

Small Group Guide: The Attempted Seduction of Joseph

Series: The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture (Week 3)

Scripture: Genesis 39:1-18

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin your group time by inviting God's presence and asking Him to help you see the bigger picture in your current circumstances.

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Question: Share about a time when doing the right thing seemed to make your situation worse rather than better. How did you respond?

Review the Story (10 minutes)

Briefly recap Joseph's journey so far:

- Favored by his father
- Hated and forsaken by his brothers
- Sold into slavery
- Promoted in Potiphar's house
- Falsely accused after resisting temptation

Discussion: What stands out to you most about Joseph's response to his circumstances?

Key Takeaways

1. God's Presence in Difficult Places

Joseph experienced God's favor even in slavery. The Lord was with him and caused him to prosper.

Discussion Questions:

- How do we recognize God's presence when we're in difficult circumstances?
- Can you share a time when you experienced God's blessing in an unexpected or difficult place?
- What does it mean that "the Lord was with Joseph" even though he was a slave?

2. The Anatomy of Joseph's Resistance

Joseph refused Potiphar's wife based on four key respects:

- Respect for his job responsibilities
- Respect for his boss

- Respect for his boss' wife
- Respect for God (the foundation of all other decisions)

Discussion Questions:

- Which of these four "respects" do you find most challenging in your own life?
- How does our respect for God influence our other relationships and responsibilities?
- Joseph asked, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" How does viewing temptation as sin against God change our perspective?

3. Temptation Doesn't Stop After One Resistance

The text says Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph "day after day." The attacks only intensified.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think persistent temptation is so difficult to handle?
- What strategies help you resist temptation when it keeps coming back?
- How can we support each other when facing ongoing temptation?

4. Doing Right Can Lead to Worse Circumstances

Joseph's story went from good (promoted) to bad (harassed) to worse (falsely accused).

Discussion Questions:

- Why does God sometimes allow our circumstances to worsen even when we're doing the right thing?
- How do we maintain faith when obedience seems to lead to negative consequences?
- What does it mean to trust that "God's purpose is bigger than what we can see in our current circumstances"?

Central Truth

"Temptation presents an opportunity to cling tightly to God's promises in the moment, rather than let them go."

Discussion Questions:

- What promises of God are you clinging to right now?
- How does this perspective change the way you view temptation?
- What would it look like to see your current challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. **Identify Your "Respects"**

- Write down the four areas of respect Joseph demonstrated
- Evaluate which area needs the most attention in your life
- Pray daily for strength to grow in that area

2. **Create an Escape Plan**

- Like Joseph who fled, identify your recurring temptations
- Develop a specific plan for how you'll "flee" when tempted
- Share your plan with an accountability partner

3. **Practice "Bigger Picture" Thinking**

- When facing difficulty this week, pause and ask: "What might God be doing that I can't see?"
- Journal about how your perspective shifts when you consider God's larger purposes
- Share your insights with the group next week

4. **Memorize Scripture**

- Memorize Genesis 39:9: "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"
- Use this verse when facing temptation this week

Reflection Questions for Personal Time

1. Are there areas where I've compromised because "it would be easier" than doing the right thing?
2. What temptations am I currently facing "day after day"? Am I resisting or giving in?
3. Do I truly believe God has a bigger purpose for my life than what I can currently see?
4. Where in my life do I need to demonstrate greater respect—for my responsibilities, for others, or for God?

5. What "garment" do I need to leave behind and flee from this week?

Prayer Focus (15 minutes)

Share and Pray:

- Share one area where you're currently facing temptation or difficulty
- Share one area where you need to see "the bigger picture"
- Pray for each person specifically, asking God to:
 - Give strength to resist ongoing temptation
 - Provide clarity to see His bigger purposes
 - Grant faith to keep doing right even when circumstances worsen
 - Surround each person with His presence like He was with Joseph

Before Next Week

- Read Genesis 39:19-23 (Joseph in prison)
- Reflect on how Joseph continued to trust God even after being falsely accused
- Be prepared to share how you applied this week's challenge

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to group members who may be facing real temptation or false accusations
- Create a safe space for honest sharing without judgment
- Emphasize that resisting temptation is possible through God's strength, not our own
- Remind the group that seeing the bigger picture doesn't mean current pain isn't real—it means trusting God is working through it