

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God is with us even in hard times.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that even when life is hard, we can still see God's blessings.

KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 39:1-6, & 17-33 Joseph in Potiphar's House

MEMORY VERSE:

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Romans 8:28a (NirV)

SUMMARY:

Even though Joseph was now in a foreign country, his life seemed to be moving forward. Joseph was working for an important Egyptian official. But when the official's wife spread lies about him, Joseph ended up in prison. But even from prison, God was with Joseph and blessed Him.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for all your blessings.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

MEMORY VERSE

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Romans 8:28a (NirV)

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Romans 8:28a (NIV)

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God." Romans 8:28a (NLT)

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Romans 8:28a (KJV)

LARGE GROUP:

Read the verse in a normal speed with the kids. Then read it super slow. Then read it super fast!

SMALL GROUP:

Have the kids sing the memory verse in the style of their favorite pop/rock singer.

SKIT

FORWARD

ITEMS NEEDED:

Rags for Joseph, a broom, a police uniform

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

3M

CHARACTERS:

Narrator - A movie trailer announcer

Joseph - A slave

Ted - A policeman

Joseph enters with the broom, sweeping. The Narrator enters.

NARRATOR: When we last left our hero, his life was headed downward.

JOSEPH: Who said that?

NARRATOR: He went from being his father's favorite son to a slave!

JOSEPH: Oh, it's you again. How've you been?

NARRATOR: Better than you, Joseph.

JOSEPH: You think so? I don't know. Life here in Egypt hasn't been too bad.

NARRATOR: Are you kidding me? You're a slave!

JOSEPH: Yes, but I have a really cool guy for a master.

NARRATOR: You're a stranger living in a foreign land.

JOSEPH: I got to travel. I got to learn a new language.

NARRATOR: Your life was headed downward! Down I tell you.

SKIT

JOSEPH: I don't know. Seems like everything is moving forward to me.

NARRATOR: But that's not possible! How can you be moving forward when you're a slave?

JOSEPH: Oh that's easy. God is with me.

NARRATOR: He is?

JOSEPH: Sure! He's the one who put me in Potiphar's household. He's the one who helped me to earn Potiphar's respect. He put me in charge of the whole house, you know.

NARRATOR: Well, sounds like this adventure of yours is going well.

JOSEPH: It's not going bad.

NARRATOR: Maybe God has plans for you after all.

JOSEPH: I know He does! God keeps blessing me and moving me forward. You watch. Good things are coming.

Ted enters.

TED: Excuse me, are you Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes I am, officer.

TED: You are under arrest! Drop the broom! Now!

Joseph drops the broom.

JOSEPH: Whoa! What did I do?

TED: You are under arrest for a crime you didn't commit!

JOSEPH: But that's not fair.

NARRATOR: Uh oh, Joseph. Looks to me like you're headed downward again.

JOSEPH: Not at all. This isn't the direction I thought I'd be going, but it's clear to me my time with Potiphar is at an end. Okay, Mr. Policeman, let's move forward!

SKIT

NARRATOR: Forward? You're moving to the dungeon!

JOSEPH: And God is still with me. I may not be able to see the reason, but I know He is there, and I know His blessings are with me.

TED: He's right, you know. I read ahead in the story, and after he goes to jail—

NARRATOR: Okay, okay, don't give it all away this week. Onward with you, Joseph.

JOSEPH: Don't you mean forward?

TED: That's the spirit, Joseph. Awfully sorry about this, but like you said, God is still here.

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A pair of dumbbells

How do you measure forward progress in the gym working out? With a little soreness, of course! People who lift weights have a saying: no pain, no gain. They know that muscles are only built up by pushing them to the limit. Muscles grow because when we work out, we are tearing our muscles down. They'll be a little sore for a day or two, but when they heal, they heal bigger and stronger.

Sometimes moving forward means we endure some setbacks. It means we face hard times that can lead us to question, "Are we going the right way?" I'm sure Joseph had to feel that way when he was taken from slavery to prison, but even there, he was moving forward. God's blessings were hard to see, but even in those dark times, Joseph trusted God was moving him ahead.

Progress can hurt. Moving forward can lead us through some tough times. But when we trust God to take the lead, we will find He was moving us forward all along!

LARGE GROUP GAME

EGG ROLL

ITEMS NEEDED:

A dozen eggs

Colored masking tape

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mark off a long starting line and a long finish line on the floor about 15 feet apart.

Choose 12 kids for this game. Set 12 eggs on the starting line, evenly spaced out. The kids will race to see who can be first to roll their egg from start to finish using only their nose to propel the egg.

VARIATION:

To make it more challenging for older kids, put a little Vaseline on the kids' noses.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

God will help us move forward, even in hard times.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

God is with us even in hard times.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that even when life is hard, we can still see God's blessings.

KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 39:1-6, & 17-33 Joseph in Potiphar's House

INTRO:

Imagine going to see the movie Onward with your family. Imagine that the movie begins with Barley and Ian's mom giving him their father's gift, a magic wand. Imagine Barley and Ian performing the spell to bring their father back and it works perfectly. Barley and Ian get to enjoy a wonderful day with their father. Dad imparts some life lessons to his sons, tells him he loves them, and then, he is gone. The boys are richer for the experience, and dear old dad gets a chance to see his boys once more. Sounds like a wonderful story, right?

Let's be honest: if that's how the movie went, the movie would be a bore. I know it's frustrating when things don't go right for the heroes in a story, but if Barley and Ian don't mess up the spell, there's no story, and there's no movie! A good story has obstacles and problems. In order to fulfill their quest, our heroes must overcome those obstacles. In the process, our heroes learn about themselves. They are changed by the experience. They may get frustrated and even want to give up, but they keep moving forward.

