

## Is Self-Promotion Wrong For Christians? Episode #210

Welcome to another Faith Friday edition of the Ray Edwards Show. We have the regular marketing and business show on Monday's. We have the deep dive conversations on Wednesday's now and we've just started doing these, where we focus on spiritual foundation material. I've wondered, what will people think of this? Some people will like it, some won't. Turns out we've had a great reception to this feature, even from people who don't share my same faith and that makes me happy, because I want everyone to feel welcome and that there's something of value for everybody here.

*I want to read you an email I got from France from Dylan, who wrote, 'I thought I'd drop you a line when the latest faith Friday episode queued up in my iTunes to let you know what I thought of the three a week model you're moving into. Simply put, I like it. The banter between you and your son on Monday shows is great and the Wednesday interviews are perfect too.'*

*As for faith Friday well, I'm not a Christian, nor am I really religious, but I enjoy immensely listening to you speak, teach and explain the Bible. I am sure others who don't have the same faith as you do will get something from the podcast, there's plenty of learning to be found in the Bible, even if my understanding of the book is different to someone else's. All the best, from France. Here's hoping you continue with the three a week model. Dylan*

Dylan, thank you so much for those encouraging words and rest assured that I will be continuing with the three a week model, I enjoy doing it and we've had great response to it so we're going to continue on with it.

Today's topic is about the question that I posed at the beginning... **Is it wrong for Christian's to be self-promotional? If it is, what does that say about marketing and advertising?**

First of all, let's ask this question. Does it feel great when anybody is self-promotional? When you feel somebody is overly self-promotional, they're always touting their own skills, accomplishments, awards and telling you how great they are, does that ever feel good to you? The answer is probably no. So there's part of the answer already. I think we know intuitively that there's a difference between letting the world or marketplace know what we have to offer and what its value is, which I call marketing or sales and being self-promotional which involves some kind of self-aggrandizement.

So these are not inconsequential questions they're questions that trouble thoughtful Christians. I believe that you can get more clarity about the difference between marketing and self-promotion by remembering five keys from the life of Joseph in the Old Testament of the Hebrew Bible. You can read about Joseph in Genesis, I believe it starts in Chapter 37 and runs through Chapter 50.

Joseph was a remarkable man. Just to give you an encapsulated view of his life, as a young man he was the favorite of his father, Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel and the nation of Israel was named after him. And the 12 tribes were actually named after Jacob's 12 sons, of whom Joseph was one. He was the 11<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob/Israel. Joseph was Jacob's favorite, which didn't sit well with Joseph's brothers.

Something else that didn't sit well with Joseph's brothers was that Joseph had these prophetic dreams, visions of his future that he shared with the whole family every morning when he had them. He would get up the next morning and say guess what? I had a dream and God showed me that one day I would be ruling over you, my brothers. You can imagine this not being very popular with the brothers.

The next day Joseph woke up and said I had another dream and this time God showed me that I would be ruling not only over you, my brothers, but also over my mother and father. Even Joseph's dad was like son really, you're going to rule over your mom and dad and your brothers. Of course, I'm paraphrasing. His brothers became so frustrated with him that they actually ended up selling him into slavery one day.

They were all in the fields and they sold Joseph into slavery and came home after taking his jacket and putting the blood of a goat on it and convinced Jacob that wild animals had eaten his son, Joseph.

Meanwhile, Joseph was sold into slavery. He's bought by an Egyptian officer, who takes Joseph into his household and lo and behold, Joseph prospers in the household of the Egyptian. In fact, he ends up running the Egyptian officer's entire household because the Bible says God was with him. It also says he was very handsome and the officer of the Egyptian army's wife thought Joseph was pretty handsome and wanted to sleep with him. He said no and she got angry and accused him of trying to rape her, so the officer had Joseph thrown into prison, even though he was innocent.

Now Joseph, once again, has been unjustly thrown into captivity. He's in the dungeon and once again, the Bible says that he found favor with the captain of the guards, who put Joseph in charge of the prisoners. It says because the Lord was with him and everything he did prospered, even in the prison.

The first couple of lessons we learn from the life of Joseph is...

- Just because God reveals your great destiny to you, doesn't mean you necessarily need to share it with everybody.

So that we learned from Joseph and his bragging about his prophetic visions, about his future where he would rule over his brothers and his parents. That was God showing him something for sure that was coming in his future, but it seems as though God never told him to tell everyone about it. It seems like this was a message for just Joseph and he didn't steward it very well.

Next lesson learned...

- Promotion flows through God's presence.

All throughout the story of Joseph, as we're told of his successes, even in the face of great adversity, was because the Lord was with him. As present day followers of Jesus, we know we've been promised that His Spirit dwells within us and He will never leave us and never forsake us. So the Lord is always with us and promotion flows through God's presence.

So, Joseph is in prison and is in charge of the prisoners and a couple of the members of the king's court, the Pharaoh's court, his butler and baker are thrown into prison because Pharaoh apparently is upset with them. I don't know whether they messed up a party or whatever, but he was mad so he threw them in prison.

They both had these weird dreams and Joseph interpreted their dreams for them. But something has happened to our Joseph, in that he isn't nearly as arrogant as he once was, when he was a younger man. He tells them that God is the interpreter of dreams and he gives them the meaning of their dreams. To the butler he says, you're going to be raised back up out of prison and you'll get your old job back. To the baker he says, you'll be raised up out of prison and Pharaoh's going to hang you and you're going to die.

Both predictions came true and to the butler, Joseph had said, as you are returned to your station remember me and be kind to me and remember me to the king and let him know that I'm innocent and get me out of this prison. However, the butler forgot to share that information, so Joseph spent two more years in prison.

