

Oasis in the Wilderness

Night #2 – Talking Points from *The Joseph Principles, Chapter 1*

Insights based on: "The Joseph Principles: Turning Adversity and Heartache into Miraculous Living" by Steven K. Scott.

Joseph Principle #1: Seeing How Every Trial Produces Hidden Treasures

The Opening Illustration: Hidden in Plain Sight

It is likely that most of the people that walked through her home hardly noticed that dirty grimy picture on the kitchen wall. It was so insignificant that not a single person offered a penny for it during the estate sale. But fast-forward several months and that picture, once cleaned up, sold at auction for \$27 million. A picture that once seemed destined for the dump was actually a treasure hidden in plain sight.

It's a powerful illustration of how some of the chapters in our lives that we think are insignificant or even shameful might be among our most valuable experiences.

Chapter 1 focuses on "treasure hunting," which Scott defines as the act of finding "hidden treasures in [your] life that were created by the problems, trials, and adversities [you] experienced."

Making Diamonds

"The heat and pressure that adversity and trials produce always turn our blackest lumps of coal into beautiful diamonds. But nature's diamonds aren't just lying on the ground. They're usually buried deep in the earth, and miners have to dig through mud, sand, and stone to find them. They are there, just waiting to be found."

As a result of this understanding "several Bible verses took on added meaning. James told us, 'Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything' (James 1:2–4). I used to think, How on earth can I rejoice and be happy about the trials I'm going through or those I have been through? Now that I understand every trial produces treasures, I can rejoice. I know it's just a matter of time before I find the hidden treasures. Paul told us, 'Give thanks in every circumstance, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus' (1 Thess. 5:18 BSB). Knowing that there is treasure in every trial empowers us with gratefulness, and out of that gratefulness, we want to thank God in every circumstance, even those that create adversity and trials."

"Finding treasures in [his] trials... Instead of being filled with hate and vengeance, Joseph's heart was filled with gratefulness, love, and kindness. And when he told his brothers how their hateful actions toward him had been used by God to save two nations from starvation, God and His loving sovereignty were magnificently revealed and forever displayed."

Is Treasure Hunting Always Appropriate?

"The time to treasure hunt a trial is never during or immediately following a trial. Please don't suggest this to anyone who is immersed in the severe grief that immediately surrounds a trial. A person cannot treasure hunt when they are drowning! In the case of a death, you never treasure hunt the death itself. Rather, when the timing is right, you may choose to treasure hunt the circumstances that followed the death."

Can You Think of Any Treasures That Have Come Out of Your Trials?

Feel free to share these in your breakout group.

Having trouble "treasure hunting" your hurts and trials? Then try this method for treasure hunting (very slightly amended from the chapter)...

1. Choose a specific hurt or adverse situation.
2. Ask God to reveal: What positive changes have I experienced because I went through that adversity?
 - a. How has that experience influenced the way I treat or relate to others?
 - b. What have been the positive changes in the direction of my life?
 - c. What have been the positive impacts or changes in my attitudes (humility, compassion, empathy, gratefulness, kindness, courage, faith, perseverance, etc.)?