

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

4 Year Olds

Sunday Morning

Study 3

God Wants Me to Forgive

God Wants Me to Forgive

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the students to forgive others because Jesus has forgiven us, using the story of Joseph as a model of forgiveness.

Key Verses

Genesis 37:12-36; 45:1-15; 50:15-21—Main Teaching Passage (Note: Joseph's story takes place over Genesis 37-50. For more context, read Genesis 37:1-11 and Genesis 42:1-44:34.)

Ephesians 4:32

Matthew 18:21-35

Memory Verse - Galatians 5:16 (December Memory Verse)

Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh.

Hook

Describe a time when someone did something wrong to you. How did you feel? What did you do in response? Have the students share some of their own stories. Then ask, "What does God want us to do when someone does something wrong to us?"

When people are unkind to us, God wants us to forgive. Today, we will see an example of forgiveness in our lesson.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Today's story is about Joseph. Joseph had ten older brothers, and they were all jealous of him because he was their father's favorite. One day, their father Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers as they were out with the flocks. But when he got there, his brothers threw him into a pit and then sold him into slavery in Egypt.

For years Joseph was in Egypt, where he faced many difficulties including slavery and prison. However, eventually he became a powerful ruler in Egypt because he was able to interpret Pharaoh's dream about a coming famine, and he was able to prepare Egypt so they would be ready with food. During the famine, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt looking for food. He recognized them, but they didn't recognize him. At first he didn't tell them who he was and put them through several tests. But eventually, after they had shown their remorse for what they had done to him and how they had changed, Joseph revealed his true identity to his brothers. He did not hold their sin against them, but he forgave them and invited them to enjoy the riches of Egypt.

Years later, their father died and the brothers worried that Joseph would now seek his revenge. But instead, with tears he insisted that he had forgiven them, stating that what they meant for evil, God intended for good.

LOOK

Joseph's brothers had done some awful things to him. Because of their actions, he spent years separated from his family and endured all sorts of difficulty. When they came to him during the famine, it could have been his chance to get even. It might have seemed only fair to make them pay for what they did to him. But Joseph didn't take advantage of his brothers or get back at them. What he did instead was truly remarkable: He forgave them.

The Bible tells us that we should forgive others (Ephesians 4:32). Forgiving someone means not holding their sins against them. After all his brothers had done to him, Joseph could have been angry or bitter toward them. But instead of using his power to punish them for what they had done, he treated them in a way they didn't deserve. He showed them love, not holding their sins against him, but rather inviting them to share with him in God's blessing.

God wants us to forgive others the way Joseph did to his brothers. When people are unkind or mistreat you, you may want to respond to them with unkindness and mistreatment. After all, it only seems fair. But

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

God tells us to forgive those who wrong or hurt us by continuing to show them God's love. That means we can't hold a grudge or try to get even. We don't get to bring up the wrong thing they did every time we get upset. True forgiveness means treating the person as though they had never done anything wrong to you.

Forgiving someone else can be difficult, and it might make us feel like we're being treated unfairly. But it's important to remember the most important reason why we should forgive: because Jesus has forgiven us of so much more. In Matthew 18:21-35, Jesus tells a parable about a man who was forgiven of a huge debt he could never repay (many millions of dollars), but he was not able to forgive his friend who owed him a few thousand dollars. The point of this parable is that Jesus has forgiven us of all our sins, which is so much more than we could ever repay. If Jesus forgave us even though we didn't deserve it, how could we not forgive others? Joseph understood God's forgiveness, which is why he was able to forgive His brothers. What about you? Are you able to forgive others just as Jesus forgave you?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the class what Joseph's brothers did to him. Ask how he responded years later. How should we respond when we are mistreated?

Pray: Thank Jesus for forgiving all our sins. Ask Him to help us forgive others when they sin against us.

Parent Question: What does it mean to forgive?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Genesis 45:1-15 & 50:15-21 By David Guzik

Genesis 45

1. ([Gen 45:1-3](#)) The emotional revelation.

Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Make everyone go out from me!” So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph; does my father still live?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.

a. **Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him:** Joseph ordered all the Egyptians out of the room and was then alone with his brothers. His great emotion showed that Joseph did not cruelly manipulate his brothers. He was directed by God to make these arrangements and it hurt him to do it.

b. **Joseph made himself known to his brothers:** This perhaps means that Joseph *told them* he was Joseph and *showed* his brothers that he was circumcised. Jewish legend says the brothers could never believe this high Egyptian official was Joseph unless he showed he was circumcised.

c. **But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence:** Because of the punishment they anticipated, the great emotion of Joseph, his manner of revelation, and the total shock of learning Joseph was not only alive but right in front of them, the brothers were **dismayed**. The ancient Hebrew word for **dismayed** (*bahal*) actually means, *amazed* or frightened or even *terrified*.

i. *Come near to me* in [Genesis 45:4](#) implies the brothers cringed back in terror. Jewish legends (which are *only* legends) say the brothers were so shocked that their souls left their bodies and it was only by a miracle of God their souls came back.

ii. Their dismay was a shadow of what will happen when the Jewish people see Jesus for who He is again: *And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.* ([Zechariah 12:10](#))

2. ([Gen 45:4-8](#)) Joseph’s testimony.

And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

a. **God sent me before you to preserve life:** Joseph did not diminish what the brothers did (**whom you sold into Egypt**). Yet he saw that God’s purpose in it all was greater than the evil of the brothers.

i. When we are sinned against, we are tempted to fail in one or both of these areas. We are tempted to pretend that the offending party you never did it, or we are tempted to fail to see the over-arching hand of God in every circumstance.

ii. It is fair to ask, "Why was Joseph in Egypt? Was it because of the sin of his brothers or because of the good plan of God?" The answer is that both aspects are true.

b. **God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance:** All Joseph's sorrows were for a purpose. God used them to preserve his family and provide the conditions for it to become a nation. Joseph was a victim of men, but God turned it around for His glory. None of it was for a loss.

i. If this family did not go into Egypt, then they would assimilate among the pagan tribes of Canaan and cease to become a distinctive people. God had to put them in a place where they could grow, yet remain a distinctive nation.

ii. Years ago, Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote a remarkably wide-selling book titled *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. It sold more than a half a million copies before going to paperback and was on the *New York Times* best-seller list for a whole year. The whole point of his book was to say God is all loving but not all powerful; that God is good, but not sovereign. So, when bad things happen to good people, it is because events are out of God's control. Kushner advised his readers to "learn to love [God] and forgive him despite his limitations." What ever Kushner described, it was not the God of the Bible, the God displayed in Joseph's life.

c. **So now it was not you who sent me here, but God:** Joseph realized *God* ruled his life, not good men, not evil men, not circumstances, or fate. God was in control, and because God was in control all things worked together for good.

B. JOSEPH SENDS HIS BROTHERS HOME.

1. ([Gen 45:9-15](#)) Joseph tells his brothers to go home and to bring their father and find protection from the famine.

"Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: 'God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine.'" And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you. So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.'" Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

a. **Thus says your son Joseph:** When Jacob eventually heard this it was one of the greatest days of his life. He had the joy of learning that the favored son, who would save his brethren, who was given up for dead, is now alive.

b. **He kissed all his brothers and wept over them:** Joseph did not exclude those who had been especially cruel to him. His heart was open to his brothers both as a group and as individuals.

c. **After that his brothers talked with him:** This was a wonderful conversation. There was a lot to catch up on.

Genesis 50

1. ([Gen 50:15](#)) The fears of Joseph's brothers.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him."

a. **Perhaps Joseph will hate us:** The brothers feared that perhaps Joseph would turn on them after Jacob's death. Knowing human nature, this wasn't an unfounded concern.

b. **And may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him:** Here they freely acknowledged **all the evil which they did**. What they worried about was *justice*. They feared *righteous* retribution. Joseph, with his high status and prestige in Egypt, was certainly capable of bringing this retribution.

