

"The Lord is With Us"

Lesson Passage:

Genesis 45:1-14

Lesson Focus: The life of Joseph began with dreams but although God was with Joseph his circumstances changed for the worse over many years until God showed him all God had prepared Joseph to accomplish.

Lesson Point: Everyone in life will always face difficult circumstances (some worse than others) but we can be sure that God is always with us, and we must always stay with Him.

Lesson Intro: Anybody here good at knowing what the popular sayings mean? For example, if I say "this is getting out of hand"? What does that mean? It is not literally getting out of the hand, but it means it is getting out of control. Let's look at some sayings and see how well you can figure out what they mean. **(You can do what's next as a group or turn it into a game someone vs someone. List of sayings/idioms at the bottom of study guide)** After the game or group effort to figure the idioms/sayings out ask, where they are all easy? Sometimes, things are easy to figure out what they mean and sometimes they are hard. In life there are also some things that are difficult to figure out and figure out the why. But this story from the Bible will help us to learn how to look at things when things are difficult.

Start with the story of Joseph

I. Starting with Dreams. Genesis 37:1-11

Have you ever had an interesting dream?

What if you could dream what would happen later to you?

Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob. His brothers knew it and hated him for that. But God did something interesting for Joseph. God allowed Joseph to dream specific dreams that spoke of what would happen later. These dreams revealed that Joseph would one day rule over his brothers and even his dad. The brothers hated him more for the dreams. Jacob got on to Joseph but the dream caught Jacob's attention. Maybe because he had once had a dream from God (Gen. 28:1-12). So, by the dreams it seemed all would go well for Joseph.

II. Sudden Disaster. Genesis 37:17-28

Joseph was sent to his brothers by his dad. When they saw him from far away they planned how to get rid of Joseph for good. They had it all planned out and where they would get rid of him until Ruben stepped in to save Joseph from death. Instead, they threw him in a dry well (hole dug for water). While they decided what to do Judah had the idea of selling him as a slave instead of them getting rid of Joseph. So they sold Joseph for 30 pieces of silver.

If you were Joseph, what would you think about the dreams you had of ruling?

Did it look like something that was going to happen for Joseph after being sold?

Had Joseph really done anything bad for his brothers to want to get rid of him or even sell him?

So, was God still with Joseph or had he left him alone?

III. Significant Determination.

Genesis 39:1-6

Even after being sold and ending up away from his home, the Lord was with Joseph. Not only was God with Joseph but even as a slave God blessed Joseph. Potiphar could see that God was with Joseph. Joseph got

an even better job than a simple slave because the Lord was with him. What should have been or seemed to be a horrible situation turned out different for one simple reason, the Lord was with Joseph.

Can we be in a difficult or even horrible situation and know that God is with us?

Does a terrible situation mean God does not care anymore?

Genesis 39:7-20

But in the middle of how God was blessing Joseph a temptation came. Joseph responded correctly running away and refusing to sin against God. He had done what was right. But the result did not seem to be right. Potiphar's wife lied about the whole situation and got innocent Joseph locked up in prison.

Was this fair? Was this right? Joseph chose to obey God, but it still landed him in trouble.

Was God still with Joseph?

What about Joseph's dreams could they still happen from prison?

Genesis 39:21-23

Through this whole injustice God was with Joseph. God not only was with Joseph but even worked that the experience in prison was different for Joseph. The person in charge of the prison saw that God was with Joseph and although Joseph was a prisoner Joseph became in charge of the prison.

Does God leave us alone in a hopeless situation?

Does God leave us alone in a bad situation?

Should we leave God just because we are facing an unfair situation?

IV. Sad Deal. Genesis 40 (key verses 40: 8,14-15,23)

The story of Joseph seemed it was about to change completely. While in prison important prisoners from the king were locked up. God revealed to them somethings through dreams, but they did not know what it meant. But Joseph was there. He knew about dreams. Joseph spoke to them trusting God could help reveal what they meant to them.

Lets pause and think, had it gone well for Joseph since he had his dreams?

Had Joseph's dream even come close to coming true?

Did Joseph quit on God or trusting him because he was sold and locked up after all these years?

What would you do with God if this all had happened to you? Would you still hang on to Him?

God did help Joseph reveal the dreams and it seemed maybe Joseph would catch a break. One of the dreams would put the cup bearer to the king right back with the king. Perhaps he could ask the king to help Joseph out of his unfair situation. But it did not happen that way. The cupbearer forgot about Joseph although all that God had shown Joseph about the dreams came true.

What would you do if this happened to you?

Seemed so close for something "good" to happen but Joseph was forgotten?

Would you still trust God or do you give up?

V. Seeing it Differently.

Genesis 41:1, 9-16,25,28

Two years later after being forgotten the cupbearer did remember. Joseph was brought in to tell Pharaoh what his dreams meant. Joseph immediately let Pharaoh know that it was God who would be able to tell him not Joseph alone.

Did Joseph quit trusting God even after two years of being forgotten?

