

Get Ready!

Like Father, Like Sons

By: Jesse Winner



Text

Genesis 37:1-36

Key Quest Verse

James 3:13, 16-17:13. Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 16. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Bible Background

Read about Joseph and his brothers in our text: Genesis 37. It's probably easy to remember the story you've heard since you were little about "Joseph and his coat of many colors," but did you notice anything new? Perhaps right away you noticed Jacob's favoritism, a trait he inherited from his parents (see Gen. 25:28; Gen. 27) and grandparents (see Gen. 21) and passed on to his family. Maybe you wondered about "sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah," children born from Jacob's jealous wives (who happened to be sisters). Maybe you noticed the hate and envy Joseph's brothers had for their little brother, not unlike the relationship between Joseph's father, Jacob, and uncle, Esau (see Gen. 27:41). Possibly you observed how Joseph's brothers deceived their father (with a goat), and thought you remembered hearing a story like that before. Maybe you wondered why Joseph's dreams he had had so much confidence in, end in this chapter on kind of a sour note, as he's sold by his own brothers as a slave far away from home. Maybe some of our own dreams seem that far away from ever being fulfilled.

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Lesson Quest

What I want my students to:

- Know:** In the family of God, our perfect Father shows no partiality in bestowing His gifts.
- Feel:** God loves us as His special children and blesses us all uniquely in order to use our particular gifts to bless our “brothers and sisters” in Christ.
- Do:** Honor God our Father by working as a member in our church family and displaying our “brotherly” love.

Leader’s Devotion

In our text, we read about Joseph and his hateful brothers. It’s hard to imagine actually wanting to kill a sibling, sell him or her as a slave, make up a story to cover up the truth and telling it to your dad, and never even losing your appetite over the entire saga . . . then again – maybe not!

It can sometimes be so easy to embrace jealousy: your brother gets the larger slice of cake with more sprinkles; your cousin gets a bigger and better toy for Christmas; your best friend gets to drive a nicer car when she gets her driver’s license; your neighbors have a larger house with a swimming pool; or maybe your younger brother gets a nicer coat, and you can’t help but scream, “it’s not fair!” Sound familiar?

In the Family of God, we tend to be just as prone to “sibling rivalry” as were the brothers of Joseph. Perhaps our Heavenly Father has given a Christian “sister” a wonderful gift of singing – are you just a little jealous? What about that new member who is a talented actor and will probably get all the speaking lines in this year’s Christmas program that would have been *your* part – do you welcome him without grumbling? How do you feel about a younger Christian that has a gift for leadership? Like Joseph’s brothers, are you offended by the suggestion that *you* should honor *him*? Too often we get the “it’s not fair” attitude when God blesses others with gifts we think are more valuable than our own. In **1 Corinthians 12** God reminds us though, that *all* gifts are necessary and *all* parts of the body are of equal importance in His family.

When we choose to treat our “family” with grumbling and grudges, our Father God is grieved by the results of our actions, as was Joseph by his sons’ deeds in our lesson. God always blesses the faithfulness of His good children. That same loving God continues to humble the proud and honor His faithful children who give Him thanks and praise for *all* His wonderful gifts to each of us, and the most important gift He gave was one that none of us deserved – the life of His one and only son so that we may be a part of His coming kingdom.

Get Set!

Option A**GRUDGES**

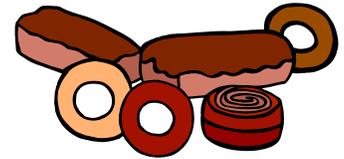
Materials: Ice cubes, hairdryer, napkins or paper towels to clean-up

Procedure: To help illustrate a lesson on holding a grudge, use ice cubes to represent grudges. Give each youth an ice cube, explaining the cold effects a grudge can cause, just like each piece of ice. Have each of them hold the ice cube. Have them race to see who can melt their “grudge” the fastest, using only their hands. Explain how hard it is to overcome a grudge alone. Great correlation include the bitter cold that the “grudge” leaves behind, the “tears” of water streaming down, and how hard it is to get rid of the grudge quickly. You can explain that like a hairdryer, Jesus can help you quickly melt those grudges, dry the “tears,” and overcome the bitter cold.

Related Scripture: Eph. 4:25-27, 31-32

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!



