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Jacob and Esau

Scripture: Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-40

Theme: God works through imperfect people

Nursery (Ages 0-2)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

"God Loves You!" "God is always with us, just like Joseph!" Even when things feel tough, God works to make everything good. "He has your back!" Let's sing, hug, and believe: God loves you!

Bible Story

Joseph's Big Dream and God's Big Love

Once, a man named Jacob had many sons, one of whom was Joseph. Joseph had a special dream: he saw his brothers bowing to him, like stars shining in the sky. His dad loved Joseph very much, so he gave him a colorful coat. But his brothers didn't like that, some even said Joseph was bad and wanted to hurt him.

One day, Jacob's family went to visit their dad. Joseph's brothers saw him too, but they were jealous. They tricked him, took his coat, dipped it in poisoned wine, and said Joseph was dead. They put him in a big, empty jar and threw him into a deep well. Joseph cried, but God was with him.

A kind man named Potiphar, who worked for a pharaoh, bought Joseph from the brothers. Potiphar loved Joseph so much that he let him take care of everything. But God was watching, and Joseph was safe. No one could hurt him because God was with him.

One day, the pharaoh's wife tried to trick Joseph, but he stayed strong. She was sad, and Potiphar put Joseph in jail. But God was still with him. God made sure Joseph was happy in jail too!

Later, God helped Joseph in jail, and the pharaoh asked him about his dreams. Joseph told him what God would do next, and the pharaoh let Joseph work for him. The pharaoh was very happy, and Joseph became the chief of all his workers.

God loved Joseph even when things were hard, and Joseph never forgot God's love. Because of that, God made everything good for Joseph!

Why This Story Matters: Even when Joseph was sad or scared, God was always there to protect and love him. Just like Joseph, you can trust God, no matter what happens! God's love is like a big, warm hug, always there to help you.

Key Verse

Genesis 25:23

"God loves you so much!" Even if something feels sad or scary, God wants to keep you safe. He is always there to hold you close and show you His love. "God's love is big and kind, always for you!"

Activities

Activity 1: The Chosen Hands

God loves our hands, even when they are small.

Supplies needed:

- *Red sock*
- *Red toy*
- *Picture of Jacob*
- *Music*

1. Step 1: Parent holds child's hands.
2. Step 2: Touch the red sock.
3. Step 3: Point to the picture.
4. Step 4: Say 'Jacob' with parent.
5. Step 5: Clap hands together.

Activity 2: The Soft Touch Song

God works with our soft, imperfect touch.

Supplies needed:

- *Soft blanket*
- *Red yarn*
- *Red toy*
- *Cotton balls*

1. Step 1: Parent wraps child in blanket.
2. Step 2: Child feels the cotton balls.
3. Step 3: Parent points to red yarn.
4. Step 4: Child touches the red yarn.
5. Step 5: Sing 'The Chosen One' together.

Discussion Questions

- Here are four simple, open-ended questions to help babies and toddlers explore God's love through Joseph's story:
- "When Joseph was sad or scared, who helped him? What did you see him do that showed he trusted God?" (Repeat: "God loves you, just like Joseph!")
- "Joseph said God turned his bad things into good things. What is one way God might help you when you feel afraid or wrong?" (Repeat: "God takes care of you!")

- "If Joseph could tell you one thing about God's love, what would it be? Can you draw or sing about it?" (Repeat: "God never gives up on you!")
- "When things are hard for Joseph, he hugs his father or sings to God. What is one way you can tell God you love Him when you're sad?" (Repeat: "God sees you and loves you!")
- Each question invites a simple answer or action, no pressure!

Prayer Focus

"Dear God, we love You so much! You love Joseph and all Your children, like little baby Jesus! You make everything good, even when things are hard. Help us trust You and love You today! Amen!" (Repeat: "God loves us!" + "He makes everything good!")

>> Missions Spotlight

The Maasai people of East Africa have a strong oral tradition of stories about suffering and redemption. Missionaries have found that Joseph's story connects deeply, and the Maasai concept of 'Enkai' (God) provides a starting point for sharing the full Gospel.

-> To the Cross

Joseph was betrayed, enslaved, and imprisoned, yet God used it all to save many lives. In the same way, Jesus was betrayed and crucified, the worst evil, yet God used it to save the world. What people meant for evil, God meant for good.