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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

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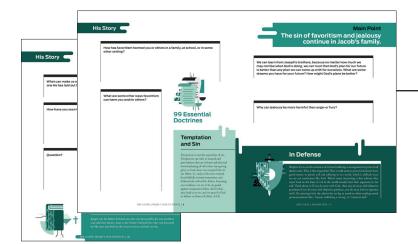
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How to Use This Study

Intro

The opening page of each session contains the focal passages of Scripture for that lesson. Take a moment to read through these passages before your group discussion begins.





His Story

Intended for group and personal use, the **His Story** contains the main point of the session, questions to interact with as a group, and the key components found in the Leader Guide—Christ Connection, Essential Doctrines, and In Defense.



The **Christ Connection** specifically points out how the biblical passage for that session points to Jesus, thus connecting the dots and helping students to understand how the books of the Bible fit together.



There are **99 Essential Doctrines** we will see covered over the course of three years. Each session will contain an essential doctrine that directly relates to the Bible study material. Knowing these doctrines will help you, as a student, to be more grounded in what Christianity teaches and celebrates, as well as being better equipped to explain to others what it is you actually believe.



The **In Defense** section discusses apologetic issues and questions related to the lesson. The term "apologetics" simply refers to the task of defending the faith, or being able to explain why we believe what we believe. Thus, this section is designed to bring greater clarity about a specific part of the text, answer tough questions raised by skeptics, and to simply help you be able to better defend your beliefs to any who may ask why you believe Christianity to be true.

Our Mission

Intended for group and/or personal use, the Our Mission section is designed to show how the biblical passage for that day challenges the way we think, feel, and live from that day forward. It is intended to show that every session goes beyond merely learning new facts about the Bible's big stories and characters. In fact, God's intention in the pages of Scripture is to make us more like His Son, Jesus. And one of the ways in which that happens is by constantly looking to Jesus in the pages of the Bible.





In addition to the group portions of this study, the Daily Discipleship Guide also includes five days of devotions following each session. As you journey through the storyline of Scripture over the course of three years, you won't have time to cover some sections of the Bible. These devotions will help with that, filling in the gaps in the biblical storyline and allowing more opportunities to cover biblical themes and insights not discussed during group time. These devotions are also aimed at equipping you to know how to read and interpret the Bible for yourself by providing simple techniques to studying the Bible. The Seven Arrows reading method has been provided at the beginning of each week's devotions as a reminder of common questions to ask about Scripture as you read each day.

