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TO: The People of Zion
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HOW TO LIVE FOR GOD IN AN UNGODLY WORLD

You and I live in a mixed-up world that fundamentally embraces a different worldview from our own. Now, I know this is a statement of the obvious, but I believe we often struggle as followers of Jesus Christ to figure out how to live in such a world. It's fallen and broken, driven by values and views that run counter to our faith and the truth of Scripture. So what do we do? We wonder how we can best to relate in a mixed-up world.

Should we isolate ourselves from such a world, trying to keep ourselves “unstained”? Should we be intimidated by what our secular counterparts believe because we feel “out of step”? Should we identify more closely with the values of our world in order to win more people to Christ? Or is there another, better, option? Well, I believe there is. And the story of Joseph, beginning in Genesis 37, illustrates it perfectly.

When Joseph was just 17 years old, he was betrayed by his brothers and became the slave of a man named Potiphar. Potiphar quickly discovered he had bought an exceptional teenager. Joseph, against all odds, succeeded in conducting himself wisely and well, in ways that were well beyond youthfulness. Deprived of his freedom and any viable options, Joseph applied himself to living well where he was—in slavery. It's hard to say, and harder to believe, but he was an astounding success as a slave!

Once his true value was recognized, he was promoted to a trusted and significant position in Potiphar's household. But a false accusation from Potiphar's wife led Joseph into the dungeons of Pharaoh. While Joseph was incarcerated, Pharaoh heard of Joseph's ability to interpret dreams, and summoned him into his presence. Joseph listened as the mighty ruler recounted his strange dreams. But when Pharaoh asked for an interpretation, Joseph gave a disclaimer. He said, “I can't tell you, but God will show you.” And God subsequently spoke his message to Pharaoh through Joseph.

This is one of the key themes throughout Joseph's life. He knew what he *couldn't* do, and he knew what God *could* do! Joseph's theme was, “I can't, but God can.” He was a spiritual man who trusted in God and, by his power, Joseph bore much fruit ... he became successful.

The situations in which you and I live are far removed from those of Joseph. But we, too, are called to be fruitful, spiritual people. Joseph can be our long-departed guide to remind us of a double secret—God is with you and me, and it is God who gives us success.

Jesus used different terminology when addressing this topic of living in an ungodly world. He talked about his disciples, (and that includes you and me) being “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” He was effectively telling his followers, “I am deliberately placing you in a

dark world to bring light into the gloom and guide those stumbling in darkness!” So don't hide your light. Don't lose your saltiness. Remember Joseph's theme, “I can't, but God can,” and then go forward and shine in whatever environment God puts you in—living by the Spirit and trusting in God who graciously gives success!



**God's World | God's Way
God Speaks | We Listen**