Every good story is full of challenges and obstacles. Rey overcomes a number of challenges in her quest to become a Jedi and defeat the first order. The Avengers lose half the heroes in the galaxy before they can defeat Thanos and his Infinity Gauntlet. As frustrating as setbacks and hard times may be our heroes come out better and stronger having faced those challenges. They turn out to be blessings in disguise.

No one understood this better than Joseph. His story began with being betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. He started his journey upward by going downward! Nevertheless he was still moving forward. Joseph trusted God was with him. God was with Joseph on the journey to Egypt. He was with him when he worked as a slave.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

God blessed Joseph as he served his new master Potiphar, and when life took another unexpected turn, God was still moving Joseph forward.

READ GENESIS 39:1-6, & 17-33

MAIN POINT:

Joseph could have been a bitter young man, but he made the best of his situation. He served Potiphar so well, he was put in charge of the entire household. But just when things seemed to be moving up, Joseph fell down hard. He was accused of a crime he did not commit, and he was thrown in jail.

Even in jail Joseph looked for God's blessings. Just as he had become a trusted slave, he was a trusted prisoner. He was tasked with taking care of the other prisoners. He was still moving forward, even in those dark times. If Joseph can find God's blessings in a lonely prison cell, we can find God's blessings in the hard times of our lives.

DRIVE IT HOME:

I'm sure some of you are questioning the logic behind that statement. How was Joseph blessed? His brothers sold him out! He was a slave! Then he was a prisoner! How could Joseph possibly keep his faith in those dark times?

God had a plan for Joseph, a plan that would not only lead him upward but help him save his family, even the brothers who betrayed him. That plan included slavery and imprisonment, but all along the way, God was moving Joseph forward. Joseph had to learn the Egyptian language to serve in Potiphar's house and in prison. He had to learn the Egyptian customs and ways. As head of the other prisoners, Joseph would meet two servants of Pharaoh who knew the king of Egypt personally. One of those men was put to death, but the other was restored to his position at Pharaoh's side where one day, he would tell the king about a prisoner who could interpret strange dreams.

Joseph may not have seen all these blessings, but he still held fast to his faith. He believed in the dreams God had given him. He knew God was always moving him forward.

The next time you or your family are facing a tough time, ask yourself, where are God's blessings? How is this setback a blessing in disguise? Is God teaching you something? Is He drawing you closer as a family? Is He making you stronger, preparing you for bigger challenges ahead? God uses hard times to bless us in ways seen and unseen. He is with you in those times. He is always working on you. He is always moving you forward.

Hard times can be discouraging, but take heart! God will never leave you, and He will make your hard times a blessing.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Thank God for the challenges in your life, and look for those blessings. You will see them, and you will know that God is always with you.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for all your blessings.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could have any magical power or super power, what would it be?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Romans 8:28a

Have the kids sing the memory verse in the style of their favorite pop/rock singer.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a round or two of Red Light/ Green Light.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Genesis 39:1-6, & 17-33

Who was Potiphar?

What did Joseph do for Potiphar?

What bad thing happened when Joseph was working for Potiphar?

How was God moving Joseph forward while he was a slave?

Can you think of something good that happened during a hard time in your life?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to see the good you are doing in hard times.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could have any magical power or super power, what would it be?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Romans 8:28a

Have the kids sing the memory verse in the style of their favorite pop/rock singer.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a round or two of Red Light/ Green Light.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Genesis 39:1-6, & 17-33

What set back did Joseph suffer at the end of his service to Pharaoh?

What blessings did God give Joseph while he was a slave?

How does God use hard times to bless us?

Can you think of something good that happened during a hard time in your life?

What can we do to remind ourselves that God is good during hard times?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to see the good you are doing in hard times.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

FILL IN THE BLANK

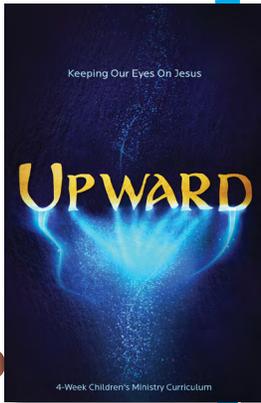
Joseph was sold to a man named _____.
POTIPHAR

Potiphar lived in the land of _____.
EGYPT

Joseph was _____ to the head of household while working for Potiphar.
PROMOTED

When Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of something he did not do, he was thrown in _____.
JAIL

Even though times were hard, _____ still blessed Joseph because he was faithful.
GOD



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Upward Lesson 2

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: FORWARD



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

Even though Joseph was now in a foreign country, his life seemed to be moving forward. Joseph was working for an important Egyptian official. But when the official's wife spread lies about him, Joseph ended up in prison. But even from prison, God was with Joseph and blessed Him. Genesis 39:1-6, & 17-33 Joseph in Potiphar's House



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Take some time to count your blessings from this past year. How many blessings happened in good times? How many happened in hard times?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- What good things happened to Joseph in Potiphar's house?
- How does God use hard times to bless us?
- Can you think of one way God has blessed you this past week?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Romans 8:28a (NIV)



PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

Hard times are when we need God the most. In hard times we need to look for God's blessings. Ask God to open your eyes to see how He blesses you every day, on good days and bad. Help your kids to look for blessings as well, especially if they have a bad day.

CRAFT ACTIVITY

Have the kids cut out a pyramid from some construction paper. On the pyramid draw parallel lines going up the pyramid. Encourage the kids to write or draw some blessing that God has given them, starting at the bottom, and see if they can fill their pyramid all the way to the top.