

GETTING STARTED

> *As your group time begins, use this section for very brief review prior to showing the video to help get the conversation going.*

Let's do life together!/Opening Discussion: As you begin today, take a few minutes and share with your group how your family celebrated Easter? Do you have any family traditions? Share your thoughts about Mark Gregston from Easter weekend.

Our Subject Today: Gone but not forgotten; what kind of spouse, parent, relative, or friend are we? *"Actions don't merely speak louder than words, sometimes they echo into the next generation."*

VIDEO NOTES/QUESTIONS

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY / OBSERVATION: Genesis is the book of beginnings. The first eleven chapters cover creation to the Tower of Babel. Chapters twelve to fifty focus on the lives of the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. From these men come the nation of Israel and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

INTERPRETATION: Commentary is located on pages five and six.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1) Can you remember someone (maybe a father, mother, relative, friend) in your past who, as they lived their life, something stood out to you? No words, just actions. Who remembers someone and will share a story?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER: Share these Scripture:

Hebrews 13:7 "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."

1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Peter 5:3 "not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock."
Actions don't merely speak louder than words, sometimes they echo into the next generation.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

Before we read these verses, someone share the story of Joseph.

Read: *Genesis 39:1-23*

2) Who can tell us the rest of the story about Joseph? Can you remember a time when you experienced someone hurting you? How did Joseph handle all the pain he went through?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER: Remember as a leader, do not share all your personal details of your personal pain, only what is necessary to help the discussion. Joseph is remembered for trusting God through all the pain and suffering
Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."...
Actions don't merely speak louder than words, sometimes they echo into the next generation.

Read *Genesis 45:3*

3) How did God come through in your story or how would you like for Him to come through? Has anyone waited and trusted God as Joseph did, to show up and work out an issue? What kind of legacy would you leave for your family, spouse, or friends if you really trusted God?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER: Share the story of Esau and Jacob — So now we've got to rewind and go back many, many years ok? Remember there's Abraham and Isaac and Esau and Jacob, and when Esau and Jacob were teenagers, maybe even during their middle school years, yes they were twin brothers but they were very, very different. Esau was an outdoorsman who loved to hunt and fish and Jacob was indoors man, Jacob wanted Esau's birthright...
Actions don't merely speak louder than words, sometimes they echo into the next generation.

Read *Genesis 45:4-9*

4) How did Joseph walking in forgiveness towards those who intended harm against him impact his family and others? Instead of bad news, Joseph's brothers went back to their father to share the good news - how can we do the same and what should we tell others?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER:

Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers and faith in God's sovereignty, allowed God to use him to save the nation of Israel. If we are saved, we walk in God's unmerited grace and forgiveness through our relationship with Jesus, God wants us to extend the same unmerited grace and forgiveness to others. Then we can speak the truth in love, we can effectively share the Gospel with authenticity, we can say "He is not dead but alive!", "He has been exalted and rules!", "He'll meet your every need!" and "He wants you to come live with Him!"

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APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)**Read Genesis 33:1-10**

5) Esau made a bad decision in a moment of pain, and suffering. What is something you “gave up” or what bad decision did you make in your past “without” seeking and trusting God? How were the bad decisions of Jacob and Esau remembered?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER: James 4:17 “If anyone then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.”

Colossians 2:8 “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.”

Philippians 4: 6-7 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

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Read John 13:34-35

6) What kind of legacy did Jesus leave for us to remember? If we are disciples of Jesus, list some ways we can be remembered that would echo through the next generation.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS / DIGGING DEEPER: 1 John 4:8 “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

SUMMARY (My Take-Away for This Week)**POSSIBLE SUMMARY:**

- *Actions don’t merely speak louder than words, sometimes they echo into the next generation*
- *There are things I need to change in my life so I can leave a legacy that will echo God’s grace, love and truth into the next generation*

WORK OUT (This Week's Assignments)

- Memorize *John 13:35* “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- Think of some ways you can love in a way that your friends, family, kids, spouse will remember.
- Reach out to some friends or neighbors and invite them to your LIFEgroup.
- Help your group leader contact those who did not attend today/tonight and invite them to attend next week.

