to pay it back. It's a grace thing. If you get a grant, if you get a loan to go to school, you've got to pay it back, but if you get a grant, that's a grace word. It was given to you. So that's a grace

word, so God has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness. Not some things, not half the things we need, but everything we need to live a spiritual godly life God has granted to us.

"For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." The promises in the word of God are ours. They have been granted to us and when we start to believe the word of God about what we think and what we feel, we change. We receive through the promises in the word all the grace we need to live so we don't have to live under a cloud; we can have our problems under our feet as we rule and reign with Jesus Christ.

And never lose sight of the cross because that's where all the provisions came from. I know sometimes we get, I think, familiar with the cross and you think, "Oh, I know that," because I'll do that sometimes. I'll hear someone say, "I know that," but there is so much in the cross of Christ that we don't know and when you think you know something as you ought, you know nothing as you ought.

The first gift of the cross we know is forgiveness of sins; that Jesus Christ in his body, in his sinless spotless body as the Lamb of God, became the sacrifice for our sins and we are absolutely free from any punishment due to our sins. We are cleansed. He took our sins and let us go free and, you know, unfortunately not too many Christians get past that. They receive Christ as their Savior and they are real grateful for the fact that Christ died and they'll go to heaven someday, but they don't get the second gift of the cross which is that our old self was crucified with him. Do you know what causes you to sin? Our attachment with the world and the things in the world, and that nature that is in us that is attached was crucified with Christ so that we could be free from it. 1 Peter 3:1, the corruption that is in the world by lust. We can be free from the corruption of our old nature and we can walk as brand-new creatures in Jesus Christ. We are adopted into the kingdom of God. It is great that he forgave all our sins but if you don't realize that you died with him, you're just going to keep sinning and be grateful he died for all your sins, but when you come to the place where you quit saying to God, "O God, help me!" And looking up into the sky saying, "Give me grace! Give me peace! I need you so much! Help me! Help me! Help me!" Instead of knowing what Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ lives in me." We don't have to cry into the heavens hoping God hears us. He is inside of us to give us the grace and the strength and everything we need to live, truly to live. He is in you but you're not going to appreciate the fact that he is in you living until you realize you died with him because like two people can't serve two masters, it's either going to be you serving you and then the devil controls your flesh, or you will be serving God because he is in you. Also on the cross, he defeated our enemy, Satan. This all happened before you were born. These are all grace gifts. He says, "I have made you a victor. You a more than a conqueror in me."

So what is our problem? We don't believe it. That's our problem. We forget what he did on the cross. And I like what Paul said when he said, "I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified to me," because you know what that is? The cross comes up between

me and the world and it makes a barrier and it protects me. I love the cross. I'm so glad for that grace gift because all of this was provided for me before I was born and before I was born again. It's grace. It's not something I have to work to attain. It's these precious promises and gifts from God just like Adam and Eve in the garden. They were given everything they needed to live and to be fulfilled and happy before they were made. It was a grace gift. So we can relate to them because we have great grace gifts to enter into the spiritual life.

And you know when it says grow in grace, you think, "Well, I've got to grow to get this grace." No, we grow and learn to receive unmerited favor. We are so used to working out our salvation. I mean, not working out because that's because it has already been given to us and we have to learn to walk in it, but working for our salvation, working for God's approval. We are so used to doing that that it takes us time to receive things from God by grace. We think we have to do something and we don't. We just have to believe him and trust him.

So that's the first gift in the garden. The second gift in the garden is dominion and that's in Genesis 1:26 and it's on our sheet and it says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" Ew, creepy things. But notice here that God said let them rule over the birds, the things in the sky, the creepy things, and even the things below that in the sea. He has given me a dominion over. It says either you're going to have dominion over things or they will have dominion over you when he gave the first man and woman dominion.

In Genesis 1:27, he said he "created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." And one of the things he did, he made us in his image, and one of the characteristics of God is his sovereignty, that he reigns but he reigns over all. His sovereignty is above that the dominion of man and man's dominion is a reflection of who God is; that he is royalty; that he has authority; that he has dignity because he is made in the image of God.

Now, there's a difference between dominion and sovereignty and I want to really, this is what we're going to look at today. I hope to make it so clear that you walk out of here with all things under your feet trusting God. Okay? Dominion or authority, now we have all been under authority. We hopefully are not rebels and we have governmental authorities. We have authorities at work. We were children, we were under the authority of our parents. If you are a wife, you have a husband that has authority over you. So we are under authority and we have authority. We have authority over our children, our work, our jobs. A lot of different things, we have authority over. Our own bodies. We have authority.

We have been given dominion but dominion is different than sovereignty because authority can make decisions, they make laws, they make rules; your husband tells you to do something, your boss tells you to do something. But there is a weakness in authority in

that it can't determine the end results. Like you can tell your kids to clean their rooms but there is no guarantee that they are going to clean their rooms. Maybe but it might be with a struggle or maybe you'll just give up and do it yourself. But authority cannot determine the outcome. You can say, "Well, I'm going to do this today," but you don't know what's going to happen between now and whatever you plan to do. I bet there were some women that were planning to come tonight and they had an authority over their own life and they decided to come and they were going to come, but something happened. So they couldn't determine the outcome where sovereignty is different because sovereignty is above all authority. It's God's. He is the Most High. He is above everything and everybody, okay? And he can determine the outcome and what God does is use the free volition and the authority of man to bring his will about.

Now the first scripture, well, let's look at Proverbs 19:21 because this is a good Scripture and I think of this all the time because we find ourselves in situations where people are unfair to us, when we get stuck doing things that we never wanted to do, we get stuck in places we never wanted to be because of somebody else, not our own choice. It says in Proverbs 19:21, "Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand." That means men can make decisions but God determines the outcome. Remember this. This is really important for your whole entire life. Acts 2:23, this is the first sermon that Peter spoke after Pentecost and he's speaking to the Jews and he said, "this Man," who was Jesus Christ, was "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God," that's sovereignty and he said, "you," that's the Jews, "nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death." So these men had a plan. The Jews, let's get rid of Jesus. He's too popular. He's going to cause us too much trouble. The Romans went along with the plan. They all were governing and Jesus put himself under their authority, but this was all because of the sovereignty of God, the preplanned foreknowledge of God. So because God is sovereign doesn't always mean that everything is going to be rainbows and butterflies. We may have to go through things but the things we go through are because they are coming through the loving hands of God and he loves you so much and he is not going to let anyone touch his beloved because he is God, unless it's going to work for their good because he promises to work all things to the good.

Lamentations 3:37 and 38, the last scripture on the first page, "Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, Unless the Lord has commanded it?" Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, Unless the Lord has commanded it? Who can say, "I'm going to do this," and they end up doing what they said unless the Lord allows it? This is sovereignty. Are you getting it?

"Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth?" If God allows evil, he allows evil. If he allows good, he allows good. But it's all for his own glory and for your good.

And the sovereignty of God and dominion of man is used to accomplish God's will, and this really comforts me. I don't know if it comforts you to know that no matter what people do to you, that if God allows them to do it, that there is a plan in it for your good because he loves you. In the kingdom of God, there is no such thing as bad news. "Oh, I

heard bad news today. Did you hear that this happened or that happened?" No, the sovereignty of God allowed that to happen. It might be painful and there is nothing wrong with sorrow because sorrow is part of our life here; that's why he sent us a Comforter. But it's not bad news because God had a plan in it for good and if he is allowing it to touch his child, that's us, and he is God and he is sovereign and he can stop and start if it was for our benefit, anything that happens, if he allows it and it's for good.

So this is a real comfort for me because he is sovereign and he loves me and trusting in the sovereignty of God, knowing the sovereignty of God, this is what gives us peace in hard times because I'm going through this but it has a purpose. In Isaiah 38:17, this was King Hezekiah and I like this. This was a word of faith, not that he was a man of faith all the time but he has had moments of faith like me. He says, "Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness." For my own welfare I had great bitterness. "It is You who has kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back." But he said it was, I'm going through this real bitter hard time for my own welfare. God wants to give us so much and we fight him all the time. We complain about the very thing that God ordained to bring us to where we want to be. We want a relationship with him. We want to be close to God. We want to be conformed into his image and we complain because this is the vehicle in which he ordained for us to become conformed to his image.

This is why in 1 Corinthians 10:10, complaining is such an evil sin because when we complain, we are not complaining about the people over us, our jobs, our families, our husbands, or our finances, we're complaining about God. We are saying, "God, you're not doing this right. I have a much better plan." And the people that complained in the wilderness all died. Maybe we won't fall over dead physically but we will die spiritually if you have a spirit of complaining in you. It will snuff out the spiritual life and Satan will reign and you will be under his domain and his kingdom while you are a child of God. That's sad.

Now, to understand sovereignty a little better, we're going to look at the life of Joseph, okay? Now, I think we all are pretty familiar with the story of Joseph but I'm going to give you a brief synopsis. Who is Joseph? Well, we know that his great-grandfather was Abraham, and God promised that through Abraham would come the seed that would bless the whole world. That seed was Jesus Christ. And Abraham is the ancestor of Christ and Abraham had a son named Isaac and he actually had two sons, but through this son Isaac the promise was to come, the promised seed. Then Isaac had a son, actually two sons, and his son Jacob, the promise was made that the seed would come through Jacob. And Jacob had 12 sons and a daughter. Now, the promise for the promised seed came to his son named Judah and Jesus was from the tribe of Judah.

You know, and so many promises were made and these 12 sons and this daughter became the nation of Israel that we know today. I always look and say the miracle of Israel being here today is proof that the Scriptures are true because what other ancient group do you know that are still alive? How many Canaanites do you know? Moabites? Ammonites? They are all lost but God preserved this nation for thousands and thousands of years. The first reason, it was like the womb, to protect the seed that Jesus would come out of. It was

in a hostile world controlled by Satan. He wanted to kill him and he tried and if you read the Scriptures, you will see many a time and even one time when there was only one offspring of David left and if that offspring would have been killed, the seed would have been killed, and there would have not have been a Savior.

Then these promises for the future of Israel. That's why Israel is still under persecution. This is why there was a Hitler and the Spanish Inquisition. Satan hates Israel because if he could destroy Israel and the promises made to her as a nation, then the promises that are made about him for annihilation at the end and destruction, then they are not true either. So he's trying to disprove God. It says in Daniel, I think 4, I'm not sure but it says that Satan comes to try to change times and seasons. What does that mean? That means God prophesied certain things to happen in the future time, he prophesied a season for the Jews, and if Satan tries to change this in desperation so that his end won't be the lake of fire which is prophesied about him. Change the prophecy for Israel, make God a liar, then he gets to go free.

Okay, at this time in history, though, we'll go back to Joseph, God knew that there was going to be a famine in the land. He knew it so he chose Joseph. Joseph was eleventh in line of the tribe of Judah, his sons. He had one younger son. Joseph was one of the younger sons. And God had a plan to save the nation from perishing and he was going to fulfill this plan through Joseph, and he was going to make Joseph the ruler of Egypt to save the seed that was going to be Christ someday. You have to realize how small. I mean, Jacob had 12 sons and a daughter and their family, they were nothing. They were insignificant. They really didn't have the land yet, they were just like nomads. They were in tents looking for a place to graze their sheep. They were insignificant and so many times, don't you feel like you are just so insignificant? But that doesn't mean anything because you feel like you're insignificant. I think that's a projection. I think that Satan says you are insignificant and then he gives you a feeling to validate his projection. God has a purpose and a plan for us and he has a work for each one of us, and we'll talk about that a little bit later.

So we have Joseph, a little shepherd boy, and we have Egypt, like 300-400 miles away. How is Joseph going to get from being a little shepherd boy to the ruler of Egypt? Does that sound impossible? It would be like saying you can be President of the United States. It just seems like how could this insignificant shepherd boy rule Egypt? We know that he was hated by his brothers. His father favored him because he was a child of his old age. You know the story, he made him a coat of many colors. And because of his father's favor on him, his brothers hated him. Hated him.

One day, he is under the hatred of his brothers and we've got another under and over. His brothers weren't under him, they were over him and they hated him. But he had a dream and in his dream, he saw these sheaves of wheat bowing down to him and his brothers were saying, "You think we're going to bow down to you? That's a joke." Then he had another dream and the sun and the moon and the stars bowed down to him. Oh, and this made his brothers even hate him more. They said, "You stupid dreamer." They hated him.

So one day they are out watching the sheep and Joseph is at home with his dad because he's a daddy's boy, and his dad says, "Go and check on your brothers. See if they're okay." So he says, "Okay, dad." So he gets his little sack and his cane and he gets lost, actually, and he asks somebody, "Where am I? I can't find my brothers." And they said, "They went that a-way." So he went that a-way and he found his brothers and his brothers see him from a distance and they said, "Let's kill him. We hate him anyway. We don't need him. Let's get rid of him." And they were going to kill him, but these Ishmaelite traders, they were walking by, and he said, one of the brothers said, "Wait! I have an idea. Let's profit from him. Let's not kill him, let's sell him."

So that's what they did and they killed a lamb and they took his coat of many colors and they splattered it with blood. So they went home and they told their dad, "Look what we found on the road. Do you know who this belongs to? I think an animal attacked him and killed him and ate him." So his father lived in grief and here is Joseph, okay, where has Joseph gone? It doesn't look like he's going to the throne of Egypt, does it? He thought being under his brothers was a bad lot in life, how about under slave drivers that bought him as a slave, the lowest human being on the earth at that time that you can buy for money. "Here, I'll buy you. I'll give you \$0.50, \$2, \$20, 20 pieces of silver." So they sold him so he's in this caravan with all these other slaves and it says they had spices and goods and guess where they were going? Egypt. He was getting closer. You see, the brothers made this decision, the traders made a decision to buy him, but they had no idea that the sovereignty of God was above all their decisions and it was directing Joseph's path.

Now, I want you to look at, let me see if I can find it here, Genesis 39:1 because this is interesting. He was bought. Imagine, he was a strong, healthy, good-looking guy and they said, "Someone is going to buy him." So these traders probably profited on selling him. And in Genesis 39:1, it says, "Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of," who? "Pharaoh." That's who bought him. Now, anybody could have bought him but this was an officer of the pharaoh himself. Guess what? He's getting closer. He's not this little shepherd boy anymore. He's sure not the ruler of Egypt. Who is he? A slave of his owner. It's Potiphar and he's an officer to pharaoh. He's getting a little bit closer to the throne because of the sovereignty of God. These people didn't know that their decisions were God's will, just like you're going through things and people make you do things you don't want to do and you find yourself in a corner and you don't know which way to go because it was somebody else deciding for your life. God's sovereignty is above it and he has a plan. It had to be that way. It was necessary for Joseph. The things we're going through today are necessary to bring us to where God wants us to be. So we can accept that there is no bad news in the kingdom.

So he's sold to Potiphar and it says in verse 2, it says, "The LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man." God was with him even as a slave to Potiphar. And in verse 4, I love this, "So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house." He is getting dominion. You think, "Oh, he's just this close to the throne, isn't he?" Except a slave of Potiphar is not going to be promoted to the ruler of Egypt, is he? Of course not. How could that be?

Potiphar had a wife and Joseph was young and handsome and strong and good-looking and she badgered him every day. Can you believe this woman? She said, "Lay with me. Lay with me." And Joseph said, "No. Your husband gave me rule over everything in his hands, the only thing I am not allowed to have is you so leave me alone." But she wouldn't leave him alone and she was mad and she was hurt because she was rejected so she thought, "I'll get him. I'll get that Joseph slave boy." And she pretended and set it up and pretended that he attacked her. And he ran from her and she grabbed his clothes so then he is running naked. Doesn't look too good. This is God's will? This is how he is going to get Joseph from being a shepherd boy to the throne room? How could that be?

Anyway, Potiphar wasn't really happy so let's look at 39:20 because he had Joseph thrown into prison. But let's look at this, it says, "So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail." Tsk, tsk. How is he going to get to the throne from jail, huh? But wait, it says, "the place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail." Not just any jail, he's thrown in a jail where the king's prisoners were confined. He is actually getting closer to the throne and he had to go there. Do you know why? He had to meet two guys. These two guys were the king's wine taster and his baker, and these two guys got to pharaoh. They know him. They are face-to-face with him. They talked to him. They know the pharaoh. They are his close servants. They cook for him, bring him his wine, but he got mad at them for some reason and threw them in jail. So Joseph now is getting closer to the throne now, isn't he, because he had met these two guys that knew pharaoh personally, and guess what? God gave those two guys a dream, the dream was from God because God in his sovereignty knew he had to get Joseph out of that prison.

The baker had a dream, and they were both upset because they had these disturbing dreams and woke up, "I just can't get this dream out of my mind." And Joseph said, "Well, what's your dream?" He said, "Interpretations of dreams come from the Lord and I might be able to help you here." So the baker said, first the wine taster said, "I saw three vines and on them all of a sudden blossoms appeared and from the blossoms grapes appeared, and I took these grapes and I squeezed them and put them in Pharaoh's cup and handed it to him." And Joseph said, "Your dream does have a meaning, it's that, the meaning is that in three days you're going to be restored to Pharaoh's court and you will be his wine taster again." And the guy is thrilled. He says, "But when you go back, would you remember me? Remember me to Pharaoh. I'm down here because my brothers were jealous of me and then this lady and all this stuff and I don't deserve to be here. Please tell Pharaoh to get me out of here!" Then the baker said, "Wow, what great news. I'm going to tell him my dream." He said, "I had a dream I had three baskets of banquets on my head and the birds came down and they were eating the bread out of the top basket. What does my dream mean?" And Joseph said, "Oh, sorry, but in three days they're going to take your head off and that's going to be the end of you."

And sure enough, three days went by and the wine taster is back with the pharaoh and the baker is gone, okay, and guess what? The wine taster forgot. It says he forgot about Joseph. He forgot about him. Do you know why he forgot about him? God didn't want him to remember him then. It wasn't time yet because if he would have said, "Hey,

Pharaoh, King, I met this guy in prison, please let him go free. He doesn't belong there." And what if pharaoh did let him go free? He would have gone back home and he would have been a shepherd. What good would that do? Because God had a plan and in his plan he gave pharaoh a dream and the dream disturbed him and he couldn't get anybody to interpret his dream. Then the wine taster goes, "Oh, wait a minute! I just remembered." Do you ever have that happen to you, someone says to you, "Oh, I just remembered! How did I forget about that? I just remembered. There's this guy, he told me and the baker what was going to happen and it happened just like he said. He interpreted our dreams. I think you should have him come up."

So they clean him up, I'm sure he had to be shaved and bathe and put on new clothes because you're not going to go to the pharaoh looking like he did in prison all this time. So he gets all cleaned up, goes to the pharaoh, pharaoh tells him his dream, Joseph interprets it. We are not going to go through all that because that's a long story. And the pharaoh is so impressed that he made him ruler of Egypt. Isn't that an amazing story of two things: man's dominion and God's sovereignty? You can apply this to your life every single day because things are always happening, stuff happens. We don't like it but God has a plan and God has a purpose because he loves us and he has all power and he has all knowledge and all love and he's going to work it for the good. God has a plan for you.