Timeline

Out of Egypt





BONUS

The Prince of Peace



4.4

God Hears His People



5.1

A Test in the Wilderness



5.2

A Leader's Wisdom



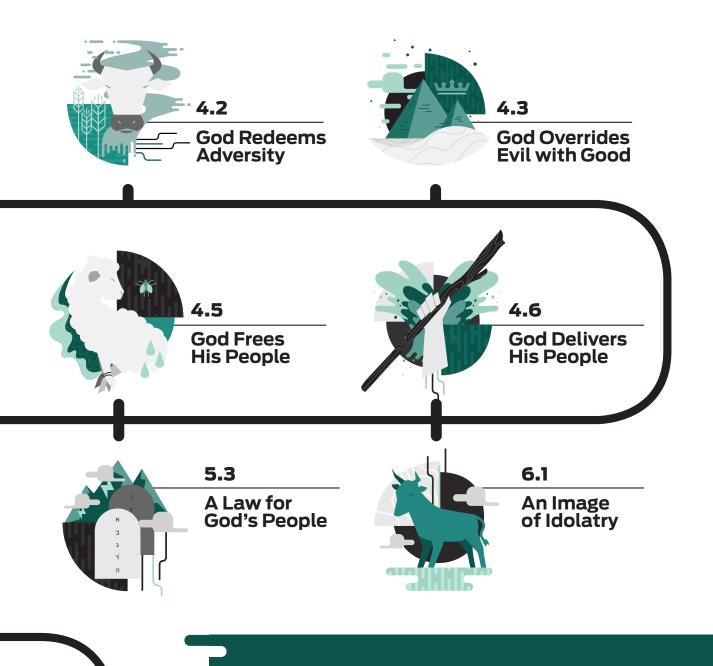
6.2

A Place for God's Presence



6.3

A Picture of Atonement



Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:27

About the Authors



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Unit.04

Session .01

God Redeems Betrayal

Scripture



Genesis 37:3-8,18-28

- 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than his other sons because Joseph was a son born to him in his old age, and he made a robe of many colors for him. 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not bring themselves to speak peaceably to him. 5 Then Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. 6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: 7 There we were, binding sheaves of grain in the field. Suddenly my sheaf stood up, and your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."
- **8** "Are you really going to reign over us?" his brothers asked him. "Are you really going to rule us?" So they hated him even more because of his dream and what he had said. ... **18** They saw him in the distance, and before he had reached them, they plotted to kill him. **19** They said to one another, "Oh, look, here comes that dream expert! **20** So now, come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of the pits. We can say that a vicious animal ate him. Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!"

21 When Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from them. He said, "Let's not take his life." 22 Reuben also said to them, "Don't shed blood. Throw him into this pit in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him"intending to rescue him from them and return him to his father. 23 When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped off Joseph's robe, the robe of many colors that he had on. 24 Then they took him and threw him into the pit. The pit was empty, without water. 25 They sat down to eat a meal, and when they looked up, there was a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying aromatic gum, balsam, and resin, going down to Egypt. 26 Judah said to his brothers, "What do we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? 27 Come on, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay a hand on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh," and his brothers agreed. 28 When Midianite traders passed by, his brothers pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took Joseph to Egypt.

His Story

How has favoritism harmed you or others in a family, at school, or in some other setting?

Why is it important that we affirm the image of God in all people?



Temptation and Sin

Temptation is not the equivalent of sin. Temptation can refer to natural and good desires that are twisted and directed toward pleasing of self rather than giving glory to God. Jesus was tempted like we are (Matt. 4), and yet He never sinned, but faithfully resisted temptation and followed the will of His Father. Knowing our weakness, we are to be on guard against temptation (Matt. 26:41) that may lead us to sin, and we pray for God to deliver us from evil (Matt. 6:13).

Main Point

The sin of favoritism and jealousy continue in Jacob's family.

We can learn from Joseph's brothers, because no matter how much we may not like what God is doing, we can trust that God's plan for our future is better than any plan we can come up with for ourselves. What are some dreams you have for your future? How might God's plans be better?

Why can jealousy be more harmful than anger or fury?

In Defense

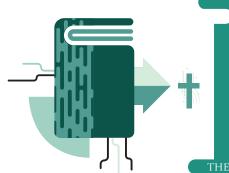


Skeptics try to use the existence of evil and suffering as an argument to prove God doesn't exist. Why is this impossible? They would need to prove God doesn't have good reasons to permit evil and suffering in our world, which is difficult since we are not omniscient like God. What's more interesting is that atheists who reject God on the basis of evil in the world actually hurt their argument in the end. Think about it: If you do away with God, then you do away with objective goodness; if you do away with objective goodness, you do away with its opposite (evil). By rejecting God, the atheist has no leg to stand on when making moral pronouncements like, "human trafficking is wrong" or "racism is bad."

His Story $\overline{}$

What can make us envy God's plan for someone else rather than accept the one He has laid out for us?

How have you seen God turn around situations for His glory and our good?



Christ Connection

Joseph was his father's beloved son who was betrayed by his own brothers and sold into slavery. Jesus is the Father's beloved Son who was betrayed by His own and died on the cross to rescue us from our sin.



Head

How does Joseph's story so far challenge our understanding of suffering in the Christian life?

Which is better: to never have to suffer or to know and experience the presence of God in life, through the good times and bad? Why?



Heart

What are some ways you intentionally put a strain on your body in order to be better prepared for the future? How can the same truth apply to our character?

What challenges have you faced that prepared you to handle future challenges and blessings?



Hands

What makes it challenging for us as God's people to take a stand against sin in our culture?

How might spending more time in God's Word motivate us to stand against sin and for the gospel?

Daily Devotions



The 7 Arrows of **Bible Reading**



What does this passage sav?

What did this passage mean to its original audience?

What does this passage tell us about God?

What does this passage Tell us about man?



What does this passage demand of me? How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?

Day 1

<u>Genesis</u>

You would think Jacob would have known better. He had seen how favoritism could tear apart a family. It was the story of his upbringing in a home where his father favored his brother, Esau, and his mother favored him.

