

Home Groups Questions

January 29, 2012

Joseph: Being Blessed Isn't Necessarily Easy! Genesis 37

Leaders: The questions below are inspired by Sunday morning's sermon. Please take time to review the questions and use them as a tool for discussion in your Home Group. It may be that we have provided more questions than you will have time to answer. If this is the case, please adjust or adapt the questions to fit your group.

Icebreakers/ Conversation Starters – These are random questions designed to create community and encourage conversation.

1. In school, would you have been described more as a “teacher’s pet” or as a “class clown”? Give an example that supports your answer.
2. Has there ever been a time when you would say, “your dreams came true?” Explain.
3. How has your birth order influenced your life?
4. In what ways has the relationship with your siblings changed over the years? What about with your parents?

Turn to Genesis 37.

What stands out most to you about the passage or message from this morning?

I. What made Joseph stand out? (37:3)

Genesis 37:3 - ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic.

1. Last week we looked at the story of Jacob and Esau. Rebekah (Jacob's Mom) seems to have favored Jacob over Esau in helping Jacob with the deception. Do you think Jacob's favoritism of his son Joseph was influenced by his own family background? Why or why not?
2. How important were words of affirmation or gifts of affirmation in your family growing up? Does that past experience influence your tendencies in family life today? If so, how? (For singles, does that influence your relationships?)
3. Do you think Jacob realized how his feelings toward Joseph were having a negative impact on the relationship between his sons? Explain.
4. Parents: If you could go back and change one thing about the way you have raised your kids (so far), what would it be and why?
5. What would a family therapist say about Jacob's family?

II. What made Joseph resented? (37:4, 11, 18–19)

Genesis 37:4, 11, 18-19 - ⁴ His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms. ¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind. ¹⁸ When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death. ¹⁹ They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer!”

1. Read Joseph’s first dream in Genesis 37:5-8. Why would Joseph feel the need to share this dream with his brothers? What could be his motivation?
2. Taking the full story into account, how would you describe Joseph to someone who had never met him?
3. Would you want Joseph for a brother? Why or why not?
4. Who holds the greatest blame for Joseph ending up in a waterless pit: Jacob, Joseph, or the older brothers? Explain.

III. Why would bad things happen to someone like Joseph? (37:28)

Genesis 37:28 - ²⁸ Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt.

1. Have you ever felt like Joseph and in the bottom of a pit? Ever felt like you were following the plans of God only to be blindsided by difficulty and turmoil? If so, when? How did you deal with it?
2. Do you think Joseph took comfort in the dreams of God, despised the dreams, or was tempted to dismiss them? Explain.
3. Do you ever feel like God uses the long road to accomplish his purposes instead of the short cut? Why do you think God does that sometimes?
4. In verse 21, Rueben convinces his brothers not to kill Joseph, but instead to put him in a pit. His goal was to eventually take him back to their father. Rueben could not keep him from being sold into slavery, but he likely saved Joseph’s life. As a community of friends, we may not be able to keep you from experiencing hard times, but we do want to be there to help in any way we can. So, is there anything we can be praying for each other about?

Calendar:

February 5 – No childcare or Home Group Questions (Super Bowl)

February 12 – Home Groups

February 19 – No Home Groups (Evening Service)

February 26 – Home Groups

March 4 – Home Groups

March 11 – No Home Groups (Spring Break)

March 18 – No Home Groups (Spring Break)

March 25 – No Home Groups (Evening Service)