

Ice Breaker Question:

Share with your group a story of sibling rivalry or family conflict that you have experienced.

Read and discuss Genesis 37:1-11

1. If you are familiar with the story of Joseph, what aspects of his story stand out to you? Why do you think you remember those parts?
2. How would you describe Joseph's relationship with his father Jacob?
3. Do you think Joseph is intentionally trying to make his brothers jealous? Could Joseph have prevented the jealousy of his brothers? Why or why not?
4. Would you say you are a dreamer or a realist? In your family (this can be the family you grew up in or have now) did you have some who were dreamers and some who were realists? Did this cause friction?
5. Like all families there are things that are passed down from generation to generation. What good aspects of your family have been passed down through the generations and what things about your family would it be healthy to end if possible?
6. While God is not mentioned in Genesis 37:1-11, many see that God is working through the dreams of Joseph. In what ways may God be giving us a vision to live in a different way?
7. In your life, do you dream about how God can use you? Do you follow those dreams or do you allow the realities of the world to keep you from following your dreams?

As your group closes, please keep the following prayer requests in mind:

> Prayers of healing for Pat Brown, Laura Nelson, John Lindenschmidt, Hadley Lehr, and Carolyn Barnes, Nancy Baker's mother.

Reminders for your group:

> Registration Open | All Church Retreat | Friday, August 26-Sunday, August 28 | Brown County
> Summer's Here! | Celebrate with a nacho bar and bounce houses at ZPC | Thursday, June 2 | 5-7 pm

Leader's Notes:

[Question 1] It's interesting to note what parts of the Joseph story stand out and why. Are the things your group remembers primarily memories from when they were children? If so (as is often the case), pay attention over the next couple of weeks to things we can learn as adults that allow the Joseph story to speak to us in deeper ways. (In other words, Joseph's beautiful coat is great but it may not be the most helpful part of this story in terms of our discipleship!)

[Question 2] It says in Genesis 37:3 "Now Israel (or Jacob) loved Joseph more than any other of his children because he was the son of his old age." Discuss what kind of dynamic this sets up for their relationship and for the others in their family.

[Question 3] Discuss Joseph's motivation for telling his brothers his dreams. Do you think he is being arrogant or is he oblivious to the feelings of his brothers? Or is he just being the typical little brother?

[Question 4] One of the powerful things about the Joseph story is how relatable it is to our lives. While there may be parts of us that are both dreamers and realistic we oftentimes fall in one category or the other. It's interesting to go around and see whether your group is made up of primarily one category or another. How does this shape your own group dynamic? How has it shaped the families of those in your group?

[Question 5] Another powerful part of the Joseph story is how most of us can see our own families in the family of Joseph. Exodus 20:4 talks about sins being passed down from generation to generation and, while we certainly have free will, we do oftentimes discover that this is the case in many families. There is power in naming the good and the bad traits of our families and asking how we continue to pass on the good attributes and what we might do to squelch those aspects of our family that are destructive.

[Question 6] Oftentimes God works by unsettling us and revealing that things do not have to be just as they always have been. In what ways might God be asking us to live in a different way than how we have been or in a way that is different from the society around us?

[Question 7] If we allow him to, God can use our dreams and desires to help us serve him better and to do his will. What are some things that keep us from, first, identifying what our dreams are and, secondly, from pursuing those dreams on God's behalf? (i.e., past fears or failures, busyness, too many choices, etc.)