



SEPTEMBER THEME

**HIGH WIRE**

**BIBLE STORY**

Genesis 37, 39:1-2

Family Unties (Joseph + His Brothers)

Genesis 40 (Genesis 39)

Unhappy Days (Joseph in Jail)

**BOTTOM LINE**

When life doesn't make sense, you  
can trust God is with you

**MEMORY VERSE**

"Trust in the Lord with all your  
heart and lean not on your own  
understanding"

Proverbs 3:5, NIV

**LIFE APP**

Trust—putting your confidence in  
someone you can depend on

**BASIC TRUTH**

I can trust God no matter what

**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW:** the connection between TRUST and God's character, as shown through God's big story

**This WEEK:** After last week's intro, we explore more of Joseph's story in **Genesis 37, 39:1-2 and 40**. Joseph gets a beautiful coat from his dad, frustrates his brothers, is thrown into a well, sold to some traders, ends up in Egypt far, far away from his family, and then ends up in prison. Joseph still trusted God, and God was with him. While he's in prison, Joseph meets pharaoh's cupbearer and baker, who both end up having dreams they don't understand. With God's help, Joseph interprets their dreams. The Cupbearer promises to talk to pharaoh about Joseph and his situation, but forgets about Joseph. Still, Joseph trusted God and eventually is put in charge of the rest of the prisoners.

**Bottom Line: When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.** There will be times in a kid's life when something happens that just doesn't make sense like a divorce, moving to a new home or a new school, or getting a serious illness. And while that situation is confusing, we pray kids continue to trust God and allow God to help them get through that difficult time.

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray for the conversations your group will have today. Ask God to give you wisdom and guidance to respond to any difficult circumstances that may come to light as a result of today's content. Pray also for the kids whose families are doing well. Pray that they would internalize today's message and be able to recall it during times when life doesn't make sense.

•• **EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

• Ask kids:

—How was your summer?

—What was one good thing that happened (a high)?

—What was one not so good thing that happened (a low)?

—Did you ever feel alone?

—Do you know that you are never, ever alone? That God is always with you...in the good times and in the hard times? In the happy times and in the sad times? Next time you feel alone, remember that God is there...loving you through!



•• **HOOP IT UP**

**What You Need:** Hula-hoops

**What You Do:**

• Challenge the kids to do various tricks with the hula-hoops. You can do the suggestions below and/or add your own.

- Hula the normal way
- Twirl the hoop on an arm
- Twirl it on one foot
- Use it like a jump rope
- See if two kids can hula together

• **NOTE:** We'll set up an activity station in the large leader bin holding area outside the grade 4/5 rooms. Groups can rotate through the station as it becomes available. Another option would be to have each group send representatives to compete with kids from other groups to see who can do the coolest hula hoop tricks. A leader could time kids to see how long they can do one of the hula styles above, and then let others see if they can beat the time.

**What You Say:** "That was fun...and pretty funny at times! You're pretty great at circus performing. **[Transition]** Today in Large Group Worship/WoW we'll spend/we spent time exploring what it means to never be alone.

*[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]*

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## GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• **THE JAIL JOURNAL** *(application activity/review the Bible story)*

**What You Need:** "Jail Journal" activity pages, pens, markers, Bibles

**What You Do:**

- Tell kids to pretend they are in jail with Joseph, and they are on the staff of the jail newspaper, The Jail Journal. They will write articles and draw pictures.
- Remind kids that all good stories include "Who, What, When, Where, and Why."
- Divide kids into three groups, and assign each group one story:
  - Joseph and His Brothers | How/why Joseph ended up in Egypt [Genesis 37]
  - How/why Joseph ended up in jail [Genesis 39:1-2 + Genesis 39:19-23]
  - Joseph helps cupbearer and baker, but he's still in jail [Genesis 40]
- Depending on the number of kids in each group, you could also suggest they assign each person a role: illustrator, writer, and presenter.
- Remind kids to brainstorm together as a group before they start on their article.
- When groups have finished their articles, allow time for them to share the stories and pictures with the other groups.

**What You Say:** "Joseph was handed a pretty raw deal. He was sold by his brothers, and then unfairly sent to jail, and then when he helped others, they didn't help him get out of jail in return. I bet none of that made sense to Joseph. I know it wouldn't make sense to me! But God was with Joseph through it all, just like God is with us. **[Bottom Line]** When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you. **[Make It Personal]** *(Tell kids an age-appropriate story about a time in your life that didn't make sense, but God was with*



*you and worked things out in the end.)* Just like my story turned out all right when I trusted God with the results, so will Joseph's. But that's a story for another week!"

•• **SCENARIO BINGO** (*application activity*)

**What You Need:** "Bingo Cards"—1 for each kid, "Bingo Scenarios" activity page, markers, prizes (provided)

**What You Do:**

- Give each kid a bingo card and a marker.
- Hold the "Bingo Scenarios" in your hand like they're playing cards. Hold them out to one kid and have her choose a card.
- Ask her to read what's on the card.
- Tell kids to find the picture on their bingo cards that matches the scenario and cross it off.
- Ask kids how they would feel if that scenario really happened. How might that affect them and their family? How would they react? How would God want them to react?
- Continue playing until all scenarios have been discussed or you run out of time.
- When kids get their first "bingo," give them a candy prize, but tell them to keep playing.
- After the game, give anyone who hasn't yet received one a candy prize.

**What You Say:** "Those are all some pretty tough situations. Life would certainly not make much sense if any of those things happened to you. And it would be perfectly normal to be angry. But God doesn't want us to stay there in our anger and confusion. God wants us to trust and remember that God is always with us. Because God is with us, even good things can happen in the middle of bad situations... just like when you got a treat in the middle of a game about bad situations! **[Bottom Line] When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.**"

•• **LEAN ON ME** (*memory verse activity*)

**What You Need:** Bibles

**What You Do:**

- Using the tips below, look up Proverbs 3:5 with the kids and read it aloud several times.

**Finding verses with 4th/5th graders:** Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents so kids can see what it looks like. Ask kids to find Proverbs in the list under "Old Testament." When the kids find Proverbs, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Proverbs. When they find the page Proverbs begins on, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 5 in chapter 3.

- Pair the kids up. Make sure the kids in each pair are of a similar size. If you have an odd number of kids, some will have to take turns.
- Tell pairs to sit back to back.
- Challenge them to stand up without using their hands, by pressing against each other's backs while they push up. As they do so, they should say the verse together.
- Do this several times, letting kids switch partners, if there is interest.

**What You Say:** "Just like you had to lean on someone else and trust them to keep pushing on you so you wouldn't fall down and could complete this activity, you also need to lean on God and trust God to hold you up when things don't make sense. **[Bottom Line] When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you,** kind of like you trusted your friend was with you in this activity."