MY NEXT STEPS FROM THE WEEKEND WORSHIP

1. Today, I will sign up for a LIFEgroup in order to learn about how to grow in my relationship with Jesus and with others.
2. Today, I will evaluate my current actions and ask myself the question, “Do I want my kids / future family doing the things I do?”
3. This week, I will answer the question, “What do I want to be known for?” and share my answer with at least one person I impact on a daily basis.
4. This week, I will read *Ephesians 5-6* to learn more about God’s plan for myself and my family.

HOW MY GROUP CAN PRAY FOR ME THIS WEEK

> Record Group Prayer Request Here:

[illegible]

COMMENTARY

Introduction:

Joseph was the 11th of 12 sons, the first by Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel. His name, "may he [the Lord] add," was a part of Rachel's prayer at his birth (*Gen. 30:24*). As the child of Jacob's old age and Rachel's son, Joseph became the favorite and was given the famous "coat of many colors" (*Gen. 37:3* KJV; "long robe with sleeves," NRSV, REB; "richly ornamented robe" NIV) by his father. This and dreams which showed his rule over his family inspired the envy of his brothers, who sold Joseph to a caravan of Ishmaelites (*Gen. 37*). Joseph was taken to Egypt where he became a trusted slave in the house of Potiphar, an official of the pharaoh. On false accusations of Potiphar's wife, Joseph was thrown in the royal prison, where he interpreted the dreams of two officials who had offended the pharaoh (*Gen. 39-40*). Eventually Joseph was brought to interpret some worrisome dreams for the pharaoh. Joseph predicted seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine and recommended a program of preparation by storing grain. Pharaoh responded by making Joseph his second in command (*Gen. 41:39-45*). (Daniel C. Browning Jr., "Joseph," ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* [Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003])

Question 2.

Genesis 39. Joseph was the kind of man who excelled at anything he undertook. Soon he was the principal servant in the household of Potiphar, his master. He attracted not only the attention of his master but also the eyes of Potiphar's wife. Her overtures to him failed, not because he was not tempted, but because of his respect for the demands of God and his refusal to betray Potiphar's trust in him (39:9).

There is some evidence in the chapter that Potiphar did not believe the story told him by his wife but had to act to halt her busy tongue. He put Joseph into a prison where important persons were held (v. 20), a sentence which was hardly to be expected for a slave taken for attempted rape of a man's wife. It would have been more natural that he be executed or certainly thrown into the darkest dungeon. Furthermore, Potiphar is said to be the captain of the guard (39:1), and later it is "the captain of the guard" who charged Joseph with the care of the other prisoners (40:4).

Joseph by sheer determination remains true to God. (Clyde T. Francisco, "Genesis," in *The Teacher's Bible Commentary*, ed. H. Franklin Paschall and Herschel H. Hobbs [Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1972])

Proverbs 3:5-6. To trust anything or anyone other than the LORD results in disaster (*11:28; 28:26; cp. Ps 52:7; 62:10; Is 30:12-13; Ezk 16:15*). To rely on something—a synonym for "trust"—is to lean on it as if it were a crutch (*2Sm 1:6; Jb 8:14-15; Is 50:10*). Understanding is good (16:16), but only if it is from the Lord (9:10). To know God in all your ways is to invite his presence into all daily activities and decisions. Make your paths straight (or smooth) means that God will make righteousness attainable. (David K. Stabnow, "Proverbs," in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax [Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017])

Questions 3.

Genesis 45:3. Although he had given them the clearest token of his mildness and his love, yet, when he told them his name, they were terrified, as if he had thundered against them: for while they revolve in their minds what they have deserved, the power of Joseph seems so formidable to them, that they anticipate nothing for themselves but death. When, however, he sees them overcome with fear, he utters no reproach, but only labours to calm their perturbation. Nay, he continues gently to soothe them, until he has rendered them composed and cheerful. (John Calvin and John King, *Commentary on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010))

What the dreams did not make known was that grace, love, and forgiveness—not submission enforced by power—achieved the benevolent outcome of the ruler over his subjects. The estranged "men" become Joseph's "brothers" again. That "his brothers talked with him" (v. 15), when before the brothers could not speak kindly to him (37:4), portrays the mending of the family fracture. Remarkably, it is Judah's moving speech of self-sacrifice, of his love for his father and family (44:18-34), that incites Joseph to move the family beyond its pain of the past to a new beginning. (K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

COMMENTARY

Questions 4.

Genesis 45:4-9. What makes possible the alleviation of anger, guilt, and vengeance is the “other world.” Joseph has gained an insight that breaks the cycle of hatred and retaliation. He perceives a broader setting and meaning that transcends their behavior and feelings. “God sent me ahead of you” (45:5, 7) dwarfs their part in this family trial, whether they are victims or victimizers (or both). How did Joseph come by this insight? We are not told directly. The answer resides in Joseph’s earlier acknowledgment to Pharaoh that the future is known only to God, who alone interprets the significance of dreams (41:16).

We must assume that Joseph came to this insight through divine revelation. This revelation came by the inspiration of the sage (cf. *Ps 105:22*), not through a direct revelation. By Joseph’s recollection of his life’s course in the context of his father’s God, who made promises of presence and provision, he observed the higher purpose of saving others. There is not much ground for recriminations when our offenses are placed in the rising tides of God’s gracious purposes (and his example, cf. *Rom 8:29; Heb 2:11-12, 17*). Does this mean that Joseph indifferently dismissed their crimes? No, he will forever be “the one you sold into Egypt” (v. 4), but God’s greater purpose of preserving life supplants any thought of revenge (cf. 50:19). (K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, vol. 1B, The New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

Question 5.

Genesis 33:1-10. The Jacob-Esau conflict comes to a happy resolution in this final episode of their lifelong wrestling match. Jacob’s exclamation, “For to see your face is like seeing the face of God” (v. 10), links his nocturnal struggle at Peniel (32:22-32[23-33]) and his reunion with Esau across the Jabbok. Jacob implies that the pugilistic encounter with God substituted for the fisticuffs Jacob feared would occur when meeting Esau. Jacob had received God’s “grace” (vv. 5, 11) and thus Esau’s “favor” (vv. 8, 10, 15). Although the tug-of-war began physically in the womb (25:26), their battle as adults was one of wits and words by which Jacob the trickster gained advantage (*chap. 27*). Esau had sworn that he would get his revenge against his conniving brother (27:41), but after twenty years of separation the men had undergone change.

We do not learn from the text explicitly why Esau’s hatred succumbed to a rekindled love for his brother. The passage, however, hints at what incited Jacob’s change of heart. That his moral transformation occurred in conjunction with his brutal treatment by Laban and with the encounter by God is implied at several points in the account. First, whereas Jacob had sent his servants and family ahead in *chap. 32*, now he takes the lead, subjecting himself to danger first (v. 3). Second, he acknowledges that his prosperity in Paddan-Aram was the benevolent favor of God (vv. 5, 11), refusing to boast in his hard work and sleight of hand (30:37-43; 31:20, 26, 38-41). Third, he provided a gift that exhibited his repentance, alluding to the blessing he had stolen (vv. 10-11) and evidencing humble submission to the elder (cf. “my lord,” vv. 8, 13, 14[2x], 15; “your/his servant,” vv. 5, 14). His remorse over his actions indicated that the man had changed his moral condition. (K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, vol. 1B, The New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

Question 6

John 13:34-35. After Judas’s departure, Jesus made clear that His time with the disciples was short (13:33). The heart of this passage is found in verses 34-35: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Here Jesus was saying that love among Christians must be in the vanguard of all that we are about. Further, if we fail in this endeavor, then the world will be given the right to deny that we are disciples of Christ. Our love for one another will be the distinguishing mark of authenticity that we truly follow Christ. (James Emery White, “John,” in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998])

“just as I have loved you”: Jesus inserts this phrase into the commandment from Lev 19:18. The new part of the commandment is that Jesus’ disciples are instructed to love other people the way Jesus loved them—serving them like a slave would, as He does in this scene, even to the point of laying down their lives for others. (John D. Barry et al., *Faithlife Study Bible* [Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016])

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