



Grace Church Elementary

Camp Grace

LESSON 14

3rd and 4th Grade

Principle: Jealousy and envy. Giving into sin becomes a downward spiral.

Bible Character(s): Joseph

Scripture Reference: Genesis 37



PERSONAL PREPARATION: Before this weekend, please read Genesis 37. Jacob's

life was full of favoritism, jealousy and envy, creating division and struggle within Jacob's family and developing a pattern of sin that would move through three generations. Jacob's father, Isaac, preferred Jacob's brother Esau (Genesis 25, 27), which led to enmity between the brothers and caused a family to split up. Jacob had two wives, and he preferred Rachel over Leah (Genesis 29-30); and jealousy and strife arose between these two sisters. In our text for this weekend, Jacob's preference for Joseph once again causes jealousy and envy within the family. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, and deceived their father into thinking Joseph was killed by animals. What began as jealousy resulted in a downward spiral of sin.

How have you seen the effects of favoritism? How have you displayed favoritism? In what ways have jealousy and envy crept into your heart as a result of favoritism? Read James 2:1-13 and 4:1-2. We see that when we are led by our own desires and preferences, instead of seeing people through God's eyes, we create division among our church body, our friends, and our families. Spend time thinking and praying about how God wants you to love others, and how your sin prevents you from being able to love as He loves. Examine how you have allowed sin to control your heart and lead you into a downward spiral. Ask God to help you follow and obey Him.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the Lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Joseph's Coat

Supplies:

Paper

Crayons

Give each camper a piece of paper and have them draw a picture of Joseph's colorful coat on one side of the page. Talk to them about how Jacob had 12 sons, but he gave only Joseph a "special robe" as a sign of his love for Joseph.

Reward Sticker Favorite

Supplies:

Reward Sticker (1 per session)

Prize (1 per session)

Before going to Big Group, please give a reward sticker and a prize to one camper. These will be used to help illustrate a point in Big Group and in Small Group. Make a big deal out of the presentation in front of everyone else right before you go to Big Group, and let this camper lead the line to Big Group.

BIG GROUP Time - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts - fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

*Take your cabin flag to Big Group.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we will be studying about Joseph, one of Jacob's sons. We will see how jealousy towards Joseph develops in Jacob's other sons, and what happens to Joseph because of that jealousy. We will also see how giving into sin can cause a downward spiral.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

(Teachers, make sure you leave a chair beside (one of) you for the sticker/prize camper after he/she returns.)

What did you learn in Big Group? Why was the first counselor so mad at the second one? (Because he/she feels like he/she always does all the work, and the other counselor never does anything.) **What did Dr. Vanhousen help them understand?** (Jealousy was making the first counselor mad and ruining their chance at friendship.)

A few weeks ago, we studied about the relationship between Jacob and Esau. What kind of relationship did they have, and why? We saw how Jacob and Esau had a broken relationship because of jealousy. What happened as a result? Jacob deceived Esau so he could get the birthright. Then

Jacob left his homeland for a long time. How did God work in their relationship? While away, God changed Jacob's heart, and Jacob started depending on God. God brought Jacob and Esau to a point of reconciliation 20 years later. Jacob and Esau both went from living independently of God to putting their faith and trust in Him, and learning to love one another.

Today, we are going to begin studying about Joseph, who was the second youngest of Jacob's 12 sons. Do you have any brothers or sisters? Do you always get along with them? Are there times where you get angry at each other? (Allow responses.) We are going to see how Jacob's sons got along with each other.

Let's begin in Genesis 37 [NLT].

Genesis 37:3-4

3 Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe. 4 But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him.

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children. Jacob favored Joseph, just like his father Isaac favored Esau. Do you remember how Isaac's favoritism of Esau made Jacob feel? (Allow responses.) He was very jealous of Esau. How do you think Joseph's brothers felt about Jacob's favoritism of Joseph? (Allow responses.) Joseph's brothers were jealous of Joseph. Their jealousy made them hate Joseph. They could not even say anything kind to him.

Sticker/Prize Roundup



The purpose is to wrap up the reward sticker demonstration and have the campers discuss how they felt when one camper was singled out.

Supplies:

None

After the red sticker camper returns to the cabin from Big Group, have the camper sit next to you. Discuss with the other campers how it made them feel that one was treated special, for no apparent reason.

Tie It Together



How did it make you feel that (camper's name) was treated special? Did you feel left out? Were you a little angry or jealous? (Allow responses.) Do you think this is how Joseph's brothers felt? (Allow responses.)

(Think of a time when someone close to you, preferably a brother or sister, was given special treatment and share it with the class. Talk about how it made you feel.) When you see someone else getting special attention, it is very easy to feel jealous of that person. You might even start to feel like you do not like them because they are getting something you are not getting. We get angry with

and feel jealousy towards others who receive special attention because we want that attention and think we deserve it too. This anger and jealousy can even cause us to do something that does not bring glory to God. It caused Joseph's brothers to hate him and not even speak any kind words to him. God wants us to love others more than we love ourselves, and this means not becoming angry and jealous when others get something we do not get.

Let's continue with the story.

Genesis 37:5-11

5 *One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever.* 6 *"Listen to this dream," he said. 7 "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!"*

8 *His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.*

9 *Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"*

10 *This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?" 11 But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant.*

Joseph had two dreams that he told his brothers. What did his brothers think the dreams meant? (Allow responses.) The dreams seemed to say that one day Joseph would be in a powerful position, where even his entire family would bow down to him. How do you think this made his brothers feel? (Allow responses.) Not only was Joseph favored by Jacob, but Joseph was claiming that he would rule over them. This made them even angrier.

