Joseph in Prison

Bible Story
Genesis 39—40

Teacher Challenge

Joseph—abused, enslaved, imprisoned on a false charge—could have justly cried, “I don’t deserve this!” But Joseph’s question was not, “Why me?” but “What now, Lord?”

Joseph saw past his personal misery enough to wait for God to come through—and, of course, God ultimately honored him with power to save both Egypt and the infant nation of Israel. Through Joseph’s focus on doing right, on being diligent, history was made—millions were affected!

When are you tempted to tire of doing what is right?

Ask God to encourage you to persevere with anticipation of what God might be up to.

Living in consistent obedience is not the easy way to go. But in every generation, God seeks people who won’t get tired of doing what is right. Future generations will be blessed as God works through obedient people today! There is no end to the impact made by one consistent person courageous enough to obey God in spite of circumstances!

God’s Word

“Don’t get tired of doing what is right.”
(See 2 Thessalonians 3:13.)

God’s Word and Me

God helps me do what is right.

Teacher’s Planning

1. Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them. For tips on schedule planning, see page 9.

2. Plan who will lead each center, making sure to have one adult for approximately every six children. For staffing tips and ideas, see page 12.
Play to Learn

Active Game Center:
Balancing Act

Collect
Bible, rope, beanbag.

Prepare
Place rope in a straight line on the floor in an open area of your classroom.

Do
1. Children take turns walking along the rope. For the second round, give children a beanbag. Children walk along the rope balancing the beanbag on their outstretched hands.
2. Repeat, instructing children to balance beanbag in different ways (on head, shoulder, elbow, etc.) as they walk along the rope.

Talk About
→ The Bible says, “Don’t get tired of doing what is right.” Sometimes we don’t feel like doing what is right. God will help us do what is right when we ask Him. Let’s play a game where we keep trying!
→ Daniel, you did a good job of walking to the end of the rope, even though the beanbag kept falling off your head. You know how to keep trying to do good!
→ Olivia, what did you do this morning to obey your parents? When you obey, you are doing what is right!
→ Pray briefly, Dear God, please help us to do what is right.

God’s Word
“Don’t get tired of doing what is right.”
(See 2 Thessalonians 3:13.)

For Younger Children
Instead of walking on a rope, younger children carry beanbag in different ways (hold on head, put in one hand and then the other, hold up high, hold down low, etc.).

For Older Children
If children master walking along the rope and balancing the beanbag, vary the manner in which children move along the rope (hopping on one foot, backwards, heel-to-toe, etc.).
Play to Learn

Art Center:

Puppet Feelings

Collect
Bible, paper plates, scissors, pieces of yarn, glue sticks, markers, crafts sticks, tape.

Prepare
For every two children, cut a paper plate in half and then cut eye holes in each half.

Do
1. Children glue yarn to paper-plate halves to make face puppets with hair. Children draw eyebrows and noses with markers. Help children tape craft sticks to puppets to make handles.
2. Children hold face puppets so that they can see through the eye holes, and frown or smile to show how Joseph felt as you talk about the Bible story.

Talk About
- In our Bible story today, Joseph worked for a man in Egypt. God helped Joseph do what was right.
- Later, Joseph was put in jail, even though he had not done anything wrong. Use your face puppet to show me what Joseph’s face might have looked like when he was put in jail.
- God was with Joseph and helped him do what was right wherever he was. That must have made Joseph glad! Show me a glad face with your puppet face. What is a right thing that you can do?
- The Bible says, “Don’t get tired of doing what is right.” God will help us do what is right, even when it is hard.

For Younger Children
Precut yarn into 5-inch (12.5-cm) lengths.

For Older Children
Children hold puppet up to their faces while they say the Bible verse.
Play to Learn

Construction Center:
Cup Pyramids

Collect
Bible, large paper or plastic cups.

Do
1. Children build pyramids with cups. Show children how to start with three cups as the base, add two cups on the next layer, and then one on the top.
2. Show children how to increase the size of their pyramids by starting with five cups, then seven, and so on. Encourage children to build taller and taller pyramids.

Talk About
- In today's Bible story, Joseph worked for an important man in Egypt. Joseph always did what was right. But later, Joseph was put in jail, even though he had not done wrong.
- While he was in jail, Joseph continued doing what was right, even though it must have been hard. Let’s see how tall we can make our pyramids. We can keep trying, even when they fall down!
- Jordan, I see you helped Jon pick up his fallen cups. You know how to help and do what is right! What are some other good things you can do when you play with your friends?
- Abigail, when are some times it might be hard to do what is right? (When someone says mean things. When someone is unkind.) God will help us do what is right, even when it is hard. Pray briefly, Dear God, please help us do what is right.

For Younger Children
Children stack blocks to make towers. Remind children to make towers no higher than chin-level.

For Older Children
Children work together to build a group pyramid. Start with seven cups as the base.
Play to Learn

Dramatic Play Center: Car Wash

Collect
Bible, cloths or sponges, blocks, toy cars.

Prepare
Moisten cloths or sponges.

Do
Children use blocks to outline a car wash and a road leading to the car wash. Children place cars in a line leading to the car wash. Children use damp cloths or sponges to wash toy cars.

