

“The Legacy Question”
Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets, Part 3
September 26th, 2021

We all love a good story, but what’s not apparent is that each of us is **CREATING** a story – the story of our **LIVES**

Truth is, we write the story of our lives one **DECISION** at a time

The “Integrity Question” is: “Am I being honest with **MYSELF** – **REALLY?**”

The “Legacy Question” is: “What **STORY** do I want to **TELL?**”

Every decision you make becomes a **PERMANENT** part of your story – whether for good or bad

The challenge is, most of us don’t **THINK** this way – that our life is a story

You’d like to be able to tell your entire story without **SKIPPING** any parts or chapters or having to **LIE** about the details; you want to be the **HERO** in your own story

One reason we don’t think about story when we’re making decisions is we get distracted by the pressure and the **EMOTIONS** of the moment; decisions are **NOW**, we think about later, **LATER**

Emotions complicate the decision-making process by focusing our attention on the **IMMEDIATE** rather

than the **ULTIMATE**; we’re left thinking in terms of **OPTIONS**, but not our story

“Focalism” – victims hyper-focus on the **ONE** thing to the **NEGLECT** of pretty much everything else

When confronted with anything or anybody with strong emotional appeal, press **PAUSE**, not play because strong emotional appeal should trigger a **RED** flag, not a **GREEN** light

When you consider your story, it places the **DECISION-MAKING** process within the broader context of our **ENTIRE** lives

Genesis 37:31-32 (NIV) “Then they got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. ³² They took the ornate robe back to their father and said, ‘We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son’s robe.’”

Please don’t decide anything that will make you a **LIAR** for **LIFE**. Whatever you gain in the moment, will not be worth what you’re forced to carry for the **REST** of your life

NONE of what happened was Joseph’s **FAULT**. Someone else took **CONTROL** of his story.

Genesis 39:6 (NIV) “So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.”

Genesis 39:6-7 (NLT) “Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, ⁷ and Potiphar’s wife soon began to look at him lustfully. ‘Come and sleep with me,’ she demanded.”

In dealing with Potiphar’s wife Joseph has two options, **NEITHER** of which would lead to a good outcome; this was a **LIFE** or **DEATH** issue

Genesis 39:8-9 (NIV) “‘With me in charge,’ he told her, ‘my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. ⁹ No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?’”

Joseph did the **RIGHT** thing, but the right thing **DID NOT** turn out for Joseph

Genesis 39:10 (NIV) “And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.”

Genesis 39:21 (GN) “But the LORD was with Joseph,…”

Regardless of what you're going through right now, your story isn't **OVER** either; your story is still being written, **ONE DECISION** at a time

You may **KNOW** how Joseph's story turns out, but Joseph **DIDN'T** **Genesis 40:14-15** (NLT) "And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. ¹⁵For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it."

Joseph was making the **BEST** decisions possible **UNDER** the circumstances, but he was neither **HAPPY** nor **CONTENT** with the circumstances **Genesis 40:23** (NLT) "Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought." **Genesis 41:25** (NIV) "[Joseph said to Pharaoh]...God has revealed to Pharaoh what He is about to do." **Genesis 41:37-38 & 41** (GN/NIV) "³⁷Pharaoh and his officials approved this plan, ³⁸and he [Pharaoh] said to them, 'We will never find a better man than Joseph, a man who has God's spirit in him.'...⁴¹So Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.'"

With his new title and responsibility, Joseph did what Joseph always did – **HIS BEST**

What do you do when you've got the power and your decisions determine your enemy's destiny? It depends on the **STORY** you want to **TELL** or the story you want to be told by **OTHERS** **Genesis 50:20** (NIV) "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

Joseph refused to react, and in refusing to react, he **AVOIDED** becoming like the people he **DIDN'T LIKE**;

he was free to write a **BETTER** story, and he decided revenge would not be a part of his story

If your story hasn't been a good one up to this point to tell, remember this, your **CURRENT CHAPTER** is

just that, a chapter; it's **NOT** your **WHOLE** story

Challenge: Decide to write a story you will be **PROUD** to tell, and remember you write the story of your life **ONE DECISION** at a time, write a good one

Decision #2: The Legacy Decision – I will **DECIDE** a story I'm proud to tell. I will not decide anything that makes me a **LIAR** for life.

My Next Step Today Is:

- I will make the legacy decision and will decide a story I'm proud to tell. I will not decide anything that makes me a liar for life
- I will keep the conversation going by discussing these 3 questions with someone:
 1. Can you identify a decision in the past that served as the beginning of a new & better chapter in the story of your life? What about a decision that introduced a chapter you would rather forget?
 2. What was the catalyst for those decisions?
 3. Do you know anyone whose story, through no fault of their own, set them up to write a story characterized by bitterness and resentment but decided their story in a healthy direction?
- Count me in to help serve our community at Fall Fest on Sat, Oct 23rd (*see the flyer in your program*)

Join us next week as we'll explore question #3 - "**The Conscience Question.**" Invite a friend!