

Faith Journey: Joe Pays a Visit by Nate Stauffer and Carol Duerksen

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Copies of the impromptu skit directions for participants. If possible, choose the participants prior to class and given them the directions and roles in advance. Encourage them to bring or wear something unique to their character. The role of Joe should be played by a youth leader, another adult, or a youth who can thoughtfully express some of the lessons learned in his (Joe's) life, and this person should definitely have time prior to the session to prepare for this role.
- Bibles
- A cool jacket or other piece of apparel—something that would be a source of pride for the guys in your class. It should fit the person that will be portraying Joe.

SESSION OUTLINE

FOCUS:

Welcome students, and then say that a “special guest” will be joining the group today. His name is Joe, and he’s coming all the way from Egypt, straight out of the Bible story. Invite youth to name everything they can think of that they already know about Joseph.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE STORY:

Invite participants to “get into character.” For Joe, that means donning his jacket or other apparel. For the others, it means wearing or carrying what they brought to portray their character.

Do the impromptu skit.

APPLY:

After the impromptu skit, continue your discussion with these questions:

- 1 How does Joe’s story apply to the struggles we face in our faith journeys today?
- 2 Are there any problems that are too big for God to bring us through them? Can you find a Bible passage that supports your answer?
- 3 On a scale of 1-10, how much do you trust God? Discuss the answers.

RESPOND:

Ask students to turn to Romans 8:28 and read it. Memorize the verse together. Challenge the students to repeat it often during the week, believing that it is true for their lives.

Close with prayer.

Session Reproducibles

SKIT: JOE PAYS A VISIT

Characters:

Joseph, narrator, Jessica, Becca, Matt

Format:

Each person receives a description of the character they are portraying, along with a sample question. The sample question will be used to give each person an idea of how to portray the role of their character. The narrator will read the introductory paragraph to give the audience an understanding of who Joseph is and the setting of the skit. The rest of the skit should be impromptu based on the characters' descriptions, sample questions, and other comments and questions from class members. Encourage each character to talk to Joe and to each other ... asking questions, offering advice, dialoguing about their thoughts and feelings and what they believe.

Narrator: Today, we are going to use our imaginations. We are going to imagine that Joe has stepped out of the Bible story to come talk with us. We've already heard some things that we know about Joe—a young man that was abandoned by his brothers, sold to slave traders, and then became a successful ruler in Egypt. What can we learn from him? How does his faith journey tie in with ours? Let's talk!

Background information: Character Descriptions

Joseph: You have been able to reflect on your life experiences and faith journey. You were a prideful young man—your father's favorite son. You had the best clothes. You even had the guts to tell your brothers about a dream that they would one day bow down to you. The nerve! Your brothers were less than thrilled with you, so they sold you into slavery and didn't expect to see you again. But God works in mysterious ways, and God helped you overcome many situations which could have ended badly. For example, just when you thought things were going well for you when you were in charge of Potiphar's house, everything went bad. Potiphar was an influential Egyptian official who had an unfaithful wife, and she had her eyes on you. When she tried to get you to sleep with her, and you refused, she lied to her husband about you coming on to her. You were put in jail and things seemed hopeless. But once again God came through and you were put in charge of the prison. You ended up interpreting Pharaoh's dream, and eventually you became a ruler in Egypt. Your relationship with God was not a one time conversion experience, but a journey that was built on God's faithfulness. Even though some of your experiences seemed bad at the time, they were beneficial as they strengthened your faith in God.

Your story continued with your reconciliation with your family when they came to Egypt for food. You tested your brothers thoroughly to make sure they were repentant, and then you were gracious to them just as God was gracious to you.

Sample Questions: What lessons did you learn about family? About God? About doing what is right? What were the ups and downs of your faith journey?

Jessica: You are a 16-year-old cheerleader who is extremely popular but empty on the inside.

Session Reproducibles

Your parents are wealthy, but recently went through a divorce. You feel as though you can never be good enough and are looking for someone to love you unconditionally. You are wondering if there really is a God and why your life has been so hard. Your friends continually pressure you to drink, and you and your boyfriend are sexually active. You feel like God is not on your side in life at all—when has God done anything for you? You come to church just because it's a place to be with other kids.

Sample Question: Why should I trust God and expect God to come through for me? When has God done anything for me?

Becca: You are a 17-year-old who is active in the church and youth group. You have great parents, but sometimes you get tired of your mom always doing all the talking. You are shy and you'd like to be more confident in yourself, so you can make friends easier and also so you can share God's love with some kids at school. You've been a Christian for five years and you want to grow in your faith. You're frustrated lately because you don't think you've been very close to God.

Sample Questions: How do I get closer to God? How do I break out of my shyness? How do I talk about God with kids in school?

Matt: You are 16 and a guitarist in a heavy metal band. Your mind is always on learning new guitar solos and keeping up your tough guy image. Your mom left home when you were in second grade. Your dad is an alcoholic who gets drunk on the weekends and often smacks you around. Emotional and physical pain is something you've dealt with most of your life. You feel abandoned and let down. The youth group sponsors have been pretty cool and convinced you to come to youth group. You go, and you wish you could believe in the God that they talk about, but it just isn't tough to be a Christian. What would your band members say?

Sample Question: Would I have to give up my music to be a Christian? Explain your answer. If God loves me, why did he let my mom leave and my Dad be an alcoholic?