

# CAMPFIRE STORIES

Elementary  
Week 2

## **PARENT BIBLE STUDY**

### **Read: Genesis 39**

It can be easy to believe the lie that if we follow God and do what he says is best, then our lives will be stress-free. But Joseph's story teaches us something uncomfortably different. Sometimes, even when we do exactly what God has told us to do, we still get hurt and fall into trouble.

Potiphar's wife became interested in a sexual relationship with Joseph. He refused and refused. Finally, everything came to a head one day when Potiphar's wife became so forceful that she pulled off Joseph's shirt as he was trying to run away from her. Then she lied to her husband and got Joseph thrown in jail. Joseph is an example of someone who tried to respond to circumstances with complete trust and obedience to God, but bad things still happened to him. Joseph knew that if he had a sexual relationship with Potiphar's wife he would be sinning against Potiphar and against God. But even though Joseph ran away from temptation, he was still punished. But this part of Joseph's story is similar to the other trials he faced. God ended up taking what others meant to hurt Joseph and using it to bless him.

Joseph's life brings up the question of why we do what God tells us to do? Are we doing good as some kind of transaction with God to get what we want in the end? Or is there more to faith in God?

In any other relationship, we try to do things to benefit the other person because we love them. So why should we think of our relationship with God any differently? We listen to God, not so that we can have bargaining rights, but so that we can work on building a relationship with him. If we are constantly doing things he says not to do, or not doing what he says to do, he will forgive us but in the end our relationship with him suffers.

God took all that happened to Joseph and eventually blessed him in big ways. And Joseph had only his strange dreams from when he was a teenager to encourage him to believe that God's blessings would come. He had to be willing to follow God even when things got really hard. Even when wrongfully imprisoned, Joseph had to have faith that God wanted what was best for him. Joseph's story is an example to us to have faith, whatever our circumstances.

**How can you continue to make your relationship with God stronger?**

**What areas in your life do you need God's help with in order to run away from temptation?**