

#TargetPractice: What can we learn from Miriam?

Last week we talked a little about being willing to be used by God. Josiah was young and was stepping out of the current culture to turn the nation back to God. He was willing to take a big step for God, recognizing God is above all.

We can learn this from Miriam as well, but it looks a little different. While Josiah knew he was making a stand for God and making change (although he didn't realize the full effect), Miriam didn't realize what her actions were going to accomplish at all.

What did she do as a child? (watched younger brother in Nile and suggested to the daughter of Pharaoh that she could find a woman to care for the baby Moses)

She was willing to step up, even though it might have put her in danger, in order to protect a loved one who couldn't protect himself. God used her to protect the one who would lead Israel out of slavery.

God will use us to do things that we can't even imagine as long as we are willing to take a step and do the right thing in front of us.

While this is a great thing we can learn from Miriam, I want to focus on something else from later in her life.

What is something you would like to do more than anything else?

Do you know someone who might be more successful at that than you are?

How does that make you feel?

Does that change how you treat that person if you know them or how you speak of or to that person?

Emily was listening to a book the other day about a couple cousins who loved to play 2 on 2 basketball. They were nearly practically unbeatable and very supportive of one another. They went to 2 different school districts but were different ages, so there was no chance they would have to play against each other...or so they thought. The older cousin, Trey, became captain of his team but then found out his younger cousin, Pete, was good enough that he was placed as a starter on his school's team.

Trey was afraid that Pete would do better in the game and embarrass him. So he began to do things during the game to make Pete look bad or unsuccessful. The only thing it accomplished was making Trey look bad, foul Pete, and get Trey taken out of the game. He even began to bad mouth Pete!

Jealousy can be a dangerous thing. It can cause us to do things that we normally would not do.

Miriam began to complain about Moses many years after standing up for him. The cause...jealousy. She (along with Aaron) said *"Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?"* (Numbers 12)

She might have felt unseen or unappreciated. God had used her to save Moses' life. She had been with Moses during the exodus of Israel from Egypt. She supported his ministry and God's mission. But Moses got the credit and recognition.

Miriam received a consequence from God for speaking against Moses. Do you remember what it was? (leprosy) However, Moses spoke up for her and prayed for God to heal her.

We can learn from Miriam that it is important to be willing to do the right thing before us. We also need to be humble if God has someone doing something we might want to do. We can support them without jealousy or complaint. Be willing to be used by God but humble enough to be content with God using someone else.

Going back to the basketball story, Trey learned that it was more important to do his best and be glad and supportive of his cousin. They enjoyed playing ball together but learned to be able to play against one another and just have fun doing their best.

²⁶ We must not be proud. We must not make trouble with each other. And we must not be jealous of each other. Galatians 5:26 ICB