

you'll get
through this.

HOPE & HELP FOR YOUR TURBULENT TIMES

SMALL GROUP
STUDY GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our all-church fall study, “You’ll Get Through This”! Thanks for your commitment to dive in and connect with others and grow in your faith. Our prayer is that the next eight weeks will change your life in little and big ways. We pray that you will find hope, encouragement, challenge and growth! No matter where you are in life right now, this study is for you!

In addition to the weekly sermons and small groups, there is a companion book by Max Lucado (“You’ll Get Through This”) that we encourage you to pick up online or at the book nook any weekend at TLC. And so you know what’s coming up and what to read, here’s **the schedule for each week:**

DATE	TOPIC	BOOK	SCRIPTURE
September 24/25	The Dream	Chapter 1	Genesis 37: 1 - 11
October 1/2	The Pits	Chapters 2 - 3	Genesis 37: 11 - 36
October 8/9	The Temptation	Chapters 4 - 5	Genesis 39
October 15/16	The Waiting	Chapters 6 - 7	Genesis 40
October 22/23	The Throne	Chapters 8 - 9	Genesis 41
October 29/30	The Family	Chapters 10 - 11	Genesis 42 - 44
November 5/6	The Embrace	Chapters 12 - 13	Genesis 45
November 12/13	The Point	Chapters 14 - 15	Romans 8

We have provided discussion questions for each week on the following pages. Many are adapted from the study guide for the book “You’ll Get Through This!” These are only suggestions, of course! If you decide to use different questions based on what you’ve been learning from scripture or that weekend’s sermon, feel free to do so.

If your group chooses to, **you can watch the accompanying videos** by the author of “You’ll Get Through This,” Max Lucado. **The videos are available on RightNow Media**, which you can access on your smart TV app, Apple TV, or at their website, rightnowmedia.org. If you do not have an account, Twin Lakes Church can help you set yours up at tlc.org/rnm.

The full-length videos are about 24 minutes long, but you can shorten them by stopping at the break approximately halfway through each video (the theme music restarts and the video shows Joseph’s coat of many colors before Max begins again). Our questions are designed to tie into the weekly assigned chapters in the book of Genesis and Max Lucado’s book.

Note: There is no video for week 4 or week 7. Instead, use the extra time for group fellowship, discussion, and prayer.

If you’re in a small group, each week we’ll follow this format:

CONNECT - Questions designed to help you get the conversation going and get to know each other

CONTEXT - Read scripture and watch the video

CONVERSATION - Dive deeper together and answer questions about what you’ve read and what you’re learning

CONCLUSION - Take what you’re learning and make it personal!

CLOSE IN PRAYER

If you have any questions about small groups or need support as you lead your group please don’t hesitate to reach out! We’re here to help. **Email jim@tlc.org for answers and help!**

Let’s get started!!

WEEK 1: THE DREAM

CONNECT:

1. What did you dream about being or doing when you were younger?
2. What stood out to you as you read Chapter 1 of the book and listened to the sermon this past weekend? In what ways are you hoping this small group might be encouraging to you?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 37:2-11 and watch Video 1: You'll Get Through This (See info on Introduction pages - stopping point 10:25.)

CONVERSATION:

1. Max Lucado writes about the hard times we face on life's journey, and says, "God will use this mess for good." How have you experienced this in your life? Has God used a "pit" experience to shape who you are today in a good way, as He did for Joseph? How have you looked up from a pit and drawn closer to God during "down" times in your life?
2. Difficulties often come because of broken relationships, misunderstanding, poor communication, and hurt feelings. It's true today and it was true in Joseph's family. What were some of the problems he faced?
3. As you picture the scene in Genesis 37:2-11, what do you imagine Joseph was like? Describe his personality and his relationship to his father and his brothers at this point in his life. What might have been some of his strengths and his weaknesses?
4. God gave Joseph two dreams. They were a true revelation of his life's destiny. Do you think Joseph's way of telling them about his dream was immature, naïve, and unwise? After all, his dream did involve him ruling over the rest of his family! Or was it motivated by something else? What advice would you have given him about how to handle his coat and his dreams?
5. Even Jacob, his father, rebuked how Joseph shared his dreams. What do you think this communicated to Joseph and his brothers?

6. How would you describe your life right now: tranquil, a mixture of ups and downs, or in turmoil? What did you learn from the book or the sermon that will help you “get through” the challenging times which come into all of our lives?

CONCLUSION:

What dream or long-awaited desire has God has put on your heart? Where are you on the journey of seeing that dream or desire come to fulfillment?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together.

