

THE STORY OF JOSEPH, DAY 4

NEED: paper, pencil/regular markers (not Sharpies), bowl of water.

Watch the video here!

vimeo.com/444039080

Talking about the story

This is Genesis chapters 42, 43 and 44, if you want to look in a Bible.

Why is Joseph acting like this?

What do you think he is feeling?

Why does Joseph have Benjamin framed for theft?

What are you noticing now about his brothers?

About Israel, their father? ...

What else did you notice?

What was your favorite part?

How We Read the Bible: Theological Themes - Forgiveness.

Sometimes we read Scripture stories and texts that point us towards big important ideas... like forgiveness.

Can you think of an example of a time when you might need to say, "Please forgive me," or "I forgive you"?

What do you think forgiveness means?...

Who might need forgiveness in this story? ...

WATCH THIS VIDEO of pastor and writer Nadia Bolz-Weber talking about how forgiveness isn't just being NICE; it can be really powerful. There's a bad word in the title for this video - sorry!!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhmRkUtPra8

Pastor Nadia says, maybe holding onto the harm that's been done to you can feed evil. And that forgiveness can set us free. Let's hold that in our minds as we think a little about Judah.

Look at Judah's speech to Joseph. If you want to look in a Bible, it's Genesis chapter 44, verses 18 to 34. Here's part of what he says in the version in our play.

JUDAH

... When we ran out of food and had to return to Egypt, we begged our father to let us bring [Benjamin], knowing you would not help us otherwise.

Our father told us, "If I lose this child, I will die of grief."

And we know it's true.

We all know that Benjamin holds our father's heart.

If we return without him, our father, whom we love, will die of sorrow.

Please, allow me to stay as a slave in my brother's place.

For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me?

I cannot bear to see my father suffer.

What do you notice here?

How do you think Judah feels about his father?

Is he happy with their relationship?

Remember back in Chapter 1 when the brothers try to get rid of Joseph.

Was Judah worried about making his father sad then?

Is Judah worried about making his father sad NOW?

Has Judah changed?

I wonder why?

NOTE: Youth and grownups may want to read Genesis chapter 38 together and discuss it. This part of the story is rated PG-13! But it may cast some light on how Judah has changed.

Do you see any hints that Joseph has changed?

Do you think there will be more forgiveness in this story?

Response Activity

Most of us have something where we need to forgive somebody, or need to ask somebody for forgiveness. Maybe for big things - but for little things too. Little things matter with our friends and family!

(If you have a BIG thing in your life, it's OK to lovingly set that aside and dwell with one of the smaller things right now. The smaller things matter too... and sometimes the big things take more work than we can do at Vacation Bible School!)

Maybe there's something in your life that needs to be put right - where you need to make amends... or to speak up about having been hurt.

One way to respond to this story is to seek forgiveness - whether you need to ask for it, or offer it.

Pray and reflect on whether there's someplace where God is offering the possibility of forgiveness. And remember that forgiveness is powerful - it's not just being nice or letting somebody keep hurting you. It's about freedom and life.

If Rev. Miranda can help, or be a sounding board, please let her know!
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