

Jentezen Franklin: The Grave Mistake Faithful Churchgoers Make Every Week

When Jacob was old and on his deathbed, he pronounced prophetic blessings on each of his sons. His next-to-youngest son was Joseph. In Genesis 49:22-24, we read the words Jacob spoke over him:

“Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring, whose branches run over the wall. The archers bitterly attacked him, they shot at him and hated him. But his bow remained firm. His arms were agile because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob” (Gen. 49:22-24b).

The picture Jacob paints of Joseph’s future is of a bountiful, thriving, walled-in garden planted next to a well. The garden is so lush branches grow over the wall and reach out into neighboring areas. Jacob mentions the hatred and mistreatment Joseph will encounter, but accurately prophesies Joseph’s ability to stay faithful to God through any trial.

In the verses that follow, Joseph is given a mighty blessing from his father. Jacob promises a greater blessing to Joseph than to any of his brothers. Jacob says that because Joseph extended his reach beyond the walls, God will increase Joseph’s blessing.

See, Joseph didn’t keep the blessing of his garden inside the walls. Instead he reached out to meet the needs of others.

Jacob’s prophecy was spot-on. Later, when famine struck Egypt and the surrounding areas, Joseph provided for his brothers who had sold him into slavery. He provided for Potiphar’s wife who falsely accused him. He provided for Potiphar who threw him in jail even though he was innocent.

All people would have died in the famine if not for Joseph. Joseph extended his blessing beyond the walls, beyond his confinement, beyond where he was. He cared about people who had nothing to offer him, people who didn't deserve his help. He shared his blessing with people around him.

The well mentioned in this passage of Scripture represents Jesus Christ—the living water. When we find the living water, He changes our lives. Jesus turns our lives around and makes us new. He generously showers us with abundant blessing.

But are we sharing what we have with those beyond these walls? Beyond these walls are people who are lost and don't know Jesus can rescue them. Beyond these walls are people who are hopeless, defeated, afraid and bound. We walk among them every day, but we are often too caught up in our own lives to help.

We have the living water, but we must send a vine beyond the walls.

We can't just come to church week after week, experience the saving power of Jesus, live in His blessing and then keep all of it to ourselves. We must send a vine out to others and share what we have.

One of the last instructions we have from Jesus is to go everywhere and share the gospel with everyone (see Mark 16:15). He didn't say, "Stay put and keep quiet." Jesus expects us to go beyond these walls and share His message and His love.

The joy of living for Jesus is not just going to church. It's when we get so full of the living water that we can't help but share our joy with others.

Today, let's accept the challenge of reaching beyond these walls. Let's make up our minds to share the well of living water with everyone we can, every time we can, in every way we can.

Remember, an increased blessing came to Joseph because he shared what God had blessed him with. I believe God is telling us today that He wants to multiply our blessing, but He is waiting for us to share what we have already been blessed with.

Don't keep Jesus to yourself—reach out beyond these walls!
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