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 2 and 3 in “You’ll Get Through This” and Genesis 37:11-36

WEEK 2: THE PITS

CONNECT:

1. Joseph was an amazingly resilient person. Share about a person you know who has resilience--they seem able to bounce back and stay on their feet even when life tries to knock them down. What do you think gives them resiliency?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or as you read Chapters 2 and 3 in Lucado's book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 37:11-36 and watch Video 2: "Down and Out But Never Alone." (See info on Introduction pages - stopping point is 12:45.)

CONVERSATION:

1. As you read today's scripture, what do you think is the most shocking thing that happened?
2. Joseph begins Genesis 37 as the favorite son, and the recipient of dreams that predicted his prominence. By the end of the chapter he has been stripped of his beautiful robe, rejected by his brothers and sold as a slave. Describe a time you were dealt a blow that could have knocked you out, but through faith in God you were able to get back up again. How did your faith help carry you through?
3. Max Lucado imagines that Joseph's troubles began when he shared his dream with his family at the breakfast table. How do you think Joseph's dreams were an encouragement to him as he sat in the cistern and then found himself in a caravan headed for Egypt? Or do you think he spent time in "If only..." type of thinking (e.g., "If only I didn't tell my brothers my dreams, then..." or "If only my father didn't send me to Shechem, then...")? How do you picture him during this time?
4. Some of the pain in life can come from our own families (biological families and church families)—as it did for Joseph. What dysfunctions and unhealthy patterns in Joseph's family led to heartache and pain? Why do wounds from family (or church family) pierce so deeply?

5. According to scripture, what is your destiny? Read these verses out loud: John 14:1-3; 1 Peter 1:3-6; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; Romans 8:28-39. Write down five things you can be certain of regarding your destiny:

CONCLUSION:

It looked like all was lost for Joseph, his dreams were doomed. Yet as we will see, God used every single moment to get Joseph exactly where He wanted him. His destiny would be fulfilled. Because it was always in God's hand. How can you apply this truth in your life right now?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together.

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 4 and 5 in "You'll Get Through This" and read Genesis 39.

WEEK 3: RESISTING TEMPTATION

CONNECT:

1. What was your first paid job?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or as you read Chapters 4 and 5 in Lucado's book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 39 and watch Video 3: "Stupid Won't Fix Stupid" (See info on Introduction pages - stopping point is 7:50.)

CONVERSATION:

1. Potiphar, Joseph's Egyptian owner, took special notice of Joseph. What do you suppose he observed about this young man that impressed him so positively?
2. How would you assess your level of depletion right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Totally
Depleted

Full of
Energy

Why do temptations seem to increase in times you feel exhausted and discouraged?

3. What do you do or where do you turn when you feel tempted to make a poor choice or a self-destructive decision? What are tactics you have found are useful for resisting temptation--particularly when you feel tired or discouraged?
4. What was Joseph's key to resisting this temptation (see Genesis 39:8)? How can you apply this same principle to temptations you are facing?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. How can knowing Jesus is with you and wants to strengthen you moment by moment enable you to experience victory over temptation? What other promises do you know and claim in times of temptation?

CONCLUSION:

Joseph did everything “right” in this case--but got no reward for it. In fact, everything seemed to go wrong. With what you know about his story, how would you have encouraged Joseph? With what you know now about your own life story, how could you encourage “past you”? How can you apply this to your own situation today?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together. Please be praying for the launch of TLC en Español in two weeks!

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 6 and 7 in “You’ll Get Through This” and read Genesis 40.

WEEK 4: IS GOD STILL GOOD?

CONNECT:

When you think about it, waiting is a major part of life. There is no age or stage when anticipation is not a major part of our experience.

1. Recall a time or event in your life when the result was “worth the wait”? What are you waiting for in this season of life?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or read chapters 6 and 7 in Lucado’s book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 40 (No video this week. Use the extra time for fellowship, discussion, and prayer.)

CONVERSATION:

1. Joseph seemed to be a very patient man because he was always serving others rather than complaining about his own circumstances. How would you describe your personality? Are you generally inclined to be patient and calm or impatient and irritable? Would your family agree?
2. Joseph was counting on people for help who seemed to keep forgetting him. He seemed to be stuck in a waiting room-- in his case, a literal prison. Describe a situation when you were in life’s “waiting room,” anxious for something to happen that seemed to be taking so long.
3. We are often in a hurry, but God is not. What have you found is a helpful key for you when you are in life’s “waiting room”?
4. Joseph was probably around 17 when he was sold into slavery, and (spoiler alert!) about 30 when he finally enters Pharaoh’s service in Genesis 41. So his “waiting period” in the pit and prison was about 13 years. Think back on your life 13 years ago. How old were you, if you have them - how old were your children, where were you living and working? In what ways have you matured spiritually, emotionally, and relationally over that time?

