

Alley Rundown—October 9th, 2022

Today's Bible Story: Big Picture (Joseph Forgives His Brothers) • *Genesis 41–45*

Today's Key Question: When has something turned out better than you expected?

Today's Bottom Line: Hold on because there's a bigger story.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up.* Galatians 6:9 (NIV)

CG: Dude Perfect Filler Videos

“Well, hello, Alley! So glad to see you all here today! I am having a great time with you all this month, and we have SO much more in store. You know last week, we talked about needing grit to help us get through some hard things. So I wanted to ask you a question. Have you ever braced yourself for the worst, like you were almost positive a certain situation was going to be an absolute train wreck? You planned for the worst, but then it actually went better than you expected? Maybe you were called down to the principal's office, but . . . she gave you an award? Or you went to your game thinking your team was going to get crushed, but . . . you won? Who has a story? (*Take a few stories as you have time.*) Well, let me tell you about this one time . . .

*Tell a personal story similar to the one below of a time where something went way better than you expected it to go (a game, presentation, a hard conversation, etc.)
Optional: turn the following story into a hypothetical situation.*

Several years ago now, my good friend Eddie invited me to be his partner for an adventure race: mountain biking, high ropes, hiking, and map orienteering. It'd be a grueling day of trying to find different locations over 30 square miles to fill our card with stamps. He'd done several before, but this would be my first time doing anything like this. I was good on my feet, but my mountain bike was a discount-store special. I wasn't quite sure that it'd be up for the challenge. But we trained for months, riding up and down hills to build stamina and hiking the woods to learn how to use the compass with the orienteering maps. I was exhausted, and the bike had seen better days, but it did alright throughout the training. The true test would be on race day. I wasn't too optimistic, and at this point I just didn't want to come in last place or pass out on the course. Sure enough, race day came . . . we tried our hardest and never gave up. We only had to fix a bike tire once. And sure enough . . . I didn't pass out. AND we didn't come in last place! And most of all, we had fun. I'm so glad we raced and didn't give up.

“Adventure races, difficult tests, going up against the best teams. It's one thing to look back and see how everything turned out great. But life happens as we're living it, and we never, ever get to see the whole story while it's happening. Which brings up a big question: how can we hang on and keep going when we can never, ever know how what we're going through will turn out? How can grit show up in those moments? And more than that, how can we trust God when we don't really know how God will show up to help? That's an important question for us to answer. Thankfully, God inspired the writers of the Bible to include some amazing stories of God's faithfulness to help us trust God no matter what when we face confusing or difficult moments in our own life. Let's check one out now with the help of this week's Episode.”

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 14:00)

“You know, we don’t always think about the brothers’ perspective in this story. We often, and rightly so, focus on Joseph. But just for a moment, think about those brothers. Things certainly must have felt like they were spiraling out of control. There was definitely a point where it looked like they were not getting out of the huge mess they were in. When they were standing before Joseph, well, it looked like it was over. But then, all of the sudden, they experienced incredible grace and forgiveness from Joseph, everything ended up being turned around. They were rescued and brought into the safety of Joseph’s household. God was writing a bigger story than any of them could have even imagined.

“There’s something really important for us to remember. When we’re in the middle of a really difficult situation, it can feel like that what we’re experiencing is just always how it’s ever going to be. Or we might think there is no chance of a good ending. But we follow a God who specializes in taking pretty tough situations and finding a way to turn them around. God even turned Jesus’ death into Jesus’ resurrection. This doesn’t mean that every situation will always have a happy ending, but when we believe that God is telling a bigger story with our lives, we can have hope that God sees it all more clearly than we can.”

“As you go to your small groups today, think about this:

SLIDE: Key Question

“When has something turned out better than you expected? When were you convinced the ending was going to be a tragedy but God was able to do something different with your story? How can remembering this help you with what you’re experiencing right now? If you’re not sure how to answer those questions, don’t worry. You’ll talk more about it with your small group. Before we head out, let’s pray and thank God for being trustworthy in the past and ask God to give us strength to show grit with what we’re experiencing right now. Let’s pray.

Dismiss students to their small groups after prayer and offering.

OFFERING TIME:

We are giving our offering to our friends in Mexico through an organization called Vida Nueva Ministries. Unfortunately, many families in Mexico don’t have enough money for food or education. Vida Nueva Ministries is dedicated to overcoming poverty through education. Here is a picture of one of their amazing teachers.

SLIDE: Teacher in Classroom

Vida Nueva has built an entire set of schools in the city of Piedras Negras, where kids of all backgrounds can come and learn. They also receive meals and hear about Jesus. Isn’t that great? So if you brought an offering today, you can bring it up now!