And yet, the only thing Jacob seemed to learn from that was how to play favorites. He played favorites with his wife, Rachel, and his son, Joseph. It is no surprise to see the results were the same: a divided family.

As we consider a father's (Jacob) unequal love for his children, we should be drawn to delight in the Father's (God) equal and steadfast love for His children. God does not play favorites within His family. All who have trusted in Christ are invited to approach God as our loving Father. As we do, we should be drawn toward one another as well. We are to seek to love all of our brothers and sisters in Christ as God does, with the love He gives us.

How might you show the sin of favoritism toward some of God's family at times, either in your heart or through your actions?

Genesis 37:12-22

Genesis 37:23-28

Jacob was apparently clueless about the sinfulness of his favoritism of Joseph, but that was not all he missed. He also seems to have had no idea how deeply his favoritism wounded his other sons. Jacob used Joseph sort of like a spy to report on his older brothers, causing Joseph to bring back at least one bad report (37:2). Jacob was most likely clueless to the danger he placed Joseph in when he sent him to check on his brothers again. He had no idea what destruction his poor decision would cause; how Joseph would be rejected by his brothers, betrayed, and nearly killed.

But there is a Father who did know the perils His Son would face because of His decision to send Him to His own. He knew His Son would be rejected, betrayed, and would not escape death, but would be executed while His people mocked Him. Of course, we are talking about God sending Christ Jesus. Not as a clueless Father, but an all-knowing Father who working providentially to bring the cross to pass so we might experience salvation from our sin.

How does God knowing what Jesus would experience and working to bring it to pass deepen your understanding of the gospel and love for Him?

Joseph's brothers were so wounded by their father's favoritism that they wanted to kill their younger brother. It was only because of Reuben—the oldest brother who probably felt some sort of responsibility—that the brothers backed off of their plan and threw Joseph into a pit instead.

But a new opportunity presented itself. When Judah saw a caravan of traders approaching, he asked his brothers what they would gain by killing Joseph. Instead, they chose to make a few bucks off of their brother and sold him to the Midianites.

Sin was wreaking havoc in yet another generation of this family, but there was a way to break the chain. God worked in Joseph, and later his brothers, to change them. Sin is inherited and many sins are learned behaviors. But God's grace and mercy made known to us in the gospel is greater. Christ has crushed sin under His heel, and in doing so, He has freed us from its power in our lives.

What sins do you feel enslaved to? What do you need to repent of and trust in Christ for deliverance?

Genesis 37:29-36

Genesis 38:1-30

One of the wonderful things about the Book of Genesis, and the Bible as a whole, is how raw it is. We see this in Jacob's response when his sons told him Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourned for days—this was expected. But when all of his sons and daughters tried to comfort him, he refused. Instead, he was determined to carry his grief all the way to the grave. This is how death affects people. Apart from the gospel, this is how death would affect us; death would be a crushing blow, leaving us without hope and without joy.

Since Christ has gone before us in death and has put death to death, we can respond differently, especially when it comes to grieving the death of a fellow believer. Death does not have the final word. Death is not victorious. We grieve death, but not without hope; we do not mourn the way the world mourns (1 Thess. 4:13). Instead, we grieve with the hope and assurance that death is a temporary separation; this separation will be removed for good when Christ returns.

How do you tend to see death, through the world's lens or through the gospel's? Genesis 37 ends with a cliffhanger. Joseph had been taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar. But when we turn the page and begin reading Genesis 38, we read of a shameful account of Judah. Why this interlude? Why tell us about Tamar tricking her father-in-law and having his child? Maybe because there is something we need to learn about Judah when he comes back into the story.

Remember, it was Judah who had suggested the brothers sell Joseph into slavery. It was an action of a man who didn't appear to care much about anyone other than himself. Yet, look at how Judah responded when Tamar provided evidence showing he was the father of the child growing inside of her. He abandoned his call to put her to death and didn't try to find a way to cover his sin, as he had done before with the rest of the brothers. In this, we find a hint that God might have been at work in Judah, growing him, and changing him, just as He did with Joseph.

God was not focused solely on Joseph in Egypt. He was also at work in others preparing them for their reunion a couple of decades later. We have to remember this today too. Yes, God is at work in us, but not only us. He is also changing others, for His glory and our good.

Who do you see God working in? How can you pray for that person?