

# Joseph

## Session 1

### Leader Check-in

---

How familiar are you with the story of Joseph? What challenges might you need to overcome in order to approach this study with fresh eyes?

### Discover

---

How would you define the term *dysfunctional family*?

Read Genesis 37:1-11. What characteristics and emotions do you see in the following characters:

*Jacob:*

*Joseph:*

*Joseph's Brothers:*

Look at the lists you've made of characteristics and emotions. How did these things create a perfect storm for dysfunction?

Read Genesis 37:12-28. What series of events led to Joseph being sold into slavery?

Why do you think God chose to use a family like this to tell His story?

### Fully Own

---

Read Genesis 37:29-36. Have pride, anger, or jealousy ever led you to make a decision you later regretted? What did this experience teach you?

Reflect on the major characters in Genesis 37. Which character can you relate to most? Why?

How do the members of Joseph's family deal with their emotions (anger, pride, jealousy, apathy)? What can you learn from their examples, whether positive or negative?

Do you believe that God can work through you and your family—no matter how dysfunctional?

Read Ephesians 4:6 and James 1:19. What advice would you like to give Jacob, Joseph, or his brothers? How can you take your own advice this week?

## Challenge

---

Read **Genesis 38** during your personal study time this week and consider the following questions:

What poor choices did Judah make?

How did his choices affect his family?

Read **Matthew 1:1-3**. Why do you think Tamar is included in the lineage of Jesus?

What does Judah's story have in common with the story of Jacob's family in **Genesis 37**?

# Joseph

## Session 2

### Leader Check-in

---

What did you discover during your study of Genesis 38 this week?

### Discover

---

The stories in the Bible are filled with real people responding to pain, tragedy, and loss. Out of all the people we have read about so far (Jacob, Joseph and his brothers, Judah, Tamar) who do you relate to the most? How do you tend to respond to painful circumstances?

**Re-read Genesis 37:29-36.** Identify some healthy and unhealthy aspects of Jacob's approach to grieving. How does his behavior help you to better understand his character?

Consider what you know about Joseph's story that Jacob doesn't know. How does your extra knowledge shape the way you understand Jacob's circumstances? Why do you think the narrator gave *you* this extra information?

**Read James 1:2-4.** Would you describe Joseph as "mature and complete" at this point in the story? What predictions can you make about Joseph's journey based on the truth of this passage?

**Read Genesis 39:1-6a.** What conclusions can you draw about Joseph's response to his painful circumstances?

### Fully Own

---

Have you come to terms with the reality that Christians are not immune to suffering? Why or why not?

Consider the quote: "While pain is inevitable, suffering is optional." Do you agree or disagree? Why?

In what areas of your life are you most easily discouraged?

**Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.** Where in your life have you lost perspective on the bigger story that God is writing?

What do you most admire about Joseph? What advice would he give you regarding your current circumstances?

### Challenge

---

Commit to memorizing **James 1:4** between now and next session.

# Joseph

## Session 3

### Leader Check-in

---

What has God been teaching you as you meditated on James 1:4 this week?

### Discover

---

**Re-read Genesis 39:1-6a.** How would the average person respond to the circumstances in Joseph's life? How does Joseph's response compare?

How did Joseph's attitude and behavior impact those around him? What could the church of today learn from his example?

**Read Genesis 39:6b-18.** What temptations has Joseph faced (physical, emotional, and spiritual) by this point in the story? How did he overcome those temptations?

**Take a closer look at Genesis 39:9.** What can you discern about Joseph's understanding of sin based on this passage?

Reflect on the list you made of characteristics of Joseph during session one of this study. How do you see his character developing? What characteristics would you use to describe Joseph at this point in the story?

### Fully Own

---

**Read Genesis 39:19-23.** What is your initial reaction to this passage? What does Joseph's integrity cost him?

*If needed, divide the group into men and women before answering the questions below.*

**Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13.** How are you at handling temptation? Is there a recurring temptation in your life that you just can't seem to kick?

Consider the following principles for overcoming temptation. Which of these do you need to develop most in your life?

1. Anticipate it.
2. Accept responsibility.
3. Ask God for help.
4. Admit the struggle to a friend.
5. Avoid tempting situations.

### Challenge

---

Choose one of the five principles for overcoming temptation and put it into practice this week.

# Joseph

## Session 4

### Leader Check-in

---

Which principle for overcoming temptation did you put into practice this week? What happened?

### Discover

---

Share a story about a time when you had to persevere through a number of setbacks. How did this experience challenge your faith? What did you learn?

**Read Genesis 39:20-23.** What patterns are you noticing in Joseph's story?

What is the key to Joseph's success at each stage of this story?

**Read Genesis 40:1-8.** Reflect on Joseph's behavior and character at the beginning of this story (Genesis 37). How has Joseph changed? What, if anything, has stayed the same?

