



Part 6: 23 Year Detour

Note to Leaders: Use the attached chart of Joseph's life on page 2 to help guide your discussion. Print copies for each group member.

GET GOING

Do you really believe that God causes everything to work out for the good of those who love Him? What does good really look like, anyway? In a culture that revolves around instant gratification how can we step back and to look at the big picture work that God is putting together?

DISCUSS

1. As you look back on the life of Joseph what impacted you most about his story?
2. Mark mentioned that people either live like "God is no where" when things are going wrong, or "God is now here" when things seem to be going our way. Why do you think our faith goes to such extremes depending on the circumstances of our life?
3. What might have Joseph's life looked like if he simply reacted to life's circumstances?
*(**Check out Chart Number 1 to help guide your discussion.)*
4. When we are confident that God is with us, we will keep doing right even when things are going wrong? How did Joseph model that truth through life's ups and downs?
*(**Check out Chart Number 2 to help guide your discussion.)*
5. How can we keep pursuing God and His blueprint for living in life's difficult moments?

Read Genesis 39:4 - 39:22 - Genesis 41:40- Genesis 50:15-20

6. When we are confident that God is with us, we will see our trials as a means of growth, not a reason for doubt. As you look back over Joseph's story, how was God preparing him for the dream he had as a seventeen year old kid?
7. Are you at a place where you trust that God is in control even when life isn't going your way? Why or why not?
8. As you reflect back on your own story, how has God used some of life's difficult moments to help grow you up and bring you to where you are today?

PRAY.

Thank God that he is in control of the details of you life. Thank Him for the way that He uses the circumstances of our lives to shape us into the people He wants us to become. Pray that we might be people who live with the confidence that God is with always with us.

Chart # 1

Age	Key events in the life of Joseph	Chapter
17	He dreams of great leadership, is hated by his brothers, and is sold into slavery.	37
17-28	He becomes a slave to Potiphar, is seduced by Potiphar;s wife, unjustly prisoned.	39
28	He interprets the dean of the king’s cupbearer, who promises to help him.	40
28-30	Forgotten by the cupbearer, he spends two more years in prison	40
30	He is brought from prison to interpret the king’s dream, becomes second in command	41
37	The 7 years of famine being, as foretold in the dreams of Pharaoh.	41
40	The famine forces Joseph’s brothers to come to Egypt. As they bow before him, he finally understands the meaning of his dreams.	42
40 +	Joseph forgives his brothers, and they are reconciled as a family.	42-50

Chart # 2

Situation:	Temptation:	Joseph’s response:
Sold into slavery	Give up and stop trying	Faithful serve Potiphar
Seduced by the wife of his master	Give in	Refuses, runs away
Lied about and thrown into prison	Become bitter and withdrawn	Notices others, reaches out to help
His brothers come before him	Get even, seek revenge	Forgives their sin, seeks reconciliation