


# LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1 What lessons did you learn from Joseph's life? How can you relate it to your life?
- 2 Imagine yourself as one of the other brothers of Joseph. How would you have felt toward Joseph? How would you handle betrayal?

## WE DO LIFE TOGETHER!

If you haven't been involved in a LIFE Group yet, send us a message us thru Fb, and we will get you connected to a small group.

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### CONTACT US

(032) 254 8934  
0916 276 1067  
0942 174 4296

[wwcfcebu.org](http://wwcfcebu.org)  
[cebuwwcf@gmail.com](mailto:cebuwwcf@gmail.com)

### ADDRESS

369-L Juana Osmena Ext.,  
Camputhaw, Cebu City 6000

### SERVICES

Sundays  
10AM

### OFFICE HOURS

Mon to Sat (except Tue)  
8am - 12pm, 1-5pm

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# SUNDAY WORD

JUNE 4, 2023

## FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY! PART 1 JOSEPH

Genesis 37:2-4 "2 This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father's flocks. He worked for his half brothers, the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing. 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." 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 think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them. (NLT)

Joseph grew up in a dysfunctional, not a typical family. His father Jacob had four wives. He had 11 brothers scattered among those four wives. He had one full brother, the youngest child of all, Benjamin. With all of that, there's bound to be trouble—and there was. Genesis 37:3 says "Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age." (NIV) This means that he was the first son by Rachel, the woman Jacob always loved. Joseph was always his favorite and all the brothers knew it.

Jacob's family looks like this: one father, four mothers, eleven brothers plus one daughter (Dinah), and one favorite son. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that this is a disaster waiting to happen. Trouble is brewing right under the surface in Jacob's complicated family.

Joseph came from a family that was in many ways “off”. It was not a clean, one-man-one-woman nuclear family. He was born into a family where jealousy, comparison, and distrust were the rules of the game. It was not a happy family. Yet God chose Joseph and used him mightily. And this speaks about many of us. Not many of us come from perfect families. None of us do because there is no such thing.

## LIFE LESSONS FROM JOSEPH

Joseph, despite being chosen by God, faced a lot of hardships. No child of God is exempted from hardships. You and I may have been entrusted by God to do His ministries or we may have been chosen to do His missions. However, God’s calling does not give us a ticket to be exempted from difficulties or problems. Joseph’s story teaches us important lessons and this is what I have observed.

### 1. Joseph knew the Vision from God but he didn’t know how it was going to happen.

Remember when he shared the dreams he received from God with his siblings and father? It made his brothers more angry and jealous than before. Joseph received a peek at what God had prepared for him. Yet, he didn’t know all the hardships that he had to go through before reaching God’s vision and plan. Sometimes, God tells us about His plans but He doesn’t inform us about the process that we need to go through.

Joseph had no clue about the process that He has to go through. Did he know that his brothers were going to throw him in the pit? Nothing! Did he know that he would be sold by his brothers as a slave? Nothing! Did he know that Potiphar’s wife would falsely accuse him of rape? Nope! Did he know that he would be imprisoned? Nothing! Did Joseph know that God would use those hardships to bring him to the feet of Pharaoh so that he can interpret his dreams and become the Prime Minister of Egypt? Nothing! He didn’t see them at all.

How much do you know for sure about what will happen to you in the coming week? You have your plans, of course, but those could be changed. You have classes to attend, people to see, appointments to keep, papers to write, plans, and decisions to make. All of those things depend on situations that are far beyond your control.

This is the reality, we don’t know our future. Even if you have received a vision or dream or promise from God, you don’t know how God is going to fulfill it. Life can change with one phone call. Life is short and uncertain. No one knows what tomorrow may bring.

Joseph had no clear idea of the future, no big picture to guide him, and no “happy ending” in view. In short, we should read Joseph’s life the way we must live our own lives—one day at a time. This leads me to this point. In all of our circumstances,

### 2. God is the Hero of the story.

Through all the ups and downs of Joseph’s life, there was an “invisible hand” working through every single situation to produce the desired result. Joseph himself could not see it until he arrived at the end. Here’s the lesson I’ve learned: Through all our ups and downs, God’s hands are working through every situation in our lives so that He can produce the best results in our lives.

If we read Joseph’s story and fail to recognize God’s protection and care over all things, then we miss the point. Who protected Joseph from his siblings who wanted to kill him? Who made Potiphar see the blessings that he is receiving through Joseph? Who protected Joseph from Potiphar’s wife’s seduction? Who protected Joseph when he was in prison? Who touched the heart of the jail guard so Joseph would receive favor from him?

Joseph’s story points us to God. His story proves that even when situations seem unfavorable, there is a hidden positive part beneath it all. This is what Joseph said to his brothers: Genesis 50:20 - “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good...” (NLT)

## WE NEED A BIG GOD

When you’ve been betrayed by your brothers, a small God won’t do. When you’ve been falsely accused of rape, a “small God” won’t be enough to support you. When you’ve been forgotten in prison, a “small God” will not sustain you. A “small God” can’t help you. You need a big God whose ways are far beyond understanding. You need a God whose purposes span generations. You need a big God who cannot be stopped by the evil deeds of evil men. That big God is the God of Joseph, and our God too. He’s the God of the Bible.

What can we say about Joseph who has gone through the hardest trials and sufferings? Joseph stood before us as a man whose life was filled with troubles. But through it all, he came out victorious because God’s hand was upon him.

Here is a man who conquers all crises with the highest confidence in God. Though he came from a dysfunctional family, God turned him into a hero. He became the key link, the missing link in the chain of God’s plan that would 2000 years later bring the Messiah to the earth. As Joseph saved his own family, Jesus Christ would come as the Savior of the world.

## CONCLUSION

Life isn’t easy for any of us, and for most of us, it can be particularly difficult. To say it another way, anyone looking for an easy life has picked the wrong planet to be born on. Life is hard. We learn how this life works for our good. Since God himself stands behind the universe He created, we should not be surprised to find His fingerprints everywhere, even in the smallest details of life.

Life is hard. But, Christ is the power to make life worthwhile. Because Christ Himself lives in us, He is the power that gives meaning and purpose to life.

These are the things that left a mark on Joseph’s life:

God can put you exactly where He wants you to be. You thought you were in the wrong place? God puts you where He wants you to bloom.

God can arrange all the details in your life, years in advance. So, don’t be surprised. God is not surprised at what you’re going through. Even before you were born, He orchestrated things exactly for His purpose.

God can open doors that seem shut. What you thought was a dead-end was the right moment of God’s rescue for your life, which leads me to the next point.

God can remove any obstacle in your way. Joseph’s worst enemies came from the people who should have been closest to him—his flesh and blood.

God can take your choices and fit them into His plan so that you end up at the right place at just the right time.

God can even take your mistakes and bring good out of them. The whole story shows how God accomplishes His purposes for us even when we are clueless about the big picture.

Lastly, God can take tragedy and use it for your good and His glory. Nothing can cancel God’s choice and plan for your life.

Joseph proves you can come from a crazy, mixed-up family and do amazing things for the Lord. But it won’t be easy and definitely not predictable. I encourage you to hang on. It has been a bumpy ride for Joseph and it would be for you. But, sit back and relax. Allow God to drive your life and see how He’s going to fulfill His great plans for you and your family.