Preschool–Grade 6

Joseph and His Brothers

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God was with Joseph. Joseph forgave his brothers. God helps me forgive too!
Bible passage: Genesis 37–50. Read Genesis 37, 39–45 and 50:15–21 yourself before class.
Memory verse: "God meant it unto good" *Genesis 50:20 (KJV)*. **Meant it unto good** means God planned it for good. God can turn bad things into good.
You need: a Bible, a box of crayons, and one take-home sheet and crayons for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Genesis 37.

1. Opening game: Many Colors Hunt (5 minutes)

Hold up one crayon and name its color. Kids walk around the room and touch something that is the same color, then come back. Do it with many different crayons. Say: "Today's true story is about a boy named Joseph. His father made him 'a coat of many colours' (Genesis 37:3). That means it had lots of colors! The Bible doesn't tell us which colors."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Genesis 37. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors (Genesis 37:3). *(Pretend to put on a coat.)*
Joseph's brothers did not like him (37:4). *(Cross your arms and frown.)*
They put Joseph in a deep, empty pit (37:24). *(Crouch down low.)*
They sold him, and he was taken far away to Egypt (37:28). *(Walk in place.)*
Say it with me: "The LORD was with Joseph!" (39:2)
Someone told a lie about Joseph, and he went to prison (39:17–20). *(Hold your hands together.)*
But God was with Joseph in prison too (39:21). *(Point up, then hug yourself.)*
God helped Joseph tell the king what his dreams meant (41:16, 41:25). *(Tap your head.)*
The king made Joseph a ruler over Egypt (41:41). *(Stand up tall.)*
Joseph saved lots of food for the hungry years (41:48–49). *(Scoop up pretend food.)*
His brothers came to buy food, and they didn't know him (42:3, 42:8). *(Shrug your shoulders.)*
Joseph said, "I am Joseph your brother" (45:4). *(Point to yourself.)*
Joseph hugged his brothers and cried (45:14–15). *(Give yourself a big hug.)*
Say it with me: "Joseph forgave his brothers!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. What did Joseph's father make for him? *(A coat of many colours, Genesis 37:3)*
2. Who was with Joseph in the prison? *(God, 39:21)*
3. What did Joseph do when his brothers came? *(He hugged them, cried and forgave them, 45:14–15, 50:21)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Joseph said, 'God meant it unto good.' That means God turned the bad things into good." Teach the motion: on "God," point up high; on "meant it," tap your head; on "unto good," make a big smile with your fingers. Say the verse with the motion three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Genesis 50:20" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Coat of Many Colors (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw a big coat with stripes. Kids color every stripe a different color, as many colors as they can. While they color, ask: "Who was with Joseph? What did Joseph do when his brothers came?"

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7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for being with me.
Help me forgive, like Joseph. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and let every child do the motions. If they get wiggly, do the Many Colors Hunt again. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

If a child asks about the lie or the prison: say simply, "Someone said Joseph did something bad, but he didn't. God was with Joseph, and God took care of him (Genesis 39:20–21)." You don't need to say more for this age. This lesson leaves out the goat's blood on the coat (37:31) and the baker's dream (40:16–22).

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