Talk About
- The Bible says, “Don’t get tired of doing what is right.” When we help others, we are doing what is right. Let’s set up a pretend car wash and help people wash their cars.
- Isabella, what is a job you do at home? You help your family when you set the table for dinner. Helping others is a way to do what is right.
- Ethan, what are some ways you can be kind to others at your home? (Hold the door open for others. Give someone else first turn playing a video game. Help set the table for a meal.) Being kind to others is a way to do what is right.
- Pray briefly, Dear God, we want to do what is right. Please help us.

God’s Word
“Don’t get tired of doing what is right.” (See 2 Thessalonians 3:13.)

God’s Word and Me
God helps me do what is right.

For Younger Children
Children use damp cloths or sponges to wash classroom furniture.

For Older Children
Children choose which tasks they will do: move cars along the line, wash cars, dry cars, drive cars away. Children take turns doing each of the tasks.
Listen to Learn

Genesis 39—40

Collect
Bible, Bible Story 15 pictures from God’s Story for Me Poster Pack #2, Preschool Music #2 DVD or CD and player, index cards, marker.

Prepare
On separate index cards, draw hands, feet, mouth, and ears.

Greet Each Other
Let’s do what is right and help each other say our names! Sit with children in a circle. Pat your legs in a slow rhythm. Children imitate your actions. Begin speaking rhythmically, first saying your name and leading children to echo it. Then say the name of the child next to you. Continue around circle until each child has had a turn.

Tell the Story
Open your Bible to Genesis 39. Tell the story using the pictured motions (keywords in bold) or show Bible Story 15 pictures.

Have you ever gone on a vacation far from your home? Who went with you? Listen to hear about Joseph, who had to go far away from his home—all by himself!

Joseph was in Egypt. His brothers had been mean to him and sold him to traders. The traders sold Joseph as a slave. (A slave is a person who is owned by someone else.) Joseph was far away from his family. But God still cared about him.

Joseph was sold to Potiphar (PAHT-ih-fuhr). Joseph worked hard for Potiphar. He did his best work. And God helped Joseph. Soon, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his house. Joseph was in charge of all Potiphar’s helpers and money! But then, Potiphar’s wife lied about Joseph. Potiphar put Joseph into JAIL, even though Joseph had not done anything wrong. Joseph decided to keep on doing what was right, even when he was in jail. Joseph knew God loved him.

Joseph worked in the jail. Joseph did a VERY good job. Because Joseph did such good work, the jailer put Joseph in charge of everyone in the jail!

One day Joseph saw a very sad man. The man had been an important helper to the king. He had tasted everything Pharaoh drank to make sure that it was safe. But the king got angry at him and put the man in jail. The man had a dream that he didn’t understand. The man told his dream to Joseph.

“God has helped me know what your dream means,” said Joseph. “In three days you will get out of jail. You will work for the king again. When you go back, please ask the king to let me out of here. I haven’t done anything wrong.” The man said he would help Joseph.

Three days later the man went back to his old job. But the man forgot all about Joseph! Joseph stayed in jail for a long, long time. But Joseph didn’t give up. He knew God was still with him.

God’s Word
“Don’t get tired of doing what is right.” (See 2 Thessalonians 3:13.)

God’s Word and Me
God helps me do what is right.
Talk About the Story
Joseph helped a man who had worked for the king. What did Joseph ask the man to do to help him? (Tell the king about him.) Even though bad things happened to him, Joseph kept doing what was right. When are some times it might be hard to do right? (When someone is being mean. When we feel tired or angry.) What can we do to get help? (Talk to God. Ask for God’s help. Ask a teacher or parent to help us.)

Sing to God
Let’s sing a song that tells us something important about God. Lead children in singing “God with You” (on DVD or track 12 on CD). What do you like to do in the daytime? Nighttime? God is with us all the time and God helps us do what is right.

Hear and Say God’s Word
Holding your Bible open to 2 Thessalonians 3:13, say verse aloud. Even when it’s hard, we can do what is right. God will help us. Lead children in repeating the verse by echoing phrases after you: “Don’t get tired/of doing what is right.” Repeat several times.

Pray to God
Let’s ask God to help us do what is right. Invite volunteers to say this brief prayer: Dear God, please help me to do what is right every day.

Praise to God
Children sit in a circle. Place the four index cards you prepared facedown in the center of the circle. Invite a volunteer to select a card. Child turns card over and names the body part shown. Child tells how he or she can do right using that body part. (“I can use my ears to listen to my mom when she calls me.” “I can use my hands to pick up my toys.” “I can use my feet to get a tool for my dad.” “I can use my mouth to read a story to my sister.”) Child places card facedown and returns to his or her seat. Repeat with several children.
Talk to Learn

Bible Story Activity Pages Center

Collect
A copy of Activity 15 from The Big Book of Bible Story Activity Pages #2 for yourself and each child, scissors, crayons or markers; optional—short pieces of yarn, glue.

Do
Lead children to complete pages following the instructions. (Optional: Children glue yarn to people's hair.) Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages and retell the story.

Preschool Puzzle Center

Collect
Copies of Bible Story Puzzle 41, Bible Verse Puzzle 41 and/or Challenge Puzzle 41 from The Big Book of Preschool Puzzles #2 for each child; pencils, crayons or markers.

Do
Children complete the puzzles and color pages. Use the conversation suggestions on the pages.

Read-Aloud Story Center

Collect
A copy of Story Picture 41 from The Big Book of Read-Aloud Stories #2 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

Do
Read the story and distribute pictures. Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages.