

PARENTS' PAGE LESSON 3: Joseph, From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh

Timeless Truth: Though man fails, God's plan prevails.

Bible Basis: Genesis 37–47:11

Key Verse: Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. ... You planned to harm me. But God planned it for good." —Genesis 50:19–20, NIV

Resource: *The Story for Kids*: Chapter 3

Parent Tips:

Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity is designed to help your family discuss the pitfalls of favoritism. The Extra Mile idea will get your family into your neighborhood as you meet the needs of hungry people in your community.

Get the Point:

Preschool: God took care of Joseph. God also takes care of me.

Elementary: God worked things out for Joseph's good. God knows what's good for me.

Middle School: Through the difficult times in life, God is with me and has an ultimate purpose for my life.

High School: Joseph's life shows that good decisions don't always result in positive earthly consequences. Following God is its own reward — but sometimes these rewards are limited to spiritual rewards.

Table Talk

Preschool/Elementary

- Can anybody remember a funny or weird dream you've had recently? (If nobody remembers one, share one of your own to get the conversation started.)
- Do you think that dream has any chance of coming true? Would you like it to come true?
- What do you think is the difference between your dreams and Joseph's dreams?
- What are your hopes and dreams for your life? (Let children share and then tell them some of your hopes: that they'll always follow God; that you'll always have a strong relationship and love them; that they'll use their talents to serve God.)

Middle/High School

- Has anybody told lies about you and gotten you in trouble, like Potiphar's wife did to Joseph?
- What did it feel like? Did you do anything to get even?

- Has anybody made promises to you and then not followed through, like the drink-tester did to Joseph?
- How did that make you feel?
- What can you learn from Joseph about patience and continuing to believe in God's plan during difficult times?

Living Faith

Instruct each family member to bring his or her favorite possession to the living room. It must be only one thing, such as a toy, golf club, stuffed animal, photo, Wii gaming system or car (of course, this would require a trip outside). Once everybody has chosen something, start with the youngest family member and have her explain why that item is her favorite. Continue around the room until each person gets to share about his possession.

After everybody is finished explain that it's natural to have a favorite thing. Some items just fit your personality and specific tastes better than others. Some things have more sentimental value and mean more to you. But when it comes to families, favoritism can cause some problems.

Ask:

- How did it make Joseph's brothers feel that Jacob "loved Joseph more than any of his other sons" (Genesis 37:3)?
- Were Joseph's brothers justified in selling him into slavery?
- Who was more at fault – Jacob or Joseph's brothers – for what happened to Joseph?
- If Jacob would've acted differently, do you think Joseph's life would've been different?
- Have you ever been in a group or team where somebody else was the favorite?
- Have you ever been treated as the favorite? How did that make you feel?

At the end, pray for God to give your family the wisdom and ability to love each other fully and unconditionally without showing favoritism.

Extra Mile

God gave Joseph wisdom to prepare for the coming famine. Through God's provision, people were saved when there was no food. Take an evening as a family to go door-to-door in your neighborhood to gather nonperishable food for a community or church food bank. Have your children explain to the neighbors exactly where the food will go and who it will benefit. Make sure to visit houses of people you don't know. Bring a wagon or shopping bags to collect food donations. After to deliver the items to the food bank, write a thank-you note to the neighbors that contributed and revisit those homes to let them know the results of your family food drive.