

City SG—October 9th, 2022

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

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)

1. Gather the Crops

Non-Reader Option highlighted below

What You Need: "Gather the Crops" Slips and Bibles (1 set per Group)

What You Do:

- Scatter the "Gather the Crops" slips around your space.
- Help kids look up and read Galatians 6:9 with the Bible navigation tips below.

Finding verses with 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders: Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Galatians in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find Galatians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Galatians. Help the kids find the page. When they find Galatians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 6. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 9 in chapter 6.

- Ask if anyone wants to read the verse out loud or if anyone already has it memorized and would like to say it for the group.
- Explain there are 23 "crops" spread out around the room.
- Instruct kids to spread out and each gather two or more crops (depending on how many kids you have) and bring them back to the group.
- Tell kids to work together to put the crops in verse order, using their Bibles for help.
 - **If your kids struggle with reading, you can assist them in putting the verse together in order.**

What You Say:

"Great job, everyone. Did you know that crops like wheat don't just spring up overnight on a farm? The farmers have to be patient and diligent when planting, watering, and caring for their crops. 'Crops' is another word for 'plants' or 'produce.' Farmers don't see the plant growing right away. It can take weeks before they even see a little sprout.

"Paul writes in this verse that the good we do can grow good things in our life that we may not see right now but will later. What is something good you can do to help others that you may not immediately see? (*Being kind to someone who isn't kind to you could change that person's heart and help them choose to be kind. If you pick up trash you see on the ground, someone else may see you doing it and decide to pick up trash the next time they see it on the ground.*) We may not immediately see what doing good does, but you can **[Bottom Line]** hold on because there's a bigger story."

2. Forgiveness Slate

What You Need: Dry erase board with marker (1 set per Group)

What You Do:

- Give one kid the dry erase board and a marker.
- Instruct kids to draw exactly what you say as you retell the Bible story.
- Tell kids that Pharaoh dreamed about cows then have them draw a cow. Pause while they draw then have them erase it.
- Have kids, pass the dry erase board and marker to their right as you continue to tell the story.
- Continue having kids draw then erase the following parts of the story as you go.

- Pharaoh dreamed about wheat—draw what they think wheat looks like then erase it.
- Joseph got out of jail—draw jail bars then erase.
- There would be seven years of plenty and seven years of famine—draw the number seven then erase.
- Joseph helped store the grain so when the famine came, no one would go hungry—draw what they think Joseph looked like then erase.
- When his brothers came to buy food, Joseph gave them food but didn't tell them who he was yet. He told them to bring back Benjamin when they returned to Egypt—draw Benjamin then erase it.
- When the brothers ran out of food again, they returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and Joseph told them who he was—write "WOW!" then erase.
- Joseph forgave his brothers for what they had done all those years ago when they threw him into a pit and sold him—write "Forgive."
- Joseph pