

Falsely Accused, This Man Literally Knows Joseph's Trials

Darnelle Phillips talks about spending 28 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit.

When you talk to Darnelle Phillips, one thing that will impact you is his encouraging attitude. You would expect that someone who had been falsely accused, convicted and served 28 years of a sentence he didn't deserve would harbor some anger and bitterness at the unfairness of his life. But instead, you find a man full of gratitude to God and His faithfulness.

So, I asked him, "What did you do while you were in prison? How did you keep yourself encouraged and in the right relationship with the Lord, despite circumstances that most of us would find intolerable?" His answer was inspiring.

Phillips talked about being a new believer at the time he was imprisoned. But he knew enough of the God who saved him to decide that he was going to trust God no matter what. He believed that God was true and could not lie. He chose to stand firm on the promises of the Word of God. And he spent his time learning about God, reading books that built up his faith and living a life of integrity, even behind bars.

That's how Phillips and I became acquainted. He was searching in the prison library for something edifying to read, something encouraging, when he spotted my book, *Don't Quit in the Pit*, high on the shelf. He thought it was written by a famous author he knew about, so he pulled it down. He had never heard of me, but when he saw our ministry was based in Virginia, where he was imprisoned, he decided to read it anyway.

Ironically, the book is based on the life of Joseph—a man in the Bible who was also falsely accused and put in prison (Gen. 37, 39-41). Joseph not only received God's favor and protection, but He used the prison time to develop his character and integrity and prepare him to fulfill the mission and purpose of his life. The prison was a direct route to the promised destiny God gave to Joseph as a youth.

That is a principle that we all need to learn as followers of Jesus. God created you with a specific purpose in mind. Everything about you is designed and perfectly fitted together to equip you for a calling that God has for your life. God even uses the overwhelming circumstances and tragic events of our lives to shape us and instill in us the things we will need to fulfill that calling. The key is not to quit.

Don't stop believing, even if you have been praying for 20 years for your spouse or child. Even if it is the midnight hour, the night before the deadline—even if it is past the deadline—continue to hold onto the promises of God to you.

Sometimes we get discouraged and need to hear a word from God. Phillips shared how the Lord often spoke to him through Scriptures, letters, fellow prisoners and even prison officers to assure him that God was going to bring him out of that prison. He believed that God had the power to change everything when the time was right.

And when it was time, suddenly God moved. A prison officer recognized that Phillips was not guilty of the crime and contacted the Innocence Project on his behalf. DNA evidence proved him not guilty, and he was exonerated and released.

No, Phillips did not become the second in command of the richest nation on the earth like Joseph, but he is ministering in the calling God has for him. His faith is strong and steadfast; he is fully equipped with everything he needs; and he has the character to handle the challenges it will bring.

What about you? How are you spending your time while your circumstances are not what you desire? Don't waste the years whining and complaining. Get in the Word. Keep praying. Build up your spiritual muscles. Exercise your faith in the God who has the power to change everything in a moment when He has finished the work that He is doing in you.

Don't quit; God is about to turn it around. {eoa}

Danette Crawford is a powerful speaker, author, TV host and international evangelist with a refreshing message of hope and encouragement. Danette has a master's degree in counseling from Regent University. She is the founder and president of Danette Crawford Ministries, and its' outreach arm, Joy Ministries Evangelistic Association Inc. The ministry organizes inner-city work with over 23 different compassion programs dedicated to sustainable aid. Visit Danette's website at [. Tune into Danette's podcast, Joy with Danette Crawford, on the Charisma Podcast Network.](#)

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