Option B

EMOTIONS

Materials: Coffee and coffee maker, assorted donuts separated from the plain glazed donuts

Procedure: The illustration here also can become a mini-breakfast (a lesson for teenagers involving food is not often ignored).

Part ONE: Begin by passing out plain donuts (or other breakfast snack food) to all but one of your students. Choose a specific student to receive a special glazed, sprinkled, jelly-filled, etc., donut as you begin talking about how wonderful that particular student is (how the student is always on time, always brings his Bible, always attends, etc.). Make the reasons you describe be the purpose for their special donut reward, though secretly everyone can receive one of these donuts after you use this example. Hopefully this “favoritism” will cause a stir as everyone envies this special donut. This can become a good connection to the favoritism and rivalry in the story of Joseph and his brothers.

Part TWO: The idea of this part of the illustration is to show how the things we fill our minds with eventually fill our hearts. Using a coffeemaker, put coffee in the filter (mind). Explain that sin never goes directly to our heart, but it must first pass through the filter of our minds, and remind them of the envy and jealousy of Joseph’s brothers and how their emotions led them to anger and betrayal of Joseph.

Continue describing how (in our minds) we must recognize whether a thought is pleasing to God, or if it needs to be “taken captive,” and discarded. As we continue to think about the sin, it is like the water flowing through the filter down to the coffee pot (heart). Eventually, the pot will be filled with the essence of what was in the filter.

If we continually fill our minds with images of violence, abuse, and revenge, our heart will eventually become violent. Eventually we put into action those things which fill our hearts, but if we fill our minds with the things of God, our heart will reflect the same.

Philippians 4:8-9 may be an added Scripture reference.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!

Bible Story

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Sometimes we tend to think of the Bible and its stories and characters almost as though they were from a different, holier than now world, and we miss the application and reality of the stories as compared with today's everyday life. When we hear the names "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," the mention of "the patriarchs," or "the twelve tribes of Israel," etc., we wonder, what, if anything, and how, if at all, the stories of the Patriarchs and their families from around 4,000 years ago could possibly compare with the 21st century and God's plans for us today . . . until we *really* listen to the story and its practical applications, and it *really* comes to life. The same is true of Joseph and his brothers, a family that might live down the Balm of Gilead Trail in our own community (though a family of 4 wives, 12 sons, and a few daughters living in tents might be a bit of a stretch in today's time). Jacob's family was facing many of the same problems we encounter today. In a time where the "dysfunctional family" and "sibling rivalry" are discussed almost daily on Oprah and Dr. Phil, our society is not so drastically different than the family of Jacob.

Read about Joseph and his brothers in our text: **Genesis 37**. It's probably easy to remember the story you've heard since you were little about "Joseph and his coat of many colors," but did you notice anything new? Perhaps right away you noticed Jacob's favoritism, a trait he inherited from his parents (see Gen. 25:28; Gen. 27) and grandparents (see Gen. 21) and passed on to his family (see Gen. 29:30, 31). Maybe you wondered about "the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah," children born from Jacob's jealous wives (who happened to be sisters – see Gen. 30:1-13). Maybe you noticed the hate and envy Joseph's brothers had for their little brother, not unlike the relationship between Joseph's father, Jacob, and uncle, Esau (see Gen. 27:41). Possibly you observed how Joseph's brothers deceived their father (with a goat), and thought you remembered hearing a story like that before (You did. See Gen. 27:9-29). Maybe you wondered why Joseph's dreams he had had so much confidence in, end in this chapter on kind of a sour note, as he's sold by his own brothers as a slave far away from home. Maybe some of our own dreams seem that far away from ever being fulfilled.

Whatever the case, when studying the lives of these original Israelites, some all-too-real themes can be seen. Is a dysfunctional family with quarreling siblings, jealousy, deceit, and favoritism too far from our times? Can God really use a family with a history of problems and disorder in His plans? Why not? Does it sound like the plot to a Hollywood production? Maybe . . . but who'd play the part of a Joseph with a "technicolor dreamcoat?"

Go!**Rip Boxing****RELAY**

Materials: Old newspapers and any kind of available tape (wrapping, scotch, duct, etc.), stop watch, bell or buzzer

Quest Connection

When you fill your heart with evil, it becomes evident in your works. Joseph’s brothers built up so much resentment at Joseph, especially his coat, and it was the first thing they took from him. If you focus on revenge or payback, you will never be satisfied. In our game, we show how easy it is to tear someone down, but how hard it can be to repair a grudging relationship.

