

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God works all things out for our good.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that – even in the bad times – God is working things out for our good.

KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 42:1-11, 45:1-15, Joseph Reunited with His Brothers

MEMORY VERSE:

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

SUMMARY:

Looking back over Joseph’s life, there were so many downward moments: being sold by his brothers, living as a slave in a foreign country, and going to jail for something he didn’t do. But Joseph never lost his faith in God. In the end, if it had not been for those difficult times, Joseph would not have been in the right place to save the people of Egypt and his own family.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for always working things out for our good.

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:

See which group can recite the memory verse from memory the loudest - the boys or the girls.

SMALL GROUP:

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

SKIT

UPWARD

ITEMS NEEDED:

Royal robes for Joseph, a shepherd's cloak for Reuben

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

3M

CHARACTERS:

Narrator - A movie trailer announcer

Joseph - Second in command of Egypt

Reuben - Joseph's oldest brother

Joseph is sitting on a throne. The Narrator enters.

NARRATOR: Long ago, the world was full of wonder and food.

JOSEPH: Don't you mean magic?

NARRATOR: No, this is your story, not Onward. The world used to be full of food.

JOSEPH: Oh yes.

NARRATOR: For seven years, there was plenty of food. But now...

JOSEPH: Yeah, we sort of hit a wall, didn't we?

NARRATOR: The world is a much hungrier place.

JOSEPH: Not that hungry. After all, I was able to build some big storage barns so we had food to eat here in Egypt.

NARRATOR: Yes, the people of Egypt were grateful for all Joseph had done for them.

JOSEPH: You're welcome, Egypt.

NARRATOR: But in the land of Canaan, things were looking pretty rough.

SKIT

Reuben enters.

REUBEN: Excuse me, I'm looking for the man in charge of food. Are you the man in charge of food?

NARRATOR: No, I'm the guy with the silky smooth movie announcer voice.

JOSEPH: I'm the food guy.

Reuben bows down before Joseph.

JOSEPH: Whoa!

REUBEN: Please, sir! My family is starving! I have ten brothers who have come with me from our father Jacob!

JOSEPH: Jacob?

REUBEN: We beg you, please! Give us some food so we don't starve.

JOSEPH: Whoa!

Joseph pulls the Narrator aside.

JOSEPH: Voice man, do you know who that is?

NARRATOR: Barley?

JOSEPH: No! It's my brother! It's one of the guys who sold me into slavery.

NARRATOR: Is it? Well, well, well. I guess this adventure story just became... a REVENGE story!

JOSEPH: Revenge? Are you crazy? No way!

NARRATOR: But he sold you into slavery!

JOSEPH: And because of all the bad things that happened after that, I am here in a position to save my family!

NARRATOR: You're talking gibberish!

SKIT

JOSEPH: It's true! All the bad times – becoming a slave, being thrown in jail – God worked it all out for good. Not just for me, but my family!

NARRATOR: Yes, I see that. But don't you want even a teeny bit of revenge?

JOSEPH: Not even the teeniest. I'm so grateful how God worked things out.

NARRATOR: In a world filled with magic...

JOSEPH: There's no magic here.

NARRATOR: In a world filled with food...

JOSEPH: No food either.

NARRATOR: In a world with no magic and no food, God has brought this man's adventure upwards to a happy conclusion.

JOSEPH: *(to Reuben)* Sir? Why don't you gather your brothers and come meet me in my office.

REUBEN: Yes! Thank you, sir! Thank you!

NARRATOR: How's that for an epic ending?

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

Lemons

There are few things as sour to taste as lemons. All it takes is one touch of your tongue on the inside of a lemon. Your mouth puckers, your head shakes. It's just not that pleasant. But when you mix the sour juice of a lemon with the right combination of water and sugar, it becomes one of the sweetest, most refreshing drinks imaginable.

There's an old saying that says when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. That's what God does with all our bitter circumstances. He works all things out for our good. He shapes us, molds us, and strengthens us. He takes the bad situations, and He uses them for good.

Remember that in all life's situations, good and bad, God is in control. God is always leading us upward to a closer walk with him and an eternity in Heaven. Let's praise God for His love and goodness, and when the bad times come, remember that even those situations will be worked out for our good!

LARGE GROUP GAME

BUCKET HEAD

ITEMS NEEDED:

A hat, a small bucket, ping-pong balls

INSTRUCTIONS:

Attach the small bucket to the top of a hat. Choose one player for this game. This is a 60 second challenge, in which the player will have 60 seconds to toss and catch 4 ping-pong balls in the bucket on their head. If they can complete the challenge, they win a prize. If time allows, let more than one student play the game.

VARIATION:

You can also make this a race in which 2-4 kids race to see who can be first to get 4 ping-pong balls in the bucket on their head.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Just as we tossed the balls upward, God works all things out for our good, moving us ever upward.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

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KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 42:1-11, 45:1-15, Joseph Reunited with His Brothers

INTRO:

Some of Pixar's biggest movies ended in ways we never expected. While we all saw the cheery endings of Toy Story and A Bug's Life coming, and we all cheered the super hero victories of the Incredibles movies, who would have dreamed Toy Story 3 would end with Andy giving up his toys – even Woody? And who would have ever dared dream Woody would leave the other toys behind in Toy Story 4?