Let's see where we were here on this page. Okay, who did all that? Okay, think about and we looked at Acts 2:23 and how Christ's crucifixion was according to the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. Joseph's whole ordeal was because of the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God and do you know what? God has a plan for us. In Ephesians 2:10, the middle of page 2, it says, listen, "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand." He has a plan for you. He had it prepared beforehand that you should walk in it. Just like Joseph, he has a plan for you. Maybe you're thinking you're nobody but he has a plan for each one of us. He made us and he loves us and he has a plan for us and he has something for us to accomplish while we spend our so many years on this planet. We have victories to win. We have things to put under our feet. We have things to do. We have people to love, people to win to Christ. God has a plan for us and we have to walk in his government as women of the word and walk in his plan, and we'll see it unfold. And no matter what happens, I think trusting in the sovereignty of God makes the unacceptable acceptable. Did you ever say, "This isn't acceptable. No, no, no, no." But so many times we don't have the power to change it. So God makes the unacceptable acceptable if we trust and believe in his sovereignty.

A long time ago, 40 years ago when I was younger in the Lord, I heard a testimony and it stuck with me. I'm going to tell you this woman's testimony. This woman was in foster care as a child and she said that every foster home she went into, she just wanted to be part of a family. She wanted to feel safe and secure, feel like someone loved her. She said but every foster care home she went into, in a couple of days or maybe a week, they packed up her bags and sent her off and she said, "What's wrong with me? Why doesn't anyone like me? Why won't they be my mom and dad? Why did they send me off?" And she would go to another home and the same thing would happen so she was starting to

say, "Maybe this one will work out." In a couple of days, there were her bags packed in the hallway and off she went again, never knowing where she would be or if anyone would ever love her or take care of her or care about her. Then finally she went to this other home and she said, like, four months went by, five months went by, and she said, "Oh, finally. Finally I find someone that loves me enough to take care of me, that I can be part of this family and part of this home." And one day she is skipping home from school and she opens the front door and in the hallway were her bags packed and she told the story with such emotion that it brought the audience to tears and she said, "Don't cry for me because this is what brought me to my Savior." Even though it looked like a bad thing that she was under, a child, under unfair authority, under people that didn't know what they were doing and how they were hurting her, above that was the sovereignty of God and that sovereignty led her in her emptiness, in her desire to belong and to be loved, it led her into his kingdom. So the sovereignty of God makes the unacceptable acceptable.

Now, Denise and I were talking last week about Joseph in Psalm 105 and it said that the shackles on his arms and feet made iron in his soul, it made him strong in his soul. The unfair authority made him a strong man. It was preparing him for something. In Psalm 105, let's see if we can find it. I have no idea where it is. Okay, 105:19, the fourth Scripture down, it says about Joseph that he was in shackles until the time that his word, God's word, the dreams that his brothers were going to bow down to him, it says, "Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the LORD tested him," or a better translation, refined him. So the things that we are going through are refining us; they are preparing us for what God has for us.

So God has a plan for us. Now that seems like a really far stretch from the garden, huh? But they were given dominion in the garden and that's real important because I don't want you to forget that because we're going to come back to that in a greater way, but I want you to know that all man's dominion is under the sovereignty of God, even Adam and Eve's. The dominion that you're under, the authorities that we're told to submit to, they are not just helter-skelter, do what they want and we have to suffer. God is above it and he has a plan, all authority whether it be fair or unfair.

So that's today's, next week we're going to talk about volition and free will and the gift of marriage, okay?

Lord God, I just thank you for Joseph and his story. Lord, let this story just take a place in our heart that we can see in a similar way how your sovereignty is ruling our life. Let us believe in your word, that you have a purpose for us, and that you are using all things, you work all things to the good for us who love you according to your purpose. I thank you, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.