Make a mental list of each setback that Joseph has faced so far. What lessons might Joseph have learned from each of these difficult times? Brainstorm as many lessons as you can with your group.

**Read Genesis 40:9-23.** What is the reasonable response of the cup-bearer to Joseph's kindness? What lesson can you learn from the actions of the cup-bearer?

### Fully Own

---

What's your gut reaction when you read **Genesis 40:23**? Is there someone in your life that has returned your kindness with a lack of gratitude? Have you been that person to someone else?

Have the frustrations of your current circumstances blinded you to the needs of others? What can you learn from Joseph's example?

**Read James 1:12.** How does this description of blessedness compare to your understanding? Is your definition of "blessed" broad enough to include trials and painful experiences?

Make a mental list of the major setbacks you have experienced in your life. What lessons have you learned? If you feel that you haven't learned lessons, why might that be?

### Challenge

---

Pray **Psalm 139:23-24** every day this week. Journal the thoughts that God puts on your heart in the process.



# Joseph

## Session 5

### Leader Check-in

---

What did God reveal to you as you asked him to search your heart?

### Discover

---

As a group, create a summary of Joseph's story so far. Starting from the beginning of the story, have each group member contribute one sentence. After everyone has shared, go back and add any important details that may have been left out.

**Read Genesis 41:1-13.** What clues does the narrator give to show that Joseph's story is about to take a turn for the better?

What is the significance of dreams in Joseph's story?

**Read Genesis 41:14-36.** What does Joseph say to Pharaoh that shows his heart is still surrendered to God?

**Read Genesis 41:37-57.** What detail stand out to you in light of what you know about Joseph's past? Where can you discern God's faithfulness in this passage?

Why do you think God trusted Joseph with a position of power and wealth? Was he ready for this position when he first had his dreams as a seventeen-year-old?

### Fully Own

---

**Consider 2 Timothy 4:2.** How did Joseph live out this passage in his life? What would it look like for you to be prepared in season and out of season?

Take a closer look at **Genesis 41:37-39**. Would you be willing to go through what Joseph went through if it meant that you would have this kind of impact on unbelievers?

Is there a dream in your heart that God hasn't given to you yet? What aspects of your character might he need to refine before you are ready to step into that dream?

When was the last time you felt humble and grateful?

### Challenge

---

Ask God to show you areas of your character that still need to be refined. Then ask him what he wants you to do about it!

# Joseph

## Session 6

### Leader Check-in

---

How has God challenged you this week? How can the group support you as you lean into growth and maturity?

### Discover

---

Divide into four groups in order to read the following:

Group 1: Genesis 42      Group 2: Genesis 43

Group 3: Genesis 44      Group 4: Genesis 45

Spend the first 5-10 minutes reading silently to yourself. Pay special attention to the way Joseph:

- Handles his emotions
- Treats his brothers
- Trusts God

Spend the next 10 minutes with your group discussing what you noticed.

Finally, share what you learned beginning with Group 1, until all groups have shared.

### Fully Own

---

Be honest. What would you have done if you were in Joseph's place?

Have you ever received forgiveness when you didn't expect it? How did that moment impact your life?

Is there an estranged friend or family member who needs your forgiveness? What is keeping you from offering forgiveness in this situation?

**Compare Genesis 45:4-7 to Romans 8:28.** Consider your current circumstances (hurts, broken relationships, etc.) in light of these passages? What new perspective is God offering you?

Are you willing to let go of your ideas of fairness in order to trust God more?

### Challenge

---

Demonstrate your trust in God this week by forgiving someone you have held a grudge against.

# Joseph

## Session 7

### Leader Check-in

---

How was your practice in forgiveness this week? What challenges did you encounter as you stepped out in obedience?

### Discover

---

Recall the dreams that Joseph had as a young man. How did God bring these dreams to fruition? Use the space below to draw a picture that represents Joseph's path from prideful dreamer to wise ruler:

Read Genesis 47:1-2 and 48:11. How did Joseph's faithfulness impact his family?

What kind of legacy did Joseph leave for his family? For Egypt?

Compare Genesis 50:24 to 2 Peter 1:12-15. What similarities do you notice between Joseph's words to his brothers and Peter's words in his letter?

Read Genesis 50:25. What might Joseph's bones represent for his children and grandchildren?

### Fully Own

---

Use the space below to draw a picture of your journey with Christ so far:



Recall Genesis 45:4-7 How has God used setbacks and upsets to shape your character- to teach you about forgiveness?

What do you hope to pass on to your family, children, and grandchildren? Are you making decisions with that legacy in mind?

What is the most important lesson that Joseph's story has taught you?

## Challenge

---

Reflect on all that you have learned in your quiet time this week. Ask God how he feels about the progress you have made.