One of Pixar's greatest endings has to be the bittersweet finale of Inside Out. Most of Inside Out takes place inside a girl named Riley, where an emotion named Joy wants Riley to always be happy. Joy does everything she can to keep Riley from feeling one of the other emotions, Sadness, but Joy learns that it is through Sadness we receive the greatest Joy. In other words, the bad experiences of life – moving away, losing friends, broken dreams, and other losses – allow us to grow.

No one likes to go through hard times, but it is in those hard times that God shapes us into the person He wants us to become. We see our strength tested. We discover new skills and talents we never knew we had. We discover who our true friends are. We bond closer with our families. Hard times can bring us down, but they end with us rising upward – better, stronger, and wiser. God is with us every step of the way, helping all those bad circumstances to turn out for good.

We've watched Joseph go through some incredibly hard times in this series. He went from his father's favorite son to a slave to a prisoner. Then one day, thanks to an act of kindness he did at his very lowest point, Joseph found himself standing before Pharaoh. After interpreting Pharaoh's dream, Joseph was set free and placed second in command of Egypt! Talk about going from downward to upward.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

But this is not the end of Joseph's story! Joseph prepares Egypt for the famine, just as Pharaoh directed, and one day, in the middle of the famine, he receives a visit from some familiar faces.

READ GENESIS 42:1-11, 45:1-15

MAIN POINT:

While Joseph was moving upward, his family was headed downward. They were starving because of the famine, and his brothers came begging for food. I can only imagine the emotions Joseph felt, seeing the men who once plotted to kill him out of jealousy bowing before him. It was just like his dream!

Joseph knew he was there for a reason. God had worked his bad situation out for good so he could be there for his family. God used Joseph to save his brothers, his sister, and his parents from starvation. He turned their bad situation around by turning Joseph's bad situation around for good.

DRIVE IT HOME:

If there's one thing I hope you take away from this series, it's this. At every step along the journey, Joseph kept his faith in God. He trusted God was good. He believed God had a plan for Him. He knew that no matter how far downward he fell, God was moving him forward. When the time was right, Joseph moved onward and upward. God made his situation turn out for good, and in turn, He used Joseph to make his family's bad situation turn out for good.

When we are going through tough times, it can be hard to have faith. There's a mistaken idea in some circles that if you are a Christian, you will never have a bad day. We all have bad days. We all have tough times. The difference is as Christians, we trust that God is in control. We look for the blessings. We look for opportunities to be a blessing for others. We remain hopeful in bad times knowing God will turn our situation out for good.

If you are going through a rough time, I want to encourage you to give that hard time to God. If you're a believer, ask God to show you the blessings. Ask Him to strengthen your faith and use your tough time for good. Believe in Jesus, just as you did when you were baptized, and grab on to the promise that God still works things out for good.

If you have never given your heart to Jesus, we want to invite you to receive Him today. God is inviting you to live a life of adventure. There will be ups. There will definitely be downs. Through it all, God will keep you moving forward. He will give you chances to serve as He leads you onward. He will lift you upward, out of those hard times, and ultimately all the way to Heaven.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

God wants all of us to look upward. We can look upward for hope that God is in control. We can look upward knowing that one day we will spend forever with Him in Heaven. Wherever you are today, look up. God's got this, and He can take every bad situation, even yours, and use it for good!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for always working things out for our good.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could go on an adventure anywhere in the world, where would it be?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Romans 8:28a

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of hot potato with a real potato (or a fast food sack with an order of fries inside).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Genesis 42:1-11, 45:1-15

Why did Joseph's brothers come to Egypt?

Why didn't they recognize Joseph?

Why did God let Joseph go through all those hard times?

How did Joseph save his family?

How do we know from this story that God works all things out for good?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for being our good and loving God.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could go on an adventure anywhere in the world, where would it be?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

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How do we know from this story that God works all things out for good?

How can we begin a daily relationship with Jesus?

Is there anyone who wants to give their heart to Jesus today?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

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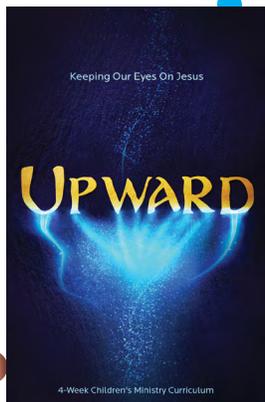
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POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

REVIEW

1. Joseph found himself headed _____ when he was tossed into a pit and then sold as a slave.
A. upward
B. downward*
C. onward
D. forward
2. Even though he was a slave, Joseph was still moving _____ while in Potiphar's house.
A. upward
B. downward
C. onward
D. forward*
3. After interpreting a dream for Pharaoh's servant, Joseph met the Pharaoh, who released him from prison and helped him move _____.
A. upward
B. downward
C. onward*
D. forward
4. God used Joseph's tough time to propel him _____ to the second highest position in Egypt so he could save his family.
A. upward*
B. downward
C. onward
D. forward
5. God can help us to move upward _____.
A. in bad times only
B. in good times only
C. in good times and bad times*



