

CAMPFIRE STORIES

Elementary
Week 1

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: Genesis 37

The story of Joseph is a story of faith: faith that God would take care of him; faith that God had purpose in his pain. Our faith is tested in the hard and painful times of our lives, and our tendency might be to feel abandoned. What we *know* to be true about God can *feel* less true when we are walking through darkness, and this is why we need stories like Joseph's. Joseph's faith wasn't perfect, but his life gives us an example of biblical faith – one that is not grounded in imaginary thinking but is instead a settled confidence in God's promises.

When Joseph was pushed into a pit by his brothers and then sold into slavery, how could he have known that he would one day be second in command behind Pharaoh? In the pit and as a slave, there were probably many moments where Joseph felt like his life was over. He had no idea what he would have to endure before that dream came true. But even as a prideful and immature boy, he was practicing the discipline of remembering and having confidence in the promises of God.

Throughout Joseph's story the Scripture repeats the phrase, "but the Lord was with Joseph." And the Lord was. The Bible is clear that God is faithful, even when life is hard. And this is why Joseph had faith. God had a plan and he took care of Joseph. We don't know the end to our own stories or seasons of pain, and many times we don't have the gift of perspective until much later. But the story of Joseph shows us that God's faithfulness is the foundation of our faith, and faith is what sustains us when feelings and circumstances fail.

Sometimes the best way to gain perspective on our current situation is to look back at a season when we saw God's faithfulness. When was the last time you were "stuck in a pit"; saw no way out? How did you see God's care for you during that season? Looking back like this can strengthen our faith in God when we are stuck in current moments of despair and darkness. It reminds us that God is with us and he cares for us. He may have a way out of the pit for us, but even if he doesn't, he will never leave us while we're there.

These are the steadfast promises that anchor our faith.

Are you stuck in a pit right now?

Think about some ways God has been faithful in the past? Does thinking about God's faithfulness give you hope for the future?