#### TRANSFORMATION CHURCH

A 5-WEEK REFLECTION ON THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

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# WELCOME

#### to your Refuse reflection guide

At Transformation Church, we are one family walking together as we follow Christ. It's our hope and prayer that this guide will be a helpful resource to you as you listen to our sermons and meet together in small groups. We want to help you get comfortable reading the Bible on your own and in community.

To watch the sermon that goes along with each week's lesson, go to our website: TransformationChurch.tc/series and look for the REFUSE series.

#### Here is how to best use this reflection guide:

- **Read** At the beginning of each week you will find a daily Bible reading plan. Each day read through the designated verses and consider journaling your thoughts as you pray and commune with God. You may also want to message your thoughts to other members of your small group throughout the week as a way to stay in touch.
- **Prepare** Before meeting with your small group, read that week's teaching. Spend time slowly taking in the information. This is also a great time to go over your sermon notes or any Bible verses that stood out to you.
- **DISCUSS** Get together with your small group to go over the Discussion Questions. These are categorized into Upward, Inward, and Outward questions. Upward questions point us to God and remind us of who He is. Inward questions help us understand how to apply what we're learning to our lives so that we can experience true transformation. Outward questions help us to see how we can take what we've discussed and live on mission in our community.

As always, we are here for you! If you ever have any questions or concerns, reach out to our Groups team at Groups@TransformationChurch.tc.

Upward	These questions direct your thoughts toward God – who He is and what His character is.
Inward	These questions direct your thoughts to the inner transformation that comes from God's love.
Outward	These questions direct your thoughts to how you can take what you have read and live on mission.

We hope you enjoy this study guide and it brings you to a deeper understanding of how the life of Joseph is a signpost of the life and victory we have in Jesus.

### Upward. Inward. Outward. TRANSFORMERS, ROLL OUT!

#### **Refuse to Let Family Dysfunction Control You**

#### Daily Bible Reading Plan:

- Day 1 Genesis 37:1-4; Romans 5:12-15
- Day 2 Mark 6:1-6; John 7:1-5
- Day 3 1 John 4:18-21
- Day 4 Colossians 3:1-13
- Day 5 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

#### Weekly Recap:

Jacob (also known as Israel) came from a family with a long history of dysfunction. Jacob was the son of Isaac and the brother of Esau. From the moment of their birth, these brothers battled for their father's favor. The family dysfunction continued into the next generation because of favoritism. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons because Joseph was the first son of his favorite wife, Rachel. This favoritism must have been evident to all the siblings throughout their lives. The pangs of jealousy must have grown with each day that passed.

One day Jacob presented Joseph with a coat of many colors. This garment symbolized the privilege of the firstborn, a privilege that should not have gone to Joseph. It was in this moment that the sibling rivalry erupted and the brothers felt hatred for Joseph.

Jesus also had brothers. Do you ever think about what it must have been like to be the brother of Jesus? Did they feel jealous? Did they believe He was the Messiah? Did they roll their eyes every time Mary recalled the story of His birth? We know from reading the Gospels that His brothers did not accept Jesus as the Messiah during His earthly ministry. We may know the extent of their family dysfunction, but it was there.

Every family has been touched by dysfunction in some way, because families are made of people, and they make mistakes and sin and hurt others, even if they have the best intentions. As we will see, Jacob and Joseph had good intentions and love for their families, but the subtle sin of favoritism crept in to cause disunity, jealousy, and even hatred. As we take a look into our own families, we can be honest about the dysfunction that may exist, while also holding out hope, that in Jesus all things can be reconciled. Jesus frees us from the sin of Adam. In Adam, we receive sin and death. In Jesus, we receive grace and life.

#### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Upward:**

- Have you ever thought about Jesus having family dysfunction? How do you relate to Jesus, knowing that there was some dysfunction in His family?
- Read Colossians 3:12-13. How does God want you to relate to your family?