This leads us to the next lesson learned.

- Sometimes promotion lies on the other side of adversity.

This has happened a couple times for Joseph now. There's great adversity and then he overcomes the adversity and there's promotion on the other side of that.

The next chapter of the story is...

Pharaoh has a very strange dream about fat and skinny cows and nobody in his kingdom can figure out what this dream means and then conveniently, as the Pharaoh is becoming more and more frustrated that nobody can figure out his dream, the butler remembers hey, there was this Hebrew guy in prison who interprets dreams and he could probably tell you what your dream means.

So the Pharaoh sends for Joseph and says, I hear that you can interpret dreams. I've had a dream and there's nobody who can interpret it, but I've heard it said that you can understand a dream to interpret it. Again, Joseph seems changed and says to the Pharaoh, it is not in me, God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Pharaoh proceeds to tell Joseph his dream and Joseph explained what the dream meant. It meant there was going to be a great famine. There would be seven fat years where there would be lots of grain and food and then

there would be seven lean years, where there would be a famine in the land and Joseph even went on to say, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man and send him over the land of Egypt.

Let Pharaoh do this and let him appoint officers over the land to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years and then let them gather all the food of the good years that are coming to store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh and let them keep the food in the cities, then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine.

It's interesting, Joseph didn't say God told me you should put me in charge. He just gave the Pharaoh good advice. Pharaoh did think the advice was good and so did all his servants. Pharaoh said, since God has shown you all this there's no one as discerning and wise as you, you should be over my house and all my people shall be ruled according to your word, only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.

See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt. So Joseph was promoted but he didn't promote himself. He did not brag of his own accomplishments, he simply told the truth about what needed to happen, what kind of person needed to occupy this position and he let God inspire the idea in the mind of Pharaoh about who to choose.

Who was glorified by this promotion? God, which leads to the next key.

- Our promotion is always for the purpose of glorifying God.

This can be hard to grasp, because as we enjoy more and more success we can easily fall into believing that on our own strength we have accomplished these things, when the truth is, we only accomplish anything we accomplish by the grace of God, by His favor, through His power, through His presence and for His glory. As long as we can remember those things and to give credit where credit is due, I believe we stay in a place of true humility where we're giving credit to God and glorifying Him for the things that have been accomplished in our life.

Now, the story continues with Joseph ruling over the land. He collects the food as he proposed, stores it up and his brother's eventually end up coming to get food from the Egyptians because they're starving and he is reunited

with his brothers, with his father and they are honored in the land of Egypt. They all come back together as a family and Joseph says something very interesting. He tells his brothers, don't be sad about what happened, because what you intended for evil, God intended for good.

So Joseph was saying, God took His sovereign design for our prosperity, for our success and He made it come to pass, even though we all messed it up. I was arrogant and bragged about my dreams and visions. You were going to kill me, you threw me in a pit and then sold me to slavers. I got thrown in prison. You were starving. A lot of hard stuff has happened to us, but God took all that, corrected our course and put our feet back on His path. We succeeded in the end. He made it turn out for our good.

I believe that God only allowed Joseph to be promoted when He knew that Joseph had achieved the true level of appreciation, humility and sensitivity to the presence and power of God, so that the promotion to these high places of authority would not destroy Joseph.

The next key lesson...

- God will promote you only when it won't destroy you. He'll never give you something that will destroy you.

You can market. That means letting people know what you're able to help them with. You can advertise. That means letting people know that you have a solution to their problems they face. That is different from self-promotion, from self-aggrandizement. So whenever you get confused about the difference between marketing and self-promotion, remember these five keys from the life of Joseph.

1. Just because God reveals your great destiny to you, doesn't mean you necessarily need to share it with everybody.
2. Promotion flows through God's presence.
3. Sometimes promotion lies on the other side of adversity.
4. Our promotion is always for the purpose of glorifying God, because God was glorified in the land of Egypt through the life of Joseph.
5. God will promote you only when it won't destroy you. He'll never give you something that will destroy you.

As far as self-aggrandizement goes, I know there's a lot of tension about this in the marketing world, because we use testimonials, we talk about our



skillsets, we have a resume that shows our accomplishments, capability and credibility. I think those are all fine and good until they become over the top and they start to feel icky. I think we all know when we hear that from someone else. We need wise counselors in our life to let us know when we're getting there ourselves. That's the value of having something like a mastermind group or a small group, some trusted people who share your same values to keep you in check and letting you know you're getting a big head with your amazing ego.

There's a proverb that's useful here, Proverbs 27:2 that says, 'let another praise you and not your own mouth, someone else and not your own lips.'

Who praised Joseph? It was the Butler and it took him a while, but he eventually did end up praising him and thereby, Joseph was promoted and God was glorified.

---

So what do you think? Does this help clear up the issue about self-promotion for you versus marketing and advertising or does it create more questions? I'd love to hear what you think, so go to the show notes and leave your comments - [RayEdwards.com/210](http://RayEdwards.com/210).

If you get value from the show, what would be super useful and helpful is if you would subscribe in iTunes and leave us a rating and/or review. It helps others learn about the show

Coming Monday is another episode of the business and marketing version of the Ray Edwards Show.

Until then, I pray that God will continue to bless you and that He will keep doing for you more than you can ask or even possibly imagine. Peace to your house.

---

Transcripts of these podcasts are available by clicking the link in the show notes. Transcripts are provided by our friends at [SuccessTranscripts.com](http://SuccessTranscripts.com), a great solution if you need your podcasts, webinars, interviews, workshops, sermons, teleseminars or other audio/video transcribed.