



Joseph is a biblical character with a broad vocation. He is given several roles, takes on numerous responsibilities, and has lots of messy relationships. But the refrain running through all of Joseph's vocations is this: God was with him.

Joseph's relationship with his brothers was so broken that they wanted to kill him. They sold him into slavery instead, all for two shekels apiece. In Egypt Joseph started in Potiphar's house and we hear that the Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:2). Everything he did succeeded, but a false accusation led to Joseph's imprisonment. In prison, the Lord was with Joseph, (Genesis 39:21, 23) and he was placed in charge of the other prisoners because everything Joseph did succeeded. In prison, Joseph met Pharaoh's chief baker and chief cupbearer and correctly interpreted their dreams for them. Though he had to wait two years for the opportunity, eventually Joseph was called to interpret one of Pharaoh's dreams. Upon hearing Joseph's interpretation, Pharaoh remarked that the Spirit of God was in Joseph (Genesis 41:38). Joseph's dream interpretation led to a new role as Pharaoh's second in command. In this role, Joseph had the responsibility of saving thousands, perhaps millions of lives from starvation including the lives of his brothers. Decades after selling Joseph into slavery, his brothers came looking to buy food. And eventually God led Joseph and his brothers to reconciliation.

In Joseph we see one example of God's presence through a tumultuous life. At the end of the story, Joseph recognizes how God called him and sees his own story through God's eyes. Joseph remarks to his brothers, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today" (Genesis 50:20). Through each role, responsibility, and relationship, God remained with Joseph.

When Jesus comes into our world, one of the names that He is given is Emmanuel, which means, God with us. Jesus is with you too. When your relationships are strained or broken, Jesus is with you. When you need to do the hard work of reconciliation and forgiveness, Jesus is with you. When you feel like your responsibilities are too heavy, Jesus is with you. He invites you to come to Him, to walk with Him, to let Him bear your burdens. When you feel like your life at home or school or work is just too much, and you want to crawl into bed for a week to hide from all the expectations, Jesus is with you.

Jesus is with you in the great successes of your life when all your dreams come true. Jesus is with you when everything comes tumbling down all around you. And Jesus is with you in the mundane as well. He's with you as you spend a few minutes on your phone trying to escape the weight of the world. He's with you as you go through the boringness of that class that is not worth your time.

Jesus is with you, no matter what you face. No matter how big or small or boring, He is your Emmanuel.