

Genesis: The Book That Started It All
Joseph (Part 2)
Group Guide | December 14

Open your group time with a few Advent questions (10 minutes)

Thus far we have discussed how Advent is a season of waiting, longing, and slowing down, how it can feel, however, busy, chaotic and like it's lacking any sort of peace. This week, as we turn to our third Advent theme, we acknowledge that many times in life it can feel despairing. It can feel as if "the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea" (Ps. 46:2).

On Sunday, however, we lit the candle of **joy** which highlights the life of joy we find only in Jesus.

- Where has or where does life feel joyless to you?
- How has/does that joylessness impact your relationships, your work, your faith?
- How does the salvation in and through Christ provide joy for the soul to rest in?

As a group, seek the Lord in these things. Pray for God's joy and pray for God's Spirit to birth joyful fruit within you (Gal. 5:22).

Read Genesis 41-47 (15 minutes)

As you begin your time discussing God's Word, take a few moments to divvy up Genesis chapters 41-47. Assign one chapter per person or per group of 2-3 people. Have each person/group read that chapter on their own or to aloud with their smaller group. Once everyone is finished reading, have the group come back together to share a brief synopsis of what occurred in the chapter they read. Have people share in order. Start by having the person/group who read Genesis 41 share, then the person/group who read Genesis 42, etc.

Once you've finished acclimating to Joseph's story, reflect on the following questions:

- What resonated with you most from Joseph's story that Dan brought up from the sermon this past week? Explain.
- In his sermon, Dan talked about how at "every critical juncture in his life, Joseph kept handing the pen to God." How do you see this as the case from the text?
- When it comes to that statement, how true does it ring for your own life? Do you tend to hand the pen over to God? What's an example of when you've done this?
- When have you *not* handed the pen over to God? What happened? What makes it hard to give it to God?
- Is there anything in your life you're needing to hand over to God, but are hesitant to? What? Why?
- In his sermon, Dan pointed out that instead of self-promotion, Joseph opted for the Lord's elevation of his life and status; how instead of revenge, Joseph opted for reconciliation through God's help; and, lastly, how instead of a story of victimhood, Joseph opted for trusting in God's providence. Where might you be inclined to self-promotion, revenge, or victimhood in your life? How do these things relate to wanting to "pen" your own story?

- What might it look like for you to and the pen to God? How might that bring out a different kind of “elevation?” How might it bring about reconciliation in your life? How might it bring out trust in God’s providence?
- What else resonated with or challenged you from this story?

Finish with prayer (10 minutes)

As our time together ends, close in prayer by applying one key lesson from Joseph’s story to your own lives. Quietly read through the three pairs below.

1. Choose one pair that best connects with an area where you personally need to grow right now.
2. When it’s your turn, pray out loud using this simple pattern: First, honestly confess or renounce the attitude on the left (the struggle).
3. Then, ask God to grow in you the attitude on the right (the godly response).

Here are the three options:

Where I’m tempted...

- Self-promotion
- Revenge
- Victimhood

I want to grow in...

- God’s elevation
- Reconciliation
- Resting in God’s providence

Example (you can pray in your own words): “Lord, I confess that I often fall into self-promotion—wanting to make sure everyone notices me and what I’ve done. Forgive me for that pride. I ask you to grow in me a quiet trust in your timing and your elevation of me instead. And, Lord, even if I never rise above being your servant, let that be enough. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Take about 1–2 minutes each. After everyone who wants to pray has shared, we’ll close out your group time with a final prayer as the leader.