5. Joseph had to wait two years before the cupbearer remembered him! What could have been the purpose for this delay? Do you think Joseph was still thinking about his own dream? How could this have encouraged him?

6. Joseph was in a pit and then a prison, for years. If you feel you are in a pit or in a prison right now, briefly share the situation (if you feel comfortable doing so) and how your group members can support and care for you during this time.

CONCLUSION:

The Bible tells us to “...rest in the Lord, to wait patiently for Him.” (Psalm 37:7) What do you think it means to rest in the Lord? What in God’s character can you rest in when you are in the waiting rooms of life? Where do you need to apply this in your life right now? Who in your life is in the “waiting room”? How can you encourage them in this season?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together. Please be praying for the launch of TLC en Español this coming weekend!

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 8 and 9 in “You’ll Get Through This” and read Genesis 41.

WEEK 5: BEING AN EFFECTIVE AMBASSADOR

CONNECT:

1. Do you have a story about your name? Do you know what it means or why your parents chose it? If you have kids is there a meaning behind their name(s)?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to last weekend's sermon or read chapters 8 and 9 in the book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 41 and watch Video 4: "Is God Good When Life Isn't?" (See info on Introduction pages - stopping point is 9:10.)

CONVERSATION:

1. As you think about Joseph's interaction with Pharaoh, what impresses you about his attitudes, his focus, his communication?
2. It's interesting to note what Joseph named his sons: Manasseh, derived from the Hebrew for forget, "because God has made me forget all my trouble and my father's family," and Ephraim, derived from the Hebrew for bountiful, "because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering." Joseph seems to be leaning into gratitude instead of bitterness. Every time he says his sons' names he will be giving thanks to God for his deliverance. Why is gratitude the wisest choice through tough times? Why does resentment still plague so many people--even after they have found success?
3. Would you say gratitude comes easy or hard for you? What is the first thing that comes to your mind right now when asked what you're grateful for?
4. Max Lucado writes that "Joseph lived with an unshakable and deep-seated belief in God's sovereignty." How did this conviction help him endure his difficult years and serve him well as he is promoted to a place of prominence in Egypt?

5. As you ponder the concept of God's sovereignty (meaning that he is ultimately in control of everything and will bring good out of all things), how does it help you deal with both the pain and frustrations, the disappointments and sorrows, as well as the joys and delights, the victories and the blessings that you're currently experiencing? It's a life-long journey for all of us, but it certainly makes life worth living! Do you agree? Why or why not?

CONCLUSION:

"Gratitude requires seeing the world as God sees it." (p. 190) How would you characterize your posture of attentiveness and grateful response to God's love, mercy, grace and goodness to you at this time in your life? How can you lean into this more in your current frustrations, trials, or joys and successes?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together.

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 10 and 11 in "You'll Get Through This" and read Genesis 42-44.

WEEK 6: FACING THE FAMILY AGAIN

CONNECT:

1. How would you describe your family of origin in this season of life? How often do you see them? Is communication easy and friendly or distant and difficult? What makes it that way?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or read Chapters 10 and 11 in Lucado's book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 42:1-21, 43:26-34 and 44:21-33 and watch Video 5: "Now, About Those Family Scandals and Scoundrels." (See info on Introduction pages - stopping point is 11:40.)

CONVERSATION:

1. As you look back over Genesis 42:1-17, what do you see in Joseph's initial interactions with his brothers that shows he has not resolved the pain from his past that they inflicted on him? What do you imagine was going through his mind when he saw them for the first time after they had thrown him into a pit, sold him into slavery, and abandoned him? What would you have been thinking? What stands out to you from this passage?
2. None of us comes from a perfect family. Describe some of the family challenges you encountered as a child, teenager or even now? How does this story challenge or convict you in those situations?
3. Max Lucado notes that Joseph could have reconnected with his family once he became Pharaoh's chief assistant, but he chose not to. Why do you imagine he kept his distance?
4. What's your reaction to this statement from Max Lucado: "Restoration is always a big deal to God. He will create situations and opportunities for us to choose healing over brokenness and restoration over retribution." Do you have a situation or opportunity where you need to choose healing and restoration?

5. Why do you think it can be so hard to extend grace to certain people who have hurt us? What is the key to overcoming that and forgiving them?

CONCLUSION:

Is there a situation in your life right now where you are facing a choice between working at healing or leaving a relationship broken? What is one specific step of reconciliation or healing you can take this week that your group can pray about with you?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together. Pray specifically for the steps of reconciliation you want to take this week.

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Before your group meets, read Genesis 45 and chapters 12 and 13 in “You’ll Get Through This”.

WEEK 7: THE EMBRACE

CONNECT:

1. Tell a personal story about a big brother or big sister (or someone who played that role in your life). Why is it so important to have people like this in our lives?
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or read Chapters 12 and 13 in Lucado's book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 45. There is no video this week so use the extra time for discussion and fellowship.

We conclude this narrative with an amazing story of forgiveness. As Joseph reveals himself to his brothers, he gives an emotional speech to relieve their guilt, ease their fears, and prevent bitterness.

CONVERSATION:

1. As you read Genesis 45:1-15, why do you think Joseph could no longer control his emotions? What do you imagine some of those feelings were?
2. What do you learn about Joseph's view of God from the way he responds to his brothers?
3. In what ways does Joseph, the youngest when he was abandoned by his older brothers, now take on "older brother" responsibilities for his brothers and the entire family?
4. Joseph is not the hero of this story, but God is the hero. What do you learn about God's wisdom and care for his people? How can you praise God next time you are in a dark valley?

5. The Bible includes many metaphors for Christ. But one of the most potent is: Brother.

“Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.” Hebrews 2:11 (NLT)

“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” Romans 8:29 (NLT)

“He looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers!’” Mark 3:34 (ESV)

What unique insights does the idea of Jesus as your first-born brother provide?

6. Read John 15:15, 1 John 2:1-2, and Matthew 11:28-30. What do these passages teach you about how Jesus sees you? How does it make you feel when you realize He sees you this way?

CONCLUSION:

Joseph saw that God was in control of every aspect and every day of his life. How similar or different is your attitude in relation to the trials in your life? What can you learn from this whole story to help you see things more like Joseph saw them?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a moment to share any personal prayer requests you may have and spend time in prayer together.

GET READY FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read chapters 14 and 16 in “You’ll Get Through This” and read Genesis 50:15-21.

Reminder: This next weekend is the final weekend for our annual Food Drive! Please be praying about how you can participate!

WEEK 8: THE POINT

CONNECT:

1. Max Lucado says “God’s the master weaver: Satan will weave and God will reweave.” Read Romans 8:28. Share a time in your life when you experienced God’s “reweaving” of your life and circumstances.
2. What stood out to you as you listened to the sermon last weekend or as you read Chapters 14 and 15 in Lucado’s book?

CONTEXT:

Read Genesis 50:15-21 and watch Video 6: “God Can Use This for Good” (See info on Introduction pages – stopping point is 10:15.)

CONVERSATION:

Here are the 10 biblical truths you’ve explored through this series;

- Nothing in life is unknown to God (Psalm 139)
- God is near to me (Psalm 23:4)
- The Lord will work out his plan for my life (Psalm 138:8)
- God uses experiences of testing to train and prepare me (James 1:1-4) all tests are temporary (1 Peter 1:6)
- God is always at work in me (Phil 1:6)
- I can wait for the lord because he is faithful, merciful, and powerful (Psalm 130:5-7)
- The reward for perseverance is a glorious life (James 1:12)
- An eternal perspective put my troubles in perspective (2 Corinthians 4:17)
- Jesus advocates for me (Romans 8:34)
- In God’s hands intended evil becomes an eventual good (Genesis 50:20)

1. How have these truths affected your view or experience of challenges in your life? In what ways, if any would you say this represents a shift from where you were at the beginning of the series? Which two or three truths are most important to you right now?

2. What stands out to you from this passage we read today? In your opinion what is the secret sauce that allowed Joseph to forgive such an injustice? How would having that same perspective help you in dealing with the people who hurt you or betrayed you?
3. Would you say you tend to be thick-skinned or easily hurt by things people do or say? Is it usually easy or hard for you to forgive someone that hurts you?
4. Tell the group about one situation in your life when you had a chance to respond to someone with grace and love rather than judgment and anger--and you chose grace. What happened? How did God get you to that place?
5. How do Joseph's brothers reveal that they still don't understand the gift of grace they have received from Joseph? Why do you think it was so hard for them to accept Joseph's gift of grace (forgiveness)?
6. How do you sometimes forget the depth and reality of God's grace given freely through Jesus Christ? What can you do to keep from falling into the fear, worry, and works-based perspective that comes from forgetting God's grace?

CONCLUSION:

What is your biggest take away from this series? What is one quality of Joseph you will ask God to grow in you? How can you be a Joseph to your family and reassure them of your love—and God's love for them?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Spend some time thanking God for the last 8 weeks, the opportunity to study God's word in community and for Joseph's story.

