



**Bother_{to}
Brother**



**GROUP GUIDE
3rd Quarter, 2023**



Bother_{to} Brother

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ABOUT

Whether we are at work, at home, or out on the go, we regularly find ourselves surrounded by people. The interactions that we have with those people along the way shape our relational influence for the future. Relational influence is the gas in the vehicle of growth and change. It is the catalyst for thriving families, friendships, and work environments.

Few model the impact of relational influence better than Joseph, son of Jacob. In this four week series, we will look at how he went from being a bother to brother in the lives of those he came into contact with. Using these principles, we will discover our own ability to cultivate influence with the people around us.

Ground Rules

Here are some guidelines for your gatherings.

Confidentiality

If the group is going to move towards authenticity, then what's shared in the group should stay in the group (note: for situations that you are not qualified to speak into, use a referral to Cornerstone Counseling).

Don't Rescue and Don't Fix

Let people openly share without trying to solve their problems. Only give advice if they request it.

No Crosstalk

People feel valued when we listen. The opposite is true as well: people will feel devalued if they are constantly interrupted. If someone has the floor, no other conversations should be happening.

Give Everyone a Chance to Share

Everyone has something to contribute and everyone should feel heard. Don't be too quick to provide all of the answers. Give others space to share.

Use Humor Responsibly

Our conversation should build up rather than tear down. Humor can be a great thing provided it is not used as the expense of others.

Use 'I' Statements

Groups are an opportunity for self-reflection. We should be quick to reflect on how what we are studying should shape us personally, and slow to tell others how it should shape them.

Fight for the Relationship

Real relationships only thrive when we commit to 'fight' for the relationship. We will not hide from conflict or disagreement, but will instead discuss them in an open and healthy way.

Leader Guidelines

Thank you for taking the time to invest in others by leading a group. As a leader, your task is to create an environment where real relationships can thrive. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do that:

Multiply.

The mission of the church is to multiply disciples. Groups are one of the environments where this occurs. You are involved in the discipleship of each person in your group. We ask that each of our group leaders has someone who they are equipping to be a disciple-maker.

Create a safe environment.

When we say 'safe', we mean an environment where participants can freely share without feeling belittled or that what they share will get spread beyond the group. When we say 'safe', we also mean a group where participants can encounter Jesus and His plan for their life.

Recognize that your group is unique.

This booklet is designed to be a general guide, but every group is unique. So when you're planning, take into account what does and doesn't work for your group and shape the session to their personalities and needs.

Review the ground rules.

Periodically, remind your group about the ground rules for the group.

Ask lots of questions.

Engaging leaders draw participants into the discussion. Ask many questions and lead your group into self-discovery. Follow the 70/30 rule: your goal should be to talk for less than 30% of the time. If you're going over that, then people in your group are going to feel limited in their ability to engage!

Get feedback.

Improve your group by asking others for feedback.

Seek wise council.

There are some questions you won't be able to answer and some situations you aren't trained to handle. That's OK! Know who your wise council is (whether a coach, minister, or another disciple-maker) and turn to them in your time of need.

For more on this topic, check out *Servant-Leadership Training* and the *CCW Group Leader Training 2.0* resource on RightNow Media.

Before the Session

Prepare for the Session: As a group leader, it's essential to be prepared. Before the group session:

1. **Pray.** God is the one doing the transformation.
2. **Take time to read over the Bible passage.** Write down questions and observations.
3. **Preview the session guide.** Highlight important questions to ask and add your own.
4. **Tap into study resources.** Check outside sources to expand your understanding of the topic. Some recommended resources include: The BibleProject, RightNow Media, and the CCW Resource Center.

During the Session

Share: Take time to review the content from last week. Use this time to check on:

- **Prayer Requests:** Follow up on any prayer requests that were made the previous session.
- **Application and Challenges:** Take time to provide accountability for any goals that the group set the previous week ('This week, I would like to...').

Transition: Introduce the topic (we give you an example each session).

Read It: Read through the Scripture passage. If it's a larger section of scripture, break it into smaller sections and ask questions throughout.

Talk About It: Make sure the passage is understood by:

1. *Retelling* the story in your own words.
2. *Asking review questions.*
3. *Seeking additional questions.* Check to see if your group has additional questions about the passage.

Apply It: The apply it section may have both (a) application questions and (b) challenges. Challenges are real-life ways to put Biblical Truth into effect this week.

Pray Together: Find creative ways to engage your group in prayer.

After the Session

Follow Up: Be present with group members throughout the week by: (1) Reminding them of their application/challenge commitments, (2) Checking in on needs and prayer requests and (3) Finding opportunities to do life together.

Input Group Attendance: Fill out your Group attendance in the ChurchTeams email that you receive.

JOSEPH AT HOME

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- How would you describe your family of origin?
- As a teenager, what behaviors or attitudes did you have that caused strife at home?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

This month, we're going to be digging into the life of Joseph to discover how we can grow in our relational influence in a variety of circumstances. As we'll see in this first story, Joseph's home life wasn't characterized by positive influence - he drove his siblings crazy! Let's see what we can learn from his mistakes.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Genesis 37:1 - 36**

Talk About It

Review:

- (1 - 4) How did Jacob contribute to the strife between Joseph and his brothers?
- (5 - 8) What was Joseph's first dream? How did it add to the strife in his relationships? How might Joseph have better communicated this dream?
- (9 - 11) What was Joseph's second dream? What was his father's reaction to this dream?
- (12 - 17) What task did Jacob (Israel) send

Joseph to do?

- (18 - 20) What did Joseph's brothers plot? How did they get to this place where they were willing to take this action?
- (21 - 24) Under Reuben's guidance, what action did the brothers take? For what reason did Reuben give this advice?
- (25 - 28) What suggestion did Judah make to the brothers?
- (29 - 35) What lie did the brothers tell their father (Jacob)? How did Jacob react?

Reflect:

- How might Joseph have cultivated a better relationship with his brothers?
- What have you seen cause division inside of families?
- Over time, small things can grow into deep resentment. What small things have become big issues in your home?
- Influence is the ability to speak into and shape people through relationship. How does someone grow relational influence in their home?
- **Read Colossians 3:18 - 21.** What advice does Colossians have for becoming a person of influence at home?

Apply:

- What actions and attitudes do you currently have that are limiting your influence at home?
- What is one thing that you will do inside of your home to become a person of relational influence?

Pray Together

...IN THE WORKPLACE

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- Describe the best work environment that you have ever experienced? How about the worst?
- What happened to Joseph in our last session?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Each of us will find ourselves in spaces where we have tasks to accomplish - our workplace. Joseph models how to grow in influence in the workplace; even in the midst of challenging circumstances.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Genesis 39:1 - 20**

Talk About It

Review:

- (1) After being sold into slavery, where did Joseph find himself?
- (2 - 6) What characteristics made Joseph successful in this workplace? What was the result?
- (6 - 10) What workplace challenge did Joseph face? For what reason did he refuse the woman's advances?
- (11 - 12) What did Joseph do when the woman tried to force herself upon him?
- (13 - 16) What lies did the woman tell to

her husband? What do you think her motivation might have been?

- (19 - 20) How did the master react to this news?

Reflect:

- How do you see people compromising their influence in the workplace?
- Joseph's master could see 'that the Lord was with him.' What do you believe that statement to mean? Would that statement apply to you?
- What made Joseph's integrity (or character) so strong?
- If the Lord was with Joseph, why did he not protect him from consequences that were no fault of his own?
- **Read Ephesians 6:5 - 9.** Although we don't find ourselves in the place of bond-servants, what does this passage tell us about growing in influence in our workplace?

Apply:

- What is your attitude towards your workplace right now? What needs to change?
- How might you show that 'the Lord is with you' in the workplace?
- What do you need to 'flee' from in your workplace?
- What step will you take to become a person of character and integrity?

Pray Together

...IN THE DARKNESS

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is the longest you can remember waiting for something?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Joseph faced an incredible injustice in his workplace that led an incredibly dark time of his life. But even in these challenging circumstances, Joseph developed an attitude that helped him to persevere and be a source of hope.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Genesis 39:20 - 41:13**

Talk About It

Review:

- What event led to Joseph's imprisonment?
- (39:20 - 23) How did God look after Joseph when he was imprisoned? How did this shape his influence with the guards?
- (40:1 - 4) Who else was placed in prison with Joseph?
- (5 - 8) What problem was Joseph able to help the other prisoners with?
- (9 - 11) What was the dream of the cupbearer?
- (12 - 15) What was Joseph's interpretation of the dream? What did Joseph request of the Cupbearer?

- (16 - 19) What was the Chief Baker's dream? What was Joseph's interpretation of this dream?
- (20 - 23) After the dreams were fulfilled, what did the Cupbearer fail to do?
- (41:1 - 8) What was the pair of dreams that Pharaoh experienced?
- (9 - 13) What was the Cupbearer's reaction when he heard of this dream?

Reflect:

- What thoughts or feelings do you think Joseph had to wrestle through as he waited in prison?
- What motivated Joseph's perseverance through this time?
- How was Joseph able to grow influence in the midst of this dark period of his life?
- How do you see God at work 'behind the scenes' in Joseph's circumstances?
- **Read James 1:2 - 4.** What advice does James give to Christ-followers who are navigating challenging times?

Apply:

- How do you react in the midst of challenging circumstances?
- What would it take for you to become a person of perseverance and hope?
- How can the dark moments of your life become an opportunity for growing in relational influence?

Pray Together

Session Four

JOSEPH IN LEADERSHIP

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What do you find attractive about the idea of leadership? What do you find scary or disconcerting about leadership?
- What happened to Joseph in our previous session?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Joseph had a bumpy ride getting there, but eventually he found himself in a position of powerful leadership. Even there, he had to discover that leadership is not the same thing as relational influence. Let's check out what we can learn about influencing others from a position of authority.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Genesis 41:25 - 57**

Talk About It

Review:

- (25 - 32) What explanation did Joseph give to Pharaoh regarding the dreams that he had?
- (33 - 36) What advice did Joseph suggest to Pharaoh in order to deal with the eventual famine?
- (37 - 45) How did Pharaoh react to Joseph's proposal? What position did Joseph receive? How did Pharaoh show his approval of Joseph?

- (46 - 49) What did Joseph do during his first four years in this new position?
- (50 - 52) What were the meanings of the names of Joseph's two sons? How do their names reflect Joseph's understanding of God's part in all of these events?
- (53 - 57) How was Joseph able to save the people of Egypt and the surrounding lands?
- Eventually, Joseph's brothers were forced to come to Egypt for food. **Read Genesis 45:1 - 11.** With what attitude did Joseph react to his brothers? How did Joseph view the circumstances of the previous twenty years?

Reflect:

- What challenges did Joseph face as a leader?
- How have you seen authority and position used in a way that limited influence?
- How can leadership be used as an opportunity to increase relational influence?
- Why might it be important to recognize God's hand in leading you to the place you are today?

Apply:

- What leadership positions do you find yourself in? How are you misusing the leadership that you have been given?
- What's a step that you can take to use this position to grow the relationships around you?

Pray Together

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **RIGHTNOW MEDIA**

Get a free RightNow Media account to get access to thousands of study resources. Some potential resources include:

- **Joseph (Steve Poe):** Joseph is a story of epic proportion. It's a story of a boy becoming a man. Of dreams coming true in the most unexpected ways. For this series, we'll walk with Joseph through the mess of a dysfunctional family, through the pain of adversity and the challenge of temptation. We'll root for Joseph through discouragement and delay. We'll marvel at God plucking Joseph out of the pit and into prosperity. We'll be humbled by Joseph's heart to forgive. And in the end, we'll stand as witnesses of what God can do through a life faithful to the end. We have so much to learn from this rotten kid in a fancy coat turned respected leader of Egypt. And much more to learn about a God who orchestrates the lives of broken people to write a beautiful masterpiece.
- **Joseph: When Life's a Rollercoaster (Andrew Ollerton):** In this compelling six-part series, Andrew Ollerton peels back the layers of Joseph's astonishing life as told in Genesis, encouraging us to live the dream even when life's a nightmare. Learn from Joseph how to triumph over temptation and how to flourish when you feel stuck. Be inspired by the power of forgiving the unforgivable, stewarding influence for the greater good, finishing strong, and leaving a legacy that lasts.
- **Building Successful Relationships (Micheal & Laura Fletcher):** We all hunger for long lasting, life giving relationships. For many they are a struggle to establish or even maintain. We all desire a deep relationship with our spouse, parents, children, coworkers, friends, and others around us. In reality, the quality of life we live is directly related to the success or failure of these relationships. In Building Successful Relationships, Michael Fletcher gives seven practical keys that will help build strong relationships throughout every area of life. He shows the central issue in every relationship is the hearts of those involved. When the seven principles are applied, you will begin to see your heart and the hearts of those around you grow closer to one another. This series will enable you to see an increased level of intimacy in your existing relationships, help you develop new relationships, or repair a damaged relationship from your past.
- **THE BIBLE PROJECT** (www.thebibleproject.com)
The Bible Project offers a variety of amazing resources. These videos expand on many of the ideas that we have touched on in this series.

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

READING PLAN

God's Word is alive and active. As we read and meditate on Scripture, it begins the process of transformation in how we think and act. As a result, we discover God's design for our life, His purpose for this world, and the path to achieving that.

We invite you to join us in reading about the life of Joseph. This reading plan has a small section of Scripture to dig into each day from **August 7 - August 26**.

DATE	SCRIPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 7	Genesis 37:1 - 8
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 8	Gen. 37:9 - 11
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 9	Gen. 37:12 - 24
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 10	Gen. 37:25 - 37
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 11	Gen. 39:1 - 10
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 12	Gen. 39:11 - 20
Sunday: Join us at CCW	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 14	Gen. 39:20 - 23
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 15	Gen. 40:1 - 8
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 16	Gen. 40:9 - 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 17	Gen. 40:16 - 23
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 18	Gen. 41:1 - 13
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 19	Gen. 41:14 - 36
Sunday: Join us at CCW	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 21	Gen. 41:37 - 57
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 22	Gen. 42
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 23	Gen. 43
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 24	Gen. 44
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 25	Gen. 45
<input type="checkbox"/> Jan 26	Psalms 105:7 - 24
Sunday: Join us at CCW	