Do you think Joseph was bragging as he talked about his dreams? (Allow responses.) Do you think it's OK to brag, even if things are true? (Allow responses.)

Dreams Made Real



The purpose is to act out Joseph's dream, and then to talk about bragging and honesty.

Supplies:

Paper from earlier (1 per camper)

Wheat sheaf and stars (1 per bin)

Have campers turn to the blank side of the paper and draw a picture of something they are good at. It could be sports, reading, school, a board game, a video game, or anything they want. Then have a camper stand up and hold their picture up along with wheat sheaf and eleven stars. As he or she does this, have him/her talk about what it is that he or she is good at. Have the other campers bow down

to him/her. Allow a few campers to be the one “bragging.”

Tie It Together

 It's great when you are able to be good at something. But does that mean you should brag about it? (Allow responses.) While it may feel good to always talk about how great you are at something, it's not fun to hear someone else brag about how they are better than you at something. We need to recognize that it is God who gave us our gifts and talents. He deserves the glory for the gifts and talents we have, and He wants us to give Him the glory instead of bragging and keeping the glory for ourselves.

Jacob sent Joseph out to look for his brother's after they had been gone for awhile pasturing Jacob's flocks. When they saw Joseph coming, they began scheming to kill Joseph, and made up a story about a wild animal eating him. Reuben, the oldest son, had his own plan to save Joseph, so he talked them into just throwing him into an empty pit. The brother's agreed to it. Something else happened next though that was not in Reuben's plan.

Let's see what happens.

Genesis 37:25-28

25 Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt.

26 Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime. 27 Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!” And his brothers agreed. 28 So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt.

Joseph's brothers end up selling Joseph to a group of Ishmaelite traders for 20 pieces of silver. 20 pieces of silver is equal to 8 ounces of silver, which is equal to about \$111 today. At that time, a common slave was usually sold for around 30 pieces of silver. So Joseph's brothers sold him for a small amount of money.

Have you ever been so mad at your brother or sister, or even a close friend, that you wished you could get rid of them? (Allow responses.) Have you ever done something to this person because you were mad at them? How do you think God would want you to respond when you get mad at someone? (Allow responses.) God understands when we feel jealous and angry towards someone, but God wants us to remember that everything we have comes from Him. He has blessed us with everything we have been given; our very breath of life is a gift from Him. We can have a heart that is filled with love for God and love for others instead of loving ourselves the most.

Let's finish up the story to see what happens.

Genesis 37:29-34

29 Some time later, Reuben returned to get Joseph out of the cistern. When he discovered that Joseph was missing, he tore his clothes in grief. 30 Then he went back to his brothers and lamented, "The boy is gone! What will I do now?"

31 Then the brothers killed a young goat and dipped Joseph's robe in its blood. 32 They sent the beautiful robe to their father with this message: "Look at what we found. Doesn't this robe belong to your son?"

33 Their father recognized it immediately. "Yes," he said, "it is my son's robe. A wild animal must have eaten him. Joseph has clearly been torn to pieces!" 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes and dressed himself in burlap. He mourned deeply for his son for a long time.

Joseph's brothers sinned in many different ways in what they did to Joseph. Do you see how the sins kept going on and on in this story? Tell me some of the different ways that the brothers sinned. (Allow responses.) The brothers started with jealousy, which led to hatred and made them stop speaking to Joseph. They schemed to kill him, but instead threw him in a pit. Then they saw an opportunity to sell him as a slave, and did so to a group of Ishmaelite traders. In order to cover up what they did, they killed an animal and dipped Joseph's robe in its blood. Then they lied to Jacob by giving him the robe and leading him to think Joseph was killed by a wild animal. Their sin was a never-ending spiral! And the result was that they lost their brother, and they broke their father's heart.

Spiral of Sin



The purpose is to show that one sin can lead to a serious downward spiral of more sin.

Supplies:

Dominos (10 per bin)

Sin spiral outline (1 per bin)

Set up the dominos on the Sin Spiral Outline guide, as indicated by the markers. Explain that each domino represents sin. Discuss how sinful desires in our heart, like jealousy and anger, lead to more sin. For Joseph's brothers, jealousy and anger led to hatred, which then led to them wanting to kill Joseph, and so on. Have one camper knock over the first domino, and show them how one sin leads to more sin.

Tie It Together

Joseph's brothers were initially just jealous of him, but their jealousy grew into hatred and it led them to decide to get rid of Joseph and lie to their father that Joseph had been killed. At the beginning of this story, they probably did not intend to hurt their brother or father, but their evil desires and sinful hearts were on a downward spiral. The problem was that they let their jealousy take control of their hearts, which led them to make choices that did not bring glory to God and caused pain in others. What is a sinful desire in your heart that you have felt before? What did that desire make you want to do? (Allow responses.) When we feel a sinful desire in our heart, we can ask God for help to remove this desire so that we can love Him and love others.

Wrapping Up

Joseph's brothers allowed sin to take over their hearts. It started with jealousy and led them to do things that did not bring glory to God. God desires for us to recognize when our hearts begin to turn away from him with feelings like jealousy and anger. If we let sin control our hearts, it will always lead to separation from God, destruction, and pain to others and ourselves. When we recognize our hearts are starting to turn from God, we can choose to repent and turn back to God.
(Teachers, if you have time you can do the following activity.)

Joseph True or False Review



The purpose is to review basics of the scripture, and to make sure we are getting the facts of the Bible story correct.

Supplies:

Joseph True or False Guide (1 per bin)

Read the questions out loud; have the campers raise both hands if they think the statement is true, and keep their hands down if they think it is false.

Prayer Time

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close small group time. Ask God to help us recognize the sin in our hearts, and to turn from sin so we can love Him and love others more than we love ourselves.



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