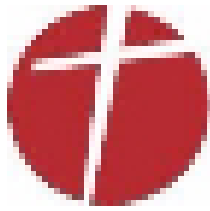


STUDY GUIDE

NEW
VISION
LIVING
THE
DREAM



NEW VISION

JOSEPH IS REWARDED
GENESIS 37:5, 1 PETER 3:9, GENESIS 50:19-21
02/19/2017

MAIN POINT

Like Joseph, we should be living the dream in a way that will leave behind a legacy of faithfulness and perseverance.

INTRODUCE

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

For group members who are parents, ask them to briefly share their predictions and hopes for the future of their children (ex: careers they will pursue, where they will live, what kind of family they will have, etc.). For those who are not parents, ask them to do the same for siblings (or family members of comparable age).

How do a person's current character and former behavior shape the circumstances around them? How do they shape our expectations and predictions for their future?

How can our decisions and actions influence the blessings or snares we bring upon ourselves? How do they define the legacy we leave?

READ AND REFLECT

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

GENESIS 37:1-8 AND 50:19-20.

Jacob fathered twelve children with four different women. His family gives us a picture of the difficulties that blended families face.

How did Jacob feel about Joseph? How did Joseph's brothers feel about Joseph's favored status? How did they respond?

What might Joseph have been thinking or praying as he was betrayed by his brothers and carried off as a slave, separated from his father?

The favoritism that Jacob extended to Joseph caused a rift between Joseph and his brothers. This, combined with the arrogant way in which Joseph shared his dreams with his brothers, resulted in Joseph's brothers being so consumed with anger that they threw him in a pit, sold him into slavery, and told Jacob that Joseph had been killed by wild animals. Through God's providence, Joseph went from being a lowly slave to being second in command in Egypt. God blessed Joseph's leadership and used him to preserve the nation during a great famine. Thus, when Jacob's family was afflicted by the famine, he sent his sons to buy grain in Egypt. When Jacob's brothers learned that Joseph was still alive and had risen to a place of power in Egypt, they feared for their lives.

Those of us who are in Christ, we are the favored child, are you allowing your family dysfunction to keep you from being the person God created you to be?

What was Joseph's answer to his brothers' fear? How did God use Joseph to bring healing in Jacob's family?

What impact might Joseph's testimony of God's grace have had on his brothers' lives?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 PETER 3:8-9.

What do you think it means to be "like-minded"?

What do you think Peter means by saying that we "can inherit a blessing"? What is the blessing?

To be "like-minded" does not mean that we all have to think the same thing. This sort of unity is impossible in this life. Rather, Peter means that we ought to be like-minded in our attitudes. We all ought to value and practice sympathy, love, compassion, and humility. If we are like-minded in these issues, then when areas of disagreement arise, we can count on our brothers and sisters to listen patiently, to think the best of us, and to have the hope that we can come to a resolution.

In Matthew 5:11-12, Jesus says, "You are blessed when they insult and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of Me. Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven." The ultimate blessing we will receive for following Christ is the reward of heaven.

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Which of God's promises can you name off the top of your head? Which do you hold onto most strongly?

How would our lives be more difficult if we did not know these promises? How might our lives change if we knew them better?

How can we fulfill our dreams and ultimately be a blessing to others?

PRAY

Thank God for the promises He's given us, and for the confidence we can have that He will be faithful to fulfill them. Pray that, in our obedience and trust, He blesses our lives through His grace in order that we can be a blessing to those around us—overflowing to others the same love, hope, and truth He's given us through the Holy Spirit, and the legacy of Christ. Finally, pray that we, and all who follow after us, will leave a legacy that brings God glory and points to the ultimate blessing of salvation through Jesus Christ.

37:2-4 The account begins with a description of 17-year-old Joseph, the central human figure in this section. Jacob's unequal treatment of his sons aroused great jealousy, so that Joseph's brothers hated him. The robe of many colors probably marked Joseph as Jacob's chosen successor for clan leadership, especially since he was the firstborn of Rachel, the only woman Jacob had ever intended to marry.

37:5-11 Like his father Jacob (28:12-15; 31:10-13), Joseph received two dreams from God during his lifetime. Both portrayed Joseph as gaining a position of supremacy in his family, though the symbols differed greatly. The first dream used an agricultural image (v. 7). The second, more important and wider in scope than the first, was astronomical (vv. 9-10). The pairing of dreams with a shared meaning meant that God would certainly make the events happen (41:32).

51:19-21 Joseph acknowledges that he is not in control of history's measures. Divine purpose prohibits Joseph from exacting personal vengeance, yet personal experience with the providence of God through difficult circumstances confirmed for him that he could never usurp God's sovereign design by taking the lives of his brothers into his own hands. It was God, after all, who had transformed the brothers' evil intentions into good, achieving the deliverance of many peoples.