

youthESource Bible Study

Joseph: A True Success Story

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Opening Activity

Has there ever been a time when you put your trust in someone and it seemed like they failed you? How did it make you feel? Did you want to continue to put your trust in them?

The goal of these questions is to get the youth thinking about trust and how hard it is to not only trust someone, but to continue to trust them if things didn't go their way.

Lesson

Read Genesis 37.

- What happened to Joseph? *His brothers sold him into slavery.*
- Why did his brothers do this? *They were jealous of him and the relationship Joseph had with his father.*
- How would you feel if you were Joseph? Why? *The goal is to lead students into thinking about whether or not they would trust their brothers, or anyone else for that matter, again. Why? Because Joseph was hurt, not just by someone, but by his very own brothers! Your family is supposed to love you and support you even when you feel like no one else does. If Joseph's own brothers could not love him, then how could he trust anyone else to?*
- What emotions would you feel toward God? Do you think it would be difficult to put your trust in God? Why or why not? *Joseph could have been angry at God for putting him in this situation, but he wasn't. He put his trust in God that everything would work out to His Glory.*

Read Genesis 39:1-6.

- How did God reward Joseph for putting his trust in Him? *He blessed the household Joseph was in. Remember, Joseph was sold into slavery, so for a slave to be promoted to a high position is very unlikely.*

Read Genesis 39:6-23

- What happened between Potiphar's wife and Joseph? *Potiphar's wife told Joseph to come and lie with her. When Joseph refused, she accused Joseph of raping her.*
- Have you ever been falsely accused of something, and if so, what was it? Will you trust the person who accused you again? *The point of this question is to lead students to the fact that we live in a fallen world. Everyone sins, everyone lies and everyone is deceived. Like Joseph, there may be a time when we feel we cannot trust anyone. Make it clear that, at this point, Joseph has been betrayed by his family and his work.*
- Reread verses 21-23. What do they say? Who was still with Joseph? What reward was Joseph given for continually putting his trust in the Lord? *Focus on the fact that the Lord was still with him (verse 21). Even though Joseph had been falsely accused, he still put his trust in the Lord and was blessed by Him. The Lord blessed him and gave him command over the prison.*

Read Genesis 40.

- What did Joseph do with the cupbearer and the baker? *Joseph interpreted the dreams of both the cupbearer and the baker.*
- What was Joseph's response when the cupbearer and the baker told him that no one could interpret Pharaoh's dreams? What does this say about Joseph? *In verse 8 Joseph says, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" Even after being held in prison all this time for something Joseph did not do, he is still trusting in God and relying on Him for direction.*
- What did Joseph ask of the cupbearer? Did he do what Joseph had asked? *In verse 14 and 15, after Joseph has interpreted the cupbearer's dream, Joseph asks the cupbearer to remember him when everything is going well so that Joseph may finally be released from prison. But the cupbearer forgets his promise.*

Read Genesis 41.

- What was happening to Pharaoh and what did Joseph do about it? *Pharaoh was having reoccurring dreams and none of the magicians and wise men of Egypt were able to interpret the dream. The cup-*

bearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh that he could interpret the dreams. Joseph interpreted the dreams.

- *What is so significant about verse 16? Joseph said that he, by himself, could not interpret the dreams, only God could. Focus on the point that Joseph could have said that he could do it, but still he is trusting in God.*
- *What was Joseph's reward for interpreting Pharaoh's dream? He was promoted to second in line to Pharaoh. Because Joseph trusted in God, even through all the bad that was happening in his life, Joseph still trusted in God.*

Application

Sometimes when things are good in our life, we tend to shove God to the side. We think that we are in control. But when bad things happen, we come running for Him. But Joseph trusted in God in BOTH times-- the good and bad. That is the point your students cannot miss. Show them that in ALL things we are to give thanks to Him.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for everything You have given us. We especially give You thanks for sending Your Son to die for us in this fallen world. Help us to lean on You, Lord, when things get bad and when things are good. In Your name we pray, Amen.