Joseph then says something which allows to see how Joseph saw things. Joseph mentioned that the dream was given twice because God was serious about what He had revealed. Joseph said this 13 years after his own two dreams.

Had Joseph quit trusting God even after 13 years?

What would you say or where would you be with your relationship or trust in God even though it had been 13 years since He showed you something and everything seemed to go wrong?

Genesis 42:8-9

Joseph eventually remembered his dreams. He remembered what God had shown him. He saw it happen here. After about 22 years.

Would you still trust in God and walk with Him even if it took 22 years to get to what He showed you?

Genesis 45:1-14

When Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers, he told them what he saw. He did not see all the evil and wrong that came to him because they sold him. He did not blame them and made them feel sorry for all the difficulties that being sold had caused him. He told them that it was all part of what God planned. He did not see everything from the perspective of bad but from the perspective of God. God had always been with him. God had kept His plan which Joseph once dreamed.

Have you been going through something difficult too? Are you trying to figure out if God is still with you or if you should still trust I God? When we dig deeper we can see, THE LORD IS WITH US.

Conclusion: Joseph did not have it easy. His story starts with high hope of what God showed him. But it quickly goes into the difficulties and unfair situations Joseph had to face. But God was with Joseph. And Joseph still trusted God. Eventually God kept His revelation of the dreams Joseph had had. Joseph in the end could see why he had gone through much difficulty and how God used it for something great.

Application: Maybe you are here and going through some difficulty? Maybe you wonder if God is with you? Maybe you have considered just ignoring everything said about God because your situation has not gotten better like you expected. But today you should know that God is still with you. No matter what hole, slave house or prison you are in. Even if you have been forgotten by others God has not forgotten you. May today encourage you to understand that no matter the circumstances or people the Lord is always with us. May we always decide to trust and walk with Him.

God's greatest desire and dream for us is that we would come to know Him as our Savior (1 Tim. 2:3-4). See one day sin came into this world and messed everything up. Sin messed up our relationship with God making us enemies of God (Rom 5:10). Sin messed up our ability to be with God and makes us fall short of His glory (Rom. 3:23). Sin condemns us to an eternal punishment of suffering (Rev. 21:8b). But God even in these horrible circumstances which are the consequence of our actions did not and does not leave us alone. Instead, God showed His love by sending Jesus to die for our sin and save us from the horrible eternal consequences of our sin (Rom. 5:8). Jesus lived, died, was buried and after the third day rose again the perfect sacrifice to take away our sin (John 1:29). But we all have a choice of what we will do with what Jesus did for us, we either believe or do not believe (John 3:18). God is willing and desires to save us from the horrible situation of sin we find ourselves in, but will you trust in Christ to save you today?

Idiom/Saying	Meaning
<i>A blessing in disguise</i>	<i>a good thing that seemed bad at first</i>
<i>A dime a dozen</i>	<i>Something common</i>
<i>Beat around the bush</i>	<i>Avoid saying what you mean, usually because it is uncomfortable</i>
<i>Better late than never</i>	<i>Better to arrive late than not to come at all</i>
<i>Bite the bullet</i>	<i>To get something over with because it is inevitable</i>
<i>Break a leg</i>	<i>Good luck</i>
<i>Call it a day</i>	<i>Stop working on something</i>
<i>Cut somebody some slack</i>	<i>Don't be so critical</i>
<i>Cutting corners</i>	<i>Doing something poorly in order to save time or money</i>
<i>Easy does it</i>	<i>Slow down</i>
<i>Get out of hand</i>	<i>Get out of control</i>
<i>Get something out of your system</i>	<i>Do the thing you've been wanting to do so you can move on</i>
<i>Get your act together</i>	<i>Work better or leave</i>
<i>Give someone the benefit of the doubt</i>	<i>Trust what someone says</i>
<i>Go back to the drawing board</i>	<i>Start over</i>
<i>Hang in there</i>	<i>Don't give up</i>
<i>Hit the sack</i>	<i>Go to sleep</i>
<i>It's not rocket science</i>	<i>It's not complicated</i>
<i>Let someone off the hook</i>	<i>To not hold someone responsible for something</i>
<i>Make a long story short</i>	<i>Tell something briefly</i>
<i>Miss the boat</i>	<i>It's too late</i>

Idiom/Saying	Meaning
No pain, no gain	You have to work for what you want
On the ball	Doing a good job
Pull someone's leg	To joke with someone
Pull yourself together	Calm down
So far so good	Things are going well so far
Speak of the devil	The person we were just talking about showed up!
That's the last straw	My patience has run out
The best of both worlds	An ideal situation
Time flies when you're having fun	You don't notice how long something lasts when it's fun
To get bent out of shape	To get upset
To make matters worse	Make a problem worse
Under the weather	Sick
We'll cross that bridge when we come to it	Let's not talk about that problem right now
Wrap your head around something	Understand something complicated
You can say that again	That's true, I agree
Your guess is as good as mine	I have no idea

This list taken from:

<https://www.ef.edu/english-resources/english-idioms/>