

THE STORY CHAPTER 3 FROM THE PIT TO THE PALACE

Memory verse:

Genesis 50:20a (NKJV) "But as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Big Idea: The place of greatest disappointment, struggle, and pain in our lives can become the thing God uses to accomplish His greatest purpose for our life.

I. Personal reading and reflection time.

- A. As you read Joseph's story seek to observe the key choices that Joseph made to align himself with God's will, in spite of feeling deeply disappointed and wounded?
- B. Take special note of the journey that Joseph had to make to walk out the process of forgiveness.
- C. See if you can identify any of the following tests Joseph had to go through to fulfill his destiny and reflect on how you might have or are facing these same tests in your life.
 - 1. Pride tests- When you want to brag and think you're better
 - 2. The betrayal and injustice test
 - 3. The loneliness test
 - 4. The faithfulness test
 - 5. The purity test
 - 6. The stand up for what you believe test
 - 7. The being forgotten and put on the shelf test
 - 8. The power and prosperity test
 - 9. The forgive your betrayer test
 - 10. The salt and light in a pagan world test
- D. Think about and write down what test you're in right now and what was the biggest disappointment you've been through and how, if in any way, you can see that He used it for good.

II. Discussion

- A. **Icebreaker.** Share one thing about the family dynamics in the house you were raised in? Were you one of the favorites? What were some of the roles and temperaments you and your siblings had? What was good or hard about that?
- B. Have you had an experience of "the Lord being with you" in a very difficult and dark time? How did that help you?
- C. Can you give an example of how Satan tried to use a disappointment to give you an excuse for disobedience?
- D. It was 22 years between the dream and the destiny for Joseph. What was one of the most important things, that took all that time, to develop in Joseph heart? Can you see how this saying could be true, "The bigger the tower the deeper the foundation must be?"

Joseph had 77 more years of glorious fruit afterwards. Do you think he felt the 22 years of testing was worth it?

- E. Do you have a story where God brought something really good out of something really bad?

Charles Colson could say, "If I had not been caught and ended up in prison, I would never have become the man I am today?" Joseph could say, "If my brothers had not turned on me, if Potiphar's wife had not falsely accused me, I would've never ended up meeting Pharaoh's servants in prison. I might have never become the king's right-hand man."

Describe how your life would be different if you had never faced a specific time of challenge and struggle. Finish the statement: If I had not _____, I would never have _____.

- F. One of the most important and powerful parts of this story is Joseph's journey towards forgiveness. How does faith in God's upper story give you the power to forgive in your lower story? Do you feel that you have been successful in your forgiveness stories or that you still have a long way to go? Do you agree with the statement, that how far I'm willing to go to forgive will determine how far I can go in how much God can redeem my hurts and use my life?
- G. The bottom line of this lesson is that if we align ourselves with the choices God wants us to make during our journey through disappointment, we can be sure that disappointment won't be the end of our story and God will use what we've been through for a grand purpose. What is one situation in your life that you need to believe this and that the group could pray with you to put yourself in the center of God's will so that this can turn out for good, to allow God's great and grand purpose to be fulfilled?

Questions for Next Week

As you read chapter 4 of *The Story*

"God delivers his people" look for answers to the following questions as you read and reflect.

1. Identify things that Moses dealt with as he responded to God's calling to deliver Israel. Look for God's answer to his excuses, weaknesses, and inadequacies? Think about areas in your life where you need to think more about who God is than how you feel.
2. Notice how the process of deliverance is much more difficult than Moses anticipated. Consider what you might need to consider in choosing a strategy against the big giants in your life.
3. Reflect on ways in which how God sees you in the bigger story is so much different than how you or others have seen you in the lower story. What are ways Moses had to change his view of himself to align with God's purposes for his life.