MAKE IT STICK

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

Upward Lesson 4

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: UPWARD



IN THE CAR:

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

Looking back over Joseph's life, there were so many downward moments: being sold by his brothers, living as a slave in a foreign country, and going to jail for something he didn't do. But Joseph never lost his faith in God. In the end, if it had not been for those difficult times, Joseph would not have been in the right place to save the people of Egypt and his own family. Genesis 42:1-11, 45:1-15, Joseph Reunited with His Brothers



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Ask your kids what they would have done if they were in Joseph's position. Would they have forgiven their brothers? Would they have realized this was all God's plan?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Why did God let Joseph go through so many down times in slavery and in prison?
- How did Joseph save his family?
- How is God able to work out all situations for our good?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

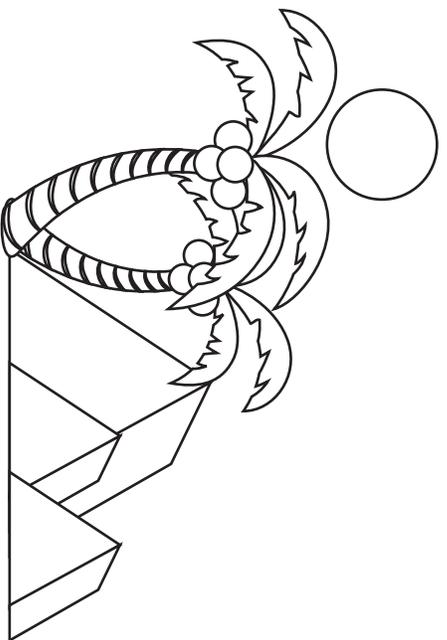
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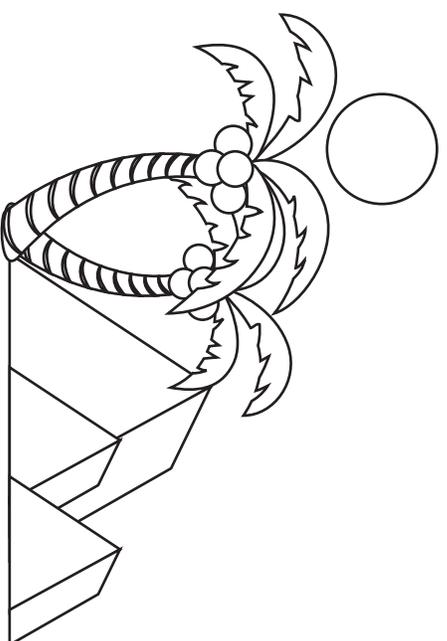
PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

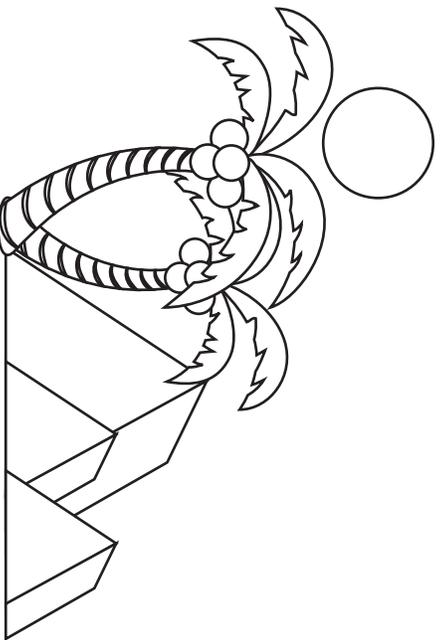
Bad times happen because we live in a fallen world, but God uses the bad times as well as the good to make all things work out for our good. Thank God for his goodness this week. Thank Him for His love and His power. Ask God to watch over your children and to always work things out for their good.



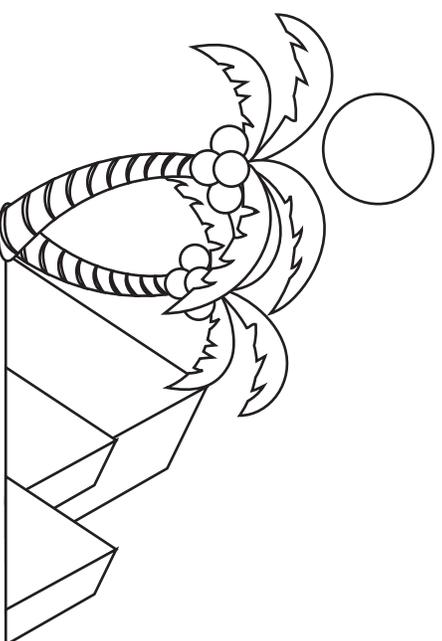
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CRAFT ACTIVITY

Have the kids make crowns to remind them of the crown Joseph wore when he was put in charge of storing food for all of Egypt.