#### Inward:

- Take a look at your own family. What dysfunction have you had to work through? What hurdles
  do you see in addressing your family dysfunction?
- Read 1 John 4:18-21. What impacts you from these verses?
- Are there any past family wounds that are holding you back? What steps can you take towards freedom this week?

#### **Outward:**

• Take a look at your church family. Often people express that they don't necessarily have a problem with Jesus but with His Church. How do the principles we've discussed today apply to the church family?

#### Prayer:

Father, we have all struggled with the pain of family dysfunction. Even Your own Son, Jesus, has felt the pain of rejection from family members. Lord, when we feel like we can't love those around us, help us to lean into Your love. Empower us with Your Spirit and remind us that we are not controlled by family dysfunction. In Jesus' name, Amen.



### PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11 CSB

ADOPT THE SAME ATTITUDE AS THAT OF CHRIST JESUS,

WHO, EXISTING IN THE FORM OF GOD, DID NOT CONSIDER EQUALITY WITH GOD AS SOMETHING TO BE EXPLOITED. INSTEAD HE EMPTIED HIMSELF BY ASSUMING THE FORM OF A SERVANT, TAKING ON THE LIKENESS OF HUMANITY. AND WHEN HE HAD COME AS A MAN, HE HUMBLED HIMSELF BY BECOMING OBEDIENT TO THE POINT OF DEATH — EVEN TO DEATH ON A CROSS. FOR THIS REASON GOD HIGHLY EXALTED HIM AND GAVE HIM THE NAME THAT IS ABOVE EVERY NAME, SO THAT AT THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE WILL BOW — IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AND UNDER THE EARTH — AND EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.

### **WEEK TWO** Refuse to Flaunt Your Gift

#### **Daily Bible Reading Plan:**

- Day 1 Genesis 37:5-10
- Day 2 Philippians 2:5-11
- Day 3 2 Chronicles 7:12-16
- Day 4 Luke 14:10-11, Micah 6:8
- Day 5 Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 18:12, Proverbs 22:4, Proverbs 27:2

#### Weekly Recap:

Sibling rivalries are all too common. Chances are, if you have a sibling, you have had some sort of competition with them, whether healthy or unhealthy. The rivalry between Joseph and his brothers may have started with their father's favoritism, but it continued when Joseph decided to flaunt his gift.

He had a strange dream, and when he told his family about it, it caused them to hate him even more. Why? Because it seemed that Joseph was interpreting his dream to mean that one day his family would bow down to him. If your annoying and spoiled little brother told you that he would one day rule over you, you might not like it either.

Joseph probably knew in his heart that these dreams were prophetic. He liked knowing that he would one day be great and that his brothers would have to respect and honor him. What he didn't know was that he would have many unexpected detours along the way to greatness. Instead of keeping the prophetic dreams to himself and waiting for God's timing for the fulfillment of these dreams, he unwisely decided to flaunt his gift to his brothers.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see humility. If anyone had a reason to "flaunt," it was Jesus; after all, He was the Son of God. But we see in Philippians how He maintained His humility. "Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited. Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity." (Philippians 2:5-7 CSB)

When we compare Joseph and Jesus, we see that they both had gifts to offer the world. Joseph would one day rule over Egypt and save his family from starvation. Jesus would give the world the greatest gift of all-eternal life. Joseph, in his youthful naivete, flaunted his gift in front of his brothers. But Jesus, though being equal to God the Father, chose humility and service. Whose footsteps will you follow in?

#### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Upward:**

- Read Philippians 2:5-11. What do we learn about Christ in this passage? What does it mean when it says "He emptied Himself"?
- For what purpose does God gift Joseph? For what purpose does God gift anyone?

#### Inward:

- Have you flaunted your gifts in the past? What was the result?
- How does it make you feel when you see others flaunting their gifts?
- How can you practice humility in your daily life?
- In what ways has God gifted you? How can you use your gifts for the good of others and the glory of God?

#### **Outward:**

- Why do you think Joseph flaunted his gift? Do you think he was in some way trying to gain the approval or respect of his brothers? Does this help you sympathize?
- Do you have a "Joseph" in your life, someone who maybe has annoyed you with their flaunting? How can you move towards them in love and show them humility with your actions?

#### Prayer:

Holy Spirit, guide me in viewing my gifts properly and using them at the appropriate time. Father, help me to adopt the same attitude as that of Jesus, marked by humility and service. I thank You for the many ways you have loved and gifted me. May these gifts be used for the good of others and for your glory. In Your name, Amen.

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#### **Daily Bible Reading Plan:**

- Day 1 Genesis 37:10-20 Day 2 Genesis 37:21-28 Day 3 Genesis 37:29-36
- Day 4 Luke 23:13-19
- Day 5 Luke 23:20-23

#### Weekly Recap:

Joseph had a strange dream and after awakening, he tells his family he will one day rule over them. As one can imagine, his brothers didn't respond well to the idea. They already disliked Joseph because of the favoritism their father showed him. Because of the bitterness in their hearts, the older brothers decided to do away with Joseph, plotting to kill him and throw him in a pit. However, when a caravan of Ishmaelites traveling to Egypt went by, they decided to sell him instead. The brothers traded their own flesh and blood for a measly twenty pieces of silver. When the Ishmaelites arrived in Egypt with their newly obtained slave, they sold Joseph to Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, and his people.

This story parallels another important biblical story. In Luke 23, Jesus was brought before the Jewish people, leaders, and chief priests after his arrest. Although Jesus had done nothing wrong, he was still on trial. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, admitted there was no reason to punish or crucify Jesus, but at the insistence of the Jewish people, he handed Jesus over to be crucified. Jesus, who was Jewish, was sentenced to death by His own people.

Both Joseph and Jesus were betrayed by their own people: Joseph by his older brothers and Jesus by his fellow Jews. They both likely felt the same emotions that we feel when someone close to us betrays us: hurt, confused, angry, disappointed. It is devastating when someone we trust inflicts harm upon us. Unfortunately, we can't decide or control how people treat us, but we can decide how we respond. When we read the stories of Joseph and Jesus, we remember that we're in good company. As both men followed God in obedience, they weren't immune to hurt or betrayal, but they knew God was with them and planned to use the evil they experienced for good. The same is true in our lives, and this is the ultimate good news.

#### Scan to read:

The Wonderful Similarities Between Joseph and Jesus



#### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Upward:**

- Compare the story of Joseph's brothers selling him into slavery and the story of the Jews releasing a rightful prisoner, Barabbas, over the righteous King, Jesus. What similarities do you notice?
- God loves Joseph and Jesus infinitely, but both suffered painful circumstances. God isn't
  indifferent to the suffering of His children, just as Jacob mourned his missing son. What does this
  say about God? How does this change the way you see Him in the midst of suffering?

#### Inward:

- Emotions and feelings are intended to be helpful indicators rather than our controllers. In the stories of Joseph and Jesus, they were impacted by the brokenness of others. How can we feel our feelings without punishing others because of them? If this is something you struggle with, ask God to help you.
- Both Joseph and Jesus were harmed by their own people. Oftentimes, we are hurt by the people closest to us. Recall a time that you experienced pain because of the choices or actions of someone else. How do the stories of Joseph and Jesus impact your own story?

#### **Outward:**

• In the stories of Joseph and Jesus, we see the outcomes of how people treat others when they are controlled by jealousy and hatred. What are your takeaways from this important point?

#### Prayer:

God, we praise You for who You are and what You've done. Just like in the stories of Joseph and Jesus, You haven't left us no matter our circumstances and You aren't indifferent to our trials. Help us to love others no matter how they treat us and give us compassion for those hard to love, as You have shown us compassion. Help us to follow You when it's tempting to build our own Kingdom. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

#### Refuse to Let Your Circumstance Determine Your Worship

#### **Daily Bible Reading Plan:**

- Day 1 Genesis 39:1-5
- Day 2 Genesis 39:6-10
- Day 3 Genesis 39:11-15
- Day 4 Genesis 39:16-20
- Day 5 Genesis 39:21-23

#### Weekly Recap:

After Joseph was sold into slavery and bought by Pharaoh's people, he began serving the house of Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers. The Lord helped Joseph, making his work successful. Potiphar began to observe the success of Joseph and decided to put him in charge of the household. Because Joseph worked for Potiphar, a blessing covered Potiphar's house and fields.

Potiphar's wife became enamored with Joseph and tried to convince him to have an affair with her. He declined, out of respect for his master and reverence for God. This is what true integrity looks like. Notice that Joseph says he would be sinning against God if he had a relationship with Potiphar's wife. She, however, was relentless, eventually telling her husband that Joseph slept with her against her will. Believing his wife, Potiphar sent Joseph to prison.

Many of us in those circumstances would feel dejected, angry, and discouraged. Here was Joseph trying to do the right thing and please God, only to be falsely accused and thrown in jail. If you've ever been in a similar situation, you can probably remember how you felt in that moment. In Genesis 39:21 we are reminded of a beautiful truth, "But the Lord was with Joseph..." and the same is true for us all. People may misunderstand or misrepresent our intentions and choices, but God knows our heart and is with us even when we are rejected or ridiculed by others.

Despite Joseph's painful circumstances, the Lord remained with him. Joseph found favor with the prison warden and began to grow in responsibility while in prison. Even when Joseph's circumstances seemed dismal and depressing, the Lord remained kind and showed His sovereignty. God was not surprised by Joseph's imprisonment, just as He was not surprised by Joseph's brothers selling him into slavery. God's ultimate plan remained.

When we find ourselves in unfavorable circumstances, we can hold onto the truth that God is with us and worthy of our worship. He doesn't ask us to approach life's struggles alone but to lean on Him and trust His plan to make good out of evil.

#### Scan to watch:

Music Moment "Trust in You" feat. KJ & Kira Scriven



#### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Upward:**

- Joseph gained responsibility and respect both in Potiphar's house and in prison. God made his
  work successful because it was done for God's glory. What does this tell you about God's plan
  and sovereignty?
- Read Colossians 3:23. How does this verse tie into the story of Joseph in this chapter?

#### Inward:

- Instead of wallowing in his tragic circumstances, Joseph allowed God to use him as a slave and as a prisoner. How can you allow God to use you in the midst of circumstances that seem pointless or unfair?
- What stands out to you the most from Genesis 39 and why? How does it invite you to change the way you live today?
- What are some ways you can respond to your circumstances with worship?

#### **Outward:**

- Joseph's devotion and obedience to the Lord impacted others. Both Potiphar and the warden noticed something special in Joseph. Who around you has impacted you in a similar way?
- Who can you share the truth of God's Word with this week?

#### Prayer:

Lord, we come to You surrendered. Just as we see in the story of Joseph, we know You have a beautiful plan that triumphs over all evil. You are sovereign and kind and good. Help us believe that when we doubt. Father, help us to show Your love and truth to others through our actions. Give us opportunities to know You and love You and share that love with others. In Your name, Amen.

### **WEEK FIVE** Refuse to Let Your Gifts Die

#### Refuse to Let Your Brits

#### **Daily Bible Reading Plan:**

Day 1Luke 22:42Day 2Galatians 3:13-14Day 3Hebrews 12:1-2Day 4Psalm 42:5Day 5Lamentations 3:19-24

#### Weekly Recap:

After honoring God as a trustworthy administrator in the house of Potiphar, Joseph finds himself unjustly imprisoned on a false accusation from Potiphar's wife. After it seemed as though Joseph's dreams were coming to fruition, he was back where he started—a pit. Nevertheless, the author reiterates that the Lord was with him. The Lord's presence did not mean the absence of trouble but that He saw Joseph's plight, cared for him, and was preparing him for an integral role within His redemptive narrative.