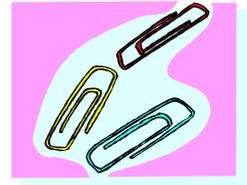
Procedure: Divide your class into two teams (if possible). Each team is given an equal amount of newspapers and tape. Each team has one member representing them. The rest of the team is to completely cover their representative from head to toe with newspaper. This is supposed to represent Joseph’s coat and how his brothers literally tore it off of him in their jealous rage. Only one eye and one finger are to be uncovered. At the bell or buzzer sound, the representatives are then to try to rip the paper off their opponents for a specified amount of time (one minute, two minutes, you be the judge). The reps are then to go back to their corner and given one minute to be recovered by their team. The team with the most paper still on them wins a point for each round (as many rounds until someone is injured or the adult class asks you to settle down). The team with the most paper still covering them in the last round gets double points. Watch out! It may get out of hand.

Other options: If not enough students are present for teams, the students may cover themselves and participate in a free-for-all, following same system as above.

For a more competitive and difficult game, you might try varying the time of each round of action and each round of repair. For example, you may gradually increase the rip time and decrease the amount of time of “recovery” as each round in the game progresses.

Close

Prayer: **Help us remember that we make each day what we put into it. If we look for good, we’ll find it.**

Go!**Joseph's Designer Coat****GAME**

Materials: Safety pins and/or paper clips, grocery sack full of colored paper or fabric

Quest Connection

God gives us all unique “coats” that He designed specifically for us.

Procedure: Divide the class into teams of three or four students each. Let each team pick a person from their group to be “Joseph.” The remaining members of the team will be designing “Joseph’s” coat – on him or her! Pass out the materials, and give each team ten minutes (or whatever is sufficient) to create a coat using these materials and building the coat on their chosen representative. After the time is up, give each team a chance to describe or name their coat, its price, its fashion season, etc., and have each of the “Josephs” model their coats.

Close

Thank God for the specific “coat” He has given us all to wear.

Go!**Joseph's Tie-Dyes of Many Colors****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Materials: Item(s) to dye (at least 60% cotton) such as t-shirts, socks, pillowcase, sheets, curtains, handkerchiefs, rubber bands or string to knot the materials being dyed, RIT brand dye (other dyes are available, but this is the most successful for the price), rubber gloves, (expendable) large pot or bucket, squirt or spray bottles, long-handle utensil (BBQ tongs, large spoon), soda ash, salt, newspaper and/or garbage bags, rags, paper towels, soap/cleansers for quick cleaning up, Resource Page

Quest Connection

God has made us all in His image, and formed us from the same ingredients, but like Joseph's coat, He has designed us each differently in a way to show His special love and favor to His beloved children.

Procedure: Before you dye your item, you should wash it to remove any sizing from the manufacturer or anything else that may have gotten on it. Decide what sort of design you want and which color or colors you want to use. Lay your shirt or other item out flat first and then fold and tie as desired. Cover your work area so the dye doesn't stain it. Prepare your dye as directed by the manufacturer. You should carefully follow all instructions. While preparing the dye and dyeing your item, you should wear rubber gloves to protect your hands from staining and the hot water. Pre-treat your item if necessary. With some dyes you will have to soak it in soda ash and with others, like RIT, you simply need to dip it in hot water. Start dyeing! It is usually best to start with the lightest color if you are using more than one color. Rinse or wait between colors as directed by the manufacturer. Make sure to follow all directions carefully when it comes to dyeing and rinsing your items. Some dyes require you to rinse immediately, and others require you to let the item set for at least 24 hours. When your dyeing is complete, make sure to clean all containers immediately with hot water and soap or cleanser if needed. Be careful washing your tie-dyed items! Most should be washed in cold water. The first few times they are washed, they might bleed, so wash them with like colors or alone. Again, the exact directions you follow will vary depending on what brand of dye you use. Read all instructions and precautions carefully.

Close

Let your shirts be a reminder of our lesson when you wear them, and remember that our personal families may not always be perfect, but to treat each other as brothers and sisters in God's own perfect family.