2. ([Gen 50:16-18](#)) The unlikely story of Joseph's brothers.

So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.'" And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants."

a. **Before your father died he commanded:** This story was probably made up. They didn't feel they had the moral right to ask Joseph for mercy, since they sinned against him so greatly. So they put the request for mercy in the mouth of their honored and dead father.

b. **Joseph wept when they spoke to him:** Joseph probably wept because it seemed that his brothers thought so little of him and they doubted his character so greatly.

c. **Fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants":** They backed up their plea for mercy with a genuine display of humility.

3. ([Gen 50:19-21](#)) Joseph comforts his brothers.

Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

a. **Am I in the place of God?** Joseph first understood he was not **in the place of God**. It wasn't his job to bring retribution upon his brothers. If the Lord chose to punish them, He would have to find an instrument other than Joseph.

i. From a human perspective, Joseph had the right and the ability to bring retribution upon his brothers, but he knew God was God and he was not. Such retribution was God's **place**, not Joseph's.

b. **As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good:** Joseph did not romanticize the wrong his brothers did. He plainly said, **"You meant evil against me."** Although this was true, it was not the greatest truth. The greatest truth was **"God meant it for good."**

i. Every Christian should be able to see the overarching and overruling hand of God in their life; to know that no matter what **evil** man brings against us, God can use it for **good**.

ii. Joseph did not have the text of [Romans 8:28](#), but he had the truth of it: *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.* Sadly, many of us who have the text do not have the truth.

iii. Ultimately, our lives are not in the hands of men, but in the hands of God, who overrules all things for His glory.

iv. There was an old minister who had a unique gift to minister to the distressed and discouraged. In his Bible, he carried an old bookmark woven of silk threads into a motto. The back of it, where the threads were knotted and tied, was a hopeless tangle. He would take the bookmark out and show the troubled person this side of the bookmark and ask them to make sense of it. They never could. Then the pastor would turn it over, and on the front were white letters against a solid background saying, "God is love." When events in our life seem tangled and meaningless, it is because we can see only one side of the tapestry.

c. **To save many people alive:** This was the *immediate* good in the situation. If this large family did not come to Egypt and live it would have perished in the famine. Had the family barely survived, it would have assimilated into the Canaanite tribes surrounding it. Only by coming to Egypt could they be preserved and grow into a distinct nation.

i. As said before, if Joseph's brothers never sold him to the Midianites, then Joseph never went to Egypt. If Joseph never went to Egypt, he was never sold to Potiphar. If he was never sold to Potiphar, Potiphar's wife never falsely accused him of rape. If Potiphar's wife never falsely accused him of rape, then he was never put in prison. If he was never put in prison, he never met the baker and butler of Pharaoh. If he never met the baker and butler of Pharaoh, he never interpreted their dreams. If he never interpreted their dreams, he never got to interpret Pharaoh's dream. If he never got to interpret Pharaoh's dream, he never became prime minister. If he never became prime minister, he never wisely administrated for the severe famine coming upon the region. If he never wisely administrated for the severe famine coming upon the region, then his family back in Canaan perished from the famine. If his family back in Canaan perished from the famine, then the Messiah could not come forth from a dead family. If the Messiah could not come forth, then Jesus never came. If Jesus never came, then we are all dead in our sins and without hope in this world. We are grateful for God's great and wise plan.

d. **And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them:** Because Joseph trusted the overarching hand of God, even in all the evil that came upon him through his brothers, he showed the love and compassion to them he did.

i. Often, the problem we have in loving others and in freeing ourselves from bitterness we may have towards them is really a problem of not knowing who *God is* and trusting Him to be who He says He is.

e. **I will provide for you and your little ones:** Joseph's love for his brothers was shown not only in feelings and words, but also in practical action. He actually *did* provide for his brothers and their families.