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Jacob and Esau

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

Theme: God works through imperfect people

PreK-K (Ages 3-5)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Title: God Is Always Near , Like Joseph! God loves us and is with us, even when things seem tough. Just like Joseph, we can trust Him through all our adventures! 1. God's Big Plan (Genesis 37) Once, a boy named Joseph had big dreams, he saw beautiful pictures in his heart. But his brothers were jealous and made him suffer. Wonder: Did you know God made Joseph's hard times part of a special plan? Even when things feel hard, God is working it for something wonderful! 2. God Helps in Hard Times (Genesis 39) When Joseph was in prison, he didn't give up. He prayed and trusted God. One day, the king's wife tried to trick him, but Joseph stayed brave. Repeat: Just like Joseph, we can face tough times and say, "God is with me!" 3. God's Kindness Wins (Genesis 45) After many years, Joseph forgave his brothers and even helped them! God turned their bad moments into good ones. Wonder: What if God's love is like Joseph's, always there to protect and guide us? Closing (Repeat the Theme): God is with us, just like Joseph! No matter what happens, we can trust Him. Praise God!

Bible Story

Joseph's Wonderful Story

Once there was a boy named Joseph who loved God more than anything. He wore a beautiful coat of many colors, and his family loved him very much. But God had a special plan for Joseph, one that would surprise everyone. "Don't worry, Joseph," God whispered to him. "No matter what happens, I will take care of you."

Joseph's brothers grew jealous because they loved him so much. They tricked him by pretending he was hurt and sold him to some travelers. Sadly, Joseph was taken far away, but God was watching over him. While Joseph was far from home, he had a dream where he saw the sun, moon, and his brothers bowing to him. "This means God will make you great one day!" Joseph told his family, but they laughed and forgot his words.

Years later, Joseph ended up in prison because he was falsely accused. Still, God gave him wisdom and power. While there, Joseph saw two men who looked sad and asked him to help them. One was a cupbearer, the other a baker. Joseph told God about their dreams, and God answered! The cupbearer was set free, but the baker was punished. "Remember me," Joseph said to the cupbearer. "I will tell the king about you!" Soon, Joseph was put in charge of all the king's work.

The king loved Joseph so much that he made him his second-in-command. One day, Joseph's family came to Egypt looking for food. The king told Joseph, "You can tell them to buy food, but don't eat any!" Joseph gave them bread and money, but they forgot to bring back Joseph's father, Jacob. "God made me great, and now I can help my family," Joseph said. His brothers bowed to him, and God had kept his promise!

Why This Story Matters: Joseph's story shows that even when things seem difficult, God works everything for good. Just like Joseph trusted God, we can trust Him too, no matter what happens!

Key Verse

Genesis 25:23

God's Big Plan Even when things seem mean, remember this: bad things happen, but God always has a surprise! Joseph saw bad things (like his brothers stealing his coat) and hurt feelings, but God turned it into something wonderful. Joseph ended up in a big, special job with the king, he saved Egypt from a super dry time! So even if someone tries to hurt you, God is always working something good. Sometimes we don't understand why bad things happen, but God knows. Joseph's brothers even said, "We didn't mean to!" But God used their mistakes to help everyone! Maybe you've felt sad or scared, but God can turn it into something kind. Just like Joseph's story, God's love is always there to protect and help you. Think about it: when you're kind to others, even if they might not know it, God is smiling! You can be brave and trust that God will guide you, just like he did for Joseph. And remember: "God's love is like a big, warm hug!" Now let's say this together: "Bad things? No! God's love is always near!"

Activities

Activity 1: Jacob's Struggle

Acknowledge God's love even during hard times.

Supplies needed:

- *Soft pillow*
- *Blanket*

1. Teacher introduces Jacob's coat story.
2. Kids hold the pillow.
3. Kids gently push the pillow.
4. Teacher says God loves you.
5. Kids place the pillow on the rug.

Activity 2: Making a Blessing Heart

Show God's love through a heart.

Supplies needed:

- *Red paper*
- *Markers*
- *Glue*
- *Jars*

1. Show a piece of red paper.
2. Kids draw a smiley face.

3. Kids draw a heart on the paper.
4. Kids glue the heart into a jar.
5. Say 'I am a gift'.

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for preschool and kindergarten children to explore Joseph's story and how God works all things for good (Genesis 37, 45). Each question invites wonder, simple thinking, and connection to their lives:
- Where did Joseph go that he felt like someone had put him in a magic box?
- (Hint: Think about how his brothers treated him. How did Joseph feel when they made him disappear? What kind of feelings can we have when someone doesn't want to share or listen to us?)
- Wonder: If God is always watching, what might He be saying to Joseph that we can't hear yet? How can we feel brave like Joseph when we're in tricky situations?
- What was the big, big dream that Joseph had?
- (Hint: It was about the sun, moon, and stars! How did his brothers react when they heard it? Did they laugh, or were they scared?)
- Wonder: What are some of our big dreams? If we had a dream like Joseph's, what would happen if someone didn't believe us? How can we trust God when things don't go exactly how we planned?
- Joseph had to wait a long time before he could tell his family the truth. What was he waiting for?
- (Hint: Think about the dressed in purple, the bowl in the pot, the coat of many colors, all these things led to him being sold as a slave. What did Joseph learn while waiting?)
- Wonder: If we wait a long time for something special, what can God teach us during that time? How can we be patient like Joseph, even when things seem hard?
- When Joseph was in prison, he still had a very special gift. What was it?
- (Hint: He could interpret dreams! What did God tell him to do when he saw dreams in prison? How did that help others?)
- Wonder: What are some special things God gives us, like Joseph's gift? When we see something hard (like a big dream or a bad dream), what can we do with our eyes wide open, like Joseph did?
- How to use these questions:
- Pause and let children share their ideas.
- Repeat key words like "magic box," "big dream," or "waiting" to help them recall the story.
- End with: "God knows our dreams and loves us even when things feel scary. What can we do to trust Him today?"
- Would you like any adjustments to make the questions even simpler or more interactive?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Little Hearts: Joseph's Story Dear God, we thank You for the big and small things You do in our lives. Sometimes, things seem hard or different, like Joseph's coat or the dreams he had. But You are always there, making everything good, even when it feels tricky or tough! Help us trust You, like Joseph did, because You know what's best. God's Good Plan Oh, God, we wonder how You turn things into something wonderful! Like Joseph's brothers sold him, but then God helped him become a leader. You turned a bad dream into a big adventure, help us see how You're doing the same! Make us brave and kind, just like Joseph was! God Works for Good Dear God, we

pray for hearts that trust You even when things don't go right! Joseph didn't know it, but You were working everything, even the bad parts! Help us believe, like Joseph did, that You love us and care for us always. When life feels confusing, remind us: You're working everything for good! Closing Wonder Now, let's close by saying: "Thank You, God! You make good come out of even the hardest things!" One, two, three, let's give You big hugs in our hearts! Amen!

>> 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.