Go!**Laser Envy****VIDEO**

Materials: Disney’s “Toy Story” video (even most teens like computer animation)

Quest Connection

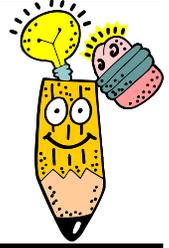
It’s easy to be jealous, especially when someone else is always getting all of your attention, but we must remember from our Key Quest Verse, the following: James 3:16, “For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you have disorder and every evil practice.”

Procedure: Set the video at about 24:00 into the video (including opening time) on your VCR. Play the video until about 40:00 (after Buzz is knocked from the window). Adjust time accordingly to your lesson, though.

About the time the video is set, the scene is a child’s (Andy’s) birthday. All of his toys are anxiously waiting and listening in as he opens his gifts to see if a new toy will be replacing Andy’s older toys. The leading toy, Woody, a cowboy doll, tries not to be worried until he finds he cannot compete with the new technology of Andy’s newest birthday present, Buzz Lightyear, a space ranger, complete with lasers and spacecraft. Soon, Woody’s spot is replaced on the bed, and Woody is overlooked by Andy and his fellow toys. Before long, Woody is jealous and looking for revenge, until suddenly his plan goes awry.

Close

When we truly desire the things of God, we must put aside our grudges, and love our neighbor as ourself. By so doing, we accept each other’s role as equally important and want to contribute to the work of God as a unified body.

Go!**Spiritual Gifts Test****TEST**

Materials: Spiritual gifts test with enough copies for everyone in Resource Page. Several types of these tests exist, and you may ask your pastor what he might have or recommend. At a Bible bookstore, they can be found relatively cheap, or you may print one (or try one on your own) from the following websites: www.kodachrome.org/spiritgift & www.equipministry.org (free download of test) www.cforc.com/sgifts.cgi

Quest Connection

Joseph's brothers apparently spent their whole lives waiting for an opportunity to get rid of Joseph. Not only did Joseph have a special coat given to him by his father Jacob, but had special dreams given to him from God, and Jacob's sons showed no signs of gratitude for what they themselves had. Sometimes at church or in the world, it's easier to focus on what someone else has that you wish you could have, than realizing what God has blessed you with is a very personal and unique gift that no one else can possess, and He wants you to use to bless others as well.

Procedure: Following our story, it may be a neat idea to discuss some of the gifts and talent God has given us that make us unique, or have students share what makes someone else in the class unique. Question the students about spiritual gifts, and see if they can name a few and what they know. Review some Scriptures from Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4 (as many or few as you desire). Afterward, administer a spiritual gifts test. (Worksheet activity "Understanding Spiritual Gifts" may also be used with discussion or following the test.)

Close

Consider all God has given us and entrusted us to care for. How can we use our gifts to bless others and honor God? Let everyone write a way they can use what gifts they have anonymously on an index card, and close with a prayer including what the students have written.

Go!**Joseph's Coat****GAME**

Materials: Two large button-up overcoats/raincoats with an equal amount of buttons

Quest Connection

We show our brotherly love by working together to accomplish the goals God has planned for us all.

Procedure: Divide the class into two teams, and form the teams into two lines. Give each team its coat for the relay. The object of the game is to be the first team to pass the coat completely through their line following this pattern:

- 1) Person ONE begins with the coat on backwards while person TWO buttons up the coat
- 2) Person ONE unbuttons the coat and passes the coat to person TWO
- 3) Person TWO puts the coat on backwards while person THREE buttons up the coat
- 4) Person TWO unbuttons the coat and passes the coat to person THREE . . . and so on

The first team to completely pass the coat through the line wins.

Close

Prayer: Help us to remember we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and God wants us to live a life that expresses the love He desires in His family like the love modeled by His son, Jesus.

Resource Page—Joseph’s Tie-Dyes of Many Colors

The following are some different techniques for folding and design:

BIG CIRCLES METHOD: Lay the t-shirt flat on the table. Grab the center, and lift the shirt. Run your hand down the t-shirt, gathering it together. Wrap the rubber bands/string one-two inches apart around the length of the t-shirt. Continue until you have the desired number of rubber bands.

TINY CIRCLES METHOD: Lay the t-shirt flat on the table. Randomly pull up on both layers of t-shirt and wrap rubber bands or pieces of string around both layers to form small bumps. Some or all of the bumps can be made into donut shapes by using your fingertip to push the tip back through the rubber band.

MARBLED METHOD: First tie (using the following method) and soak in desired dye for twenty minutes. Follow with a rinse, untie, retie, re-dye, and repeat these steps. Set the shirt on your surface, and roll into a tight ball. Have someone else wrap rubber bands tightly around the shirt to hold its shape for the dyeing, and repeat with desired colors

STRIPES METHOD: One stripe- Dip the top and bottom of shirt under one dye for about five minutes, and rinse. Then, dip center stripe in different color dye following the same method. Multiple stripes- Lay the shirt flat on your surface, and gather each section you want a stripe, wrapping rubber bands and dyeing.

SPIRAL METHOD: Lay shirt flat on your surface. Grab the center and start twisting into a tight spiral. Carefully wrap rubber bands around the outside of the shirt to hold its shape.

OTHER METHODS: Be creative!

Worksheet

Messiah ben Joseph

Ancient rabbis saw in Joseph a type of the coming of the Messiah. They distinguished the difference between the reigning sovereign king Messiah and the suffering Messiah. The future sovereign king they called “Messiah ben David,” and the suffering Messiah they called “Messiah ben Joseph.” Many noted scholars have drawn the comparisons between the life of Joseph and Jesus, the Messiah. Use the following verses to identify the parallels in each set:

1. Genesis 37:3 – Matthew 3:17; John 3:35; John 5:20

Joseph and Jesus were both _____.

2. Genesis 37:4 – John 15:23-25

Joseph and Jesus were both _____.

3. Genesis 37:18 – Mark 3:6

Joseph and Jesus were both _____.

4. Genesis 37:26-28 – Matthew 26:14-16

Joseph and Jesus were both _____.

What other similarities do you see from our story and Jesus’ life?

Understanding Spiritual Gifts

Joseph's family was full of bitter sibling rivalry, but are we really much different in God's family? Did you ever want a particular talent or gift someone else had, so much so that you wish *you* could just take it from them? Sound familiar? Maybe if we understand our OWN gift or gifts given to each of us from our spiritual Father (much better than just a "richly ornamented robe"), we can understand how important a part we are in the full functioning of the body of Christ. Let's take a look at some common questions about spiritual gifts given from our spiritual Father.

1. Why do I need to understand spiritual gifts? (1 Corinthians 12:1; Romans 12:3, 6; 1 Peter 4:10).
2. What are spiritual gifts? (1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 15:10).
3. What are the purposes of spiritual gifts? (1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:12).
4. Who receives spiritual gifts? (Ephesians 4:7).
5. How do I get them? (Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11; 1 Corinthians 12:11, 18, 28; Romans 11:29).
6. How many spiritual gifts are there? Do they change? (1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:31, 14:1).
7. Why is there confusion over the gift list? (Hebrews 2:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 30; Romans 12:6-8).
8. How should we use our gifts? (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

Worksheet

All in the Family

Do you feel like sometimes you and your parents can never agree? Do you think that you will never be like your parents when you get older, and then someone at church says, “you’re just like your mother was at that age?” Has your dad ever told you, “I hope you have a kid just like you when you’re a parent?” Do you think there is no hope for you and your family? Well, if you thought there is no hope, just look at Joseph’s dysfunctional family, and how God still blessed and used this crazy family. (They always say “nuts” don’t fall far from the tree.)

In Joseph’s family tree, there was a history of dysfunction and sibling rivalry. In the following, identify the problematic traits they showed in each set of verses.

Journal Page

1. Were Joseph's brothers justified in being jealous of their younger brother? In what ways did Jacob "add coals to the fire?" Do most parents treat all their children alike?
2. Do you think it was right for Joseph to bring a bad report about his brothers back to his father? Was Joseph just doing what was right?
3. Was God speaking in a special way to Joseph through his dreams? If you were Joseph, would you tell your family about your dreams in the same way? Would you keep it to yourself?
4. Should Reuben have been more outspoken? How would you have handled the same situation?
5. Jacob's sons sold Joseph out of envy. How does it compare in the story of Jesus' in Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10; Acts 7:9? Did either deserve what they received?
6. Although Joseph's brothers actually did not kill their brother, were they guilty of murder? How does your response compare with Jesus' words in Matthew 5:21-25?
7. What gifts do you have that God has entrusted you with? Read Matthew 25:14-30 and Romans 12:4-8. Why/How should we use our gifts?