Even in the midst of his circumstances, the Lord supplied Joseph with the grace to exercise compassion to his fellow prisoners—the cupbearer and the baker. Though his own dreams had taken yet another unexpected turn, Joseph chose to continue exercising his God-given gift of interpreting dreams and asked in return that they remember him upon their release.

As a true and better Joseph, Jesus, unjustly but willingly, steps into the greatest dungeon of all—that of sin, death, and evil. Though He asked the Father to remove the cup from Him, He was committed to the Father's dream of a renewed and reconciled humanity. This dream was so ingrained within Jesus that He extended forgiveness to one of the penitent men He was crucified next to and to those who mocked and tortured Him.

In the story of Joseph, we find both our life and Christ's life. Despite painful circumstances, we can find reassurance in the fact that the Spirit gives us comfort and the perseverance necessary to pursue the Father's dream of a multiethnic and multigenerational family. Unlike the cupbearer who forgot Joseph in his pit of despair, we serve a High Priest who took the cup we rightly deserved to sip from and promises to never forget our names.

#### Scan for additional resources:

Forgiving What You Can't Forget by Lysa TerKeurst



#### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Upward:**

- Read Ephesians 2:11-22. According to the Apostle Paul, what is God's central dream for humanity in light of Christ's death on the cross?
- Read Hebrews 12:1-2. What was the "joy" that was laid before Jesus that enabled Him to endure the suffering and shame of the cross?

#### Inward:

- Can you remember a time when you experienced the pain of despair or broken dreams? Perhaps this is your present circumstance. If you feel safe, will you share this with your group members?
- The author of Genesis who writes Joseph's story makes a point to reiterate that "the Lord was with him." In what ways does it reassure you that the Lord is with you when you experience troubling circumstances, unmet longings, and broken dreams?
- Read Luke 23:42-43. Unlike the cupbearer who forgets Joseph when he is reinstated into the kingdom, Jesus promises to remember our names when we come to Him in faith. What is the significance of Jesus knowing our names?
- Do you live as someone who is known and cherished by God?

#### **Outward:**

Despite the suffering they endured, the Lord supplied Joseph and Jesus with the grace necessary
to extend compassion and mercy to those around them. The Spirit enables us to do the same.
Who are some people in your sphere of influence who are going through a troubling time? How can
you exercise compassion to them this week? Perhaps this looks like mailing them a handwritten
note, taking them out to coffee to talk, or shooting them a thoughtful text.

#### Prayer:

Father, You are the God of all comfort. Jesus, when You suffered on the cross, You remembered my name. Holy Spirit, You empower me to live on mission and show compassion to those around me. Thank You for Your love, mercy, and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## GENESIS 39:21-23 CSB

BUT THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH AND EXTENDED KINDNESS TO HIM. HE GRANTED HIM FAVOR WITH THE PRISON WARDEN. THE WARDEN PUT ALL THE PRISONERS WHO WERE IN THE PRISON UNDER JOSEPH'S AUTHORITY, AND HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING THAT WAS DONE THERE. THE WARDEN DID NOT BOTHER WITH ANYTHING UNDER JOSEPH'S AUTHORITY, BECAUSE THE LORD WAS WITH HIM, AND THE LORD MADE EVERYTHING THAT HE DID SUCCESSFUL. PARALLELISM BETWEEN JOSEPH'S REVELATION TO HIS BROTHERS AND CHRIST'S REVELATION TO HIS DISCIPLES:

Joseph is assumed dead, but truly alive.

Joseph forgives his brothers for their sins against him.

Joseph is sent ahead by God to establish a faithful remnant who will be His people on His mission.

Joseph promises his family a land where they can dwell called Goshen. Jesus is truly dead but resurrects to new life.

Jesus forgives His disciples for abandoning Him in His final hours.

Jesus is sent ahead by God as the Messiah who establishes a new faithful remnant called the Church who will be His people on His mission.

Jesus promises those who belong to Him (His family) a residence and eternal dwelling in the new heavens and new earth.



