

JANUARY 2024



Bible Study | Faith in Action

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Prepare

- Bible
- Journal
- Pen/pencil

Get Started

You may have heard Joseph's story. He's well known as a favored son whose father gave him a coat of many colors. But, in the years after Joseph's coat was taken by his brothers in their attempt to be rid of him, he faced one difficulty after another.

- What do you know about Joseph's story? Journal what you remember, including key takeaways.

Study and Learn

Most of Joseph's story is relayed in Genesis 37 and 39–50. While I could never provide a full overview of Joseph's life as recorded in Scripture, I want to give you a quick summary to provide context for our key text. Within a brief time span, Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, falsely accused of sexual assault, and imprisoned. In every circumstance and difficulty Joseph faced, God remained with him and helped him. While in prison, Joseph interpreted a few dreams for the leader of Egypt, Pharaoh, warning of a coming famine, and Pharaoh released Joseph from prison and gave him a position of power in Egypt.

Just as God said, a famine ravaged the land. Ironically, Joseph's brothers came to buy food from him, but they didn't even recognize him. Joseph certainly recognized his brothers. After confirming his brothers had changed since they sold him into slavery, Joseph revealed his identity, had a tearful reunion with his father, and moved his family to Egypt to be preserved during the famine.

Flash forward to Genesis 50. From his seat of power, Joseph looked back over his life and traced God's hand of sovereign purpose in it all.

Read Genesis 50:15–26.

- How would you describe Joseph's attitude in this passage? What does it reveal about his character, trust, and priorities? How does Joseph's response challenge or encourage you?

Apply

The story of Joseph is a reminder that God's sovereign plans for our lives and the world around us cannot be derailed or delayed by the evil actions or intentions of others. As Romans 8:28 puts it, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Our faithfulness to rely on God and obey in all circumstances, especially confusing or unwelcome ones, matters to Him, and it helps us build deep, abiding trust.

Though Joseph seemed like a pawn in others' plans, God was always with him, no matter what difficulties or situations he faced. God used these circumstances to prepare and position Joseph—spiritually and physically—to save a remnant of His people, a plan God was masterfully orchestrating all along.

God promises to be with His children in every circumstance we face.

Follow Up

- Think about your life, and take a few moments to journal the following prompts.
What circumstances do you need to trust God with? How does the story of Joseph inform your response?

Though it may be hard, do whatever you can to be faithful in the season and circumstances God has given you. Look expectantly to Him. He can use every circumstance in your life, including difficulties, to shape you for His glory and to bring about important kingdom work.

Commit to Memory

Verse: **Genesis 50:20**

Challenge: **Genesis 50:19–21**

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Faith in Action | A Baby Shower for Many

By Laci Post

Heather was 19 and pregnant with no family living nearby. Her boyfriend's work was unreliable, and she earned little working as a waitress. She needed help for herself and her unborn baby. A coworker told her about a local crisis pregnancy center, and she went there for help.

Crisis pregnancy centers provide women in need with material resources, pregnancy testing, emotional support, education, and more. After the pandemic and subsequent inflation, more and more women need help. Your myMISSION group could partner with a local center to provide for women in your area who are in need. Here are some ways your group could help.

Understand the Need

Contact the crisis pregnancy center, and ask about its specific, current needs. Find out how you could best partner with the center for the benefit of all, whether through providing baby items, items for the mom (new clothes that fit, grocery store gift cards), or everyday supplies for the center itself (toilet paper, hand soap, reams of paper).

Host a Baby Shower

Host a baby shower at your church or a group member's home to collect items in support of the center. Provide a list of supplies to attendees beforehand. This list might include baby blankets, pacifiers, diapers, wipes, baby food and formula, baby utensils, onesies, bibs, bottles, and other needed items. Create fun at the event. Provide some delicious goodies, and play some games.

Invite center employees and volunteers to attend the shower as well. Ask the center whether any new moms-to-be could attend to receive the gifts directly. If so, be sure to engage these women, and aim to establish relationships that last beyond the shower. Ask the employees and volunteers to speak about their work at the center and share anonymous stories about the women they have served. This will help attendees understand the value of their donations.

Donate Services

When you ask employees about the center's needs, think beyond material donations. Are they in need of cleaning services, building repairs, tax preparation, or other professional services? Could people at your church donate their time and expertise to fill this need? Consider your skills and strengths and those of your group members to help you determine what services you could provide.

Give Support by Praying

Everyone needs prayer. Ask center employees to share specific needs and situations for which you could pray. Pray together as a group for the center, its workers, the women being served regularly, and the babies being born.

By partnering with a local crisis pregnancy center, your myMISSION group could help hundreds of women in your community.

LACI POST writes historical fiction and articles from Dallas, Georgia, where she lives with her husband, Jason; sons, Avery and Eli; and dog, Bucky.