

3

Group Guide

Joseph Sold Into Slavery

January 21, 2024

Main Passage: Genesis 37

Theological Theme

God is sovereign and can work all things out for our good and His glory.

Introduction

- 1. ? What is one of your favorite plot twists in a movie or book?
- 2. ? When has life given you a plot twist? How did you respond?

1. The Favored Son (Genesis 37:1-17)

Jacob, also known as Israel, was the son of Isaac. Jacob had a history with favoritism in his family and although this caused problems between him and his twin Esau, he followed in the same pattern with his children. As the father of twelve sons from four women, Jacob favored one son over the others. Joseph, Jacob's favorite, was one of the two sons that Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel, bore.

- 1. ? Why is favoritism so destructive in a family?
- 2. ? What do you think the brothers were feeling when they heard these two dreams of Joseph's? How could Joseph have responded to these dreams in a more God-honoring way?
- 3. ? Application: What can you learn from this portion of Joseph's story? How might you apply what you learn to your own life?

2. The Plot Against Joseph (Genesis 37:18-27)

The brothers' negative feelings, Jacob's special treatment, and his boasting about his dreams worked together to build resentment. As Joseph arrived to check on his brothers, the brothers conspired to kill him. They were not content only to bully him, prank him, or anything else we might consider typical sibling rivalry. Their resentment had grown to a point they desired to be done with him forever.

- ① When have you faced a moment like the brothers, even if not as drastic as involving murder? How does having an excuse already prepared affect your choice to sin or not?
- ① Why is it hard to influence a group by trying to play both sides? When are you tempted to respond this way?
- ① Application: What can you learn about your own tendency to sin from this story?

3. The Providence of God (Genesis 37:28-36)

When Reuben went back to the pit to rescue Joseph and found him gone, it all came to a head. His weak attempt at doing the right thing had fallen short as so often happens when we make half-hearted attempts to stand for what is right. After selling Joseph into slavery for twenty shekels, the brothers developed a new plan. Taking Joseph's coat and dipping it in the blood of a goat, they took the evidence to Jacob. Consider how uncaring the brothers were in the way they treated their father too. Sin can blind us and cause us to act in ways that are nothing like Jesus.

- ① When was a time sin blinded you to the reality of your actions? How do all of us face this danger at some point?
- ① When was a time you were painfully aware of sin's consequences?
- ① Application: What circumstances do you need to trust God to work in currently? Where is it hard to see how God might use what you are going through for good?

Conclusion

- ① How do you typically respond when you suffer unjustly? What does Joseph's story teach you about these moments?
- ① Where might God be calling you to offer forgiveness to those who have wronged you? How can you move toward that with His help?
- ① How might you have a gospel conversation with another person by sharing the story of Joseph?