#### Daily Bible Reading Plan:

- Day 1 Genesis 50:20
- Day 2 Romans 8:28-30
- Day 3 1 Peter 2:9-10
- Day 4 Matthew 28:18-20
- Day 5 Revelation 21:1-4

#### Weekly Recap:

Through a series of events imprinted with God's providential hand, Joseph went from being the prison administrator to the governor of Egypt. After thirteen years filled with a mixture of triumphs and painful detours, Joseph became one of the most powerful men of his day. Under his leadership, there was great innovation and prosperity. So much so that the very brothers who had attempted to kill him sought help from this great Egyptian leader—not knowing his true identity.

Could you imagine being in Joseph's position? The very people who betrayed you or intended to harm you are at your mercy, and you wield the power and authority to exact whatever judgment you see fit. Upon revealing his true identity to them as the brother they had sold into slavery, Dr. Tony Evans notes that "Joseph displayed varsity-level maturity." Rather than rightfully punishing them for their sins, he extends mercy and shares that, though they had sinned against him, God intended it for good so that he could be a catalyst for his people's preservation. The brother who was considered dead was truly alive and prepared to save their lives.

As the true and better Joseph, Jesus was resurrected from the prison of death to wield all authority and power as the world's rightful Lord. Like Joseph's brothers came to him, we come to Jesus, guilty and broken by sin. But He extends to us the same invitation that Joseph gave to his brothers—"please come near me." Jesus is a gentle King who embraces us warmly and gives us a new identity, a new mission, and the promise of an eternal dwelling place called the new heavens and new earth.

#### Scan for additional resources:

Joseph: A Story of Love, Hate, Slavery, Power, and Forgiveness by John C. Lennox



#### **Discussion Questions**

#### Upward:

 Read Genesis 45:4-8 followed by John 21:15-17. What does Joseph's response to his brothers share in common with Jesus' response to Peter? What does this communicate about the heart and character of God?

#### Inward:

- Read 1 Peter 2:9-10. The same Peter who betrayed Jesus, was enabled by the Holy Spirit to pen these words. Who are we called to be in Christ? Is there anything in particular within this passage that stands out to you?
- Read Genesis 50:20. Can you think of a time when the Lord worked through the pain of someone's sin against you, unmet expectations, or a broken dream to bless you and those around you? If you feel comfortable, please share with the group.
- Reflect on this quote from Dane Ortlund: "He [Jesus] doesn't just want us to be forgiven. He wants us." What thoughts and feelings stir within you as you think about this reality?

#### **Outward:**

Joseph was able to see his suffering through the lens of God's redemptive grace. This did not
negate the pain of the experience, but we are promised that pain won't be wasted. As you reflect,
are there people you have yet to forgive and are harboring bitterness towards? Take 5-10 minutes
to journal and pray about this. You may want to loop in a spouse, trusted friend, or a counselor
on the journey to true forgiveness.

#### Prayer:

God, we come before You humbled and grateful that You are always with us. You love us with an unfailing and unconditional love. Even when we suffer, we can rest assured that You are holding us and that You have a purpose for our lives. Help us to always hold onto the eternal hope we have in Christ Jesus. In Your name and by the power of Your Spirit, Amen.

# ABOUT

Transformation Church is a multiethnic, multigenerational, mission-shaped community that loves God completely (Upward), loves ourselves correctly (Inward), and loves our neighbors compassionately (Outward).

For more information on our church, service times, and additional resources, check out our website at TransformationChurch.tc.

You can connect with us on social media:



@TransformationChurch



@TCTransformers

## HOW TO SCAN A OR CODE:

Open the camera app on your phone or tablet.

2.

1.

Hold your device over the QR Code so that it is clearly visible within your screen. Your phone will automatically scan the code and prompt you to open a webpage.

#### 3.

Click through to the website where you will get to watch a video to further support the reading for that week.

#### Scan to connect:

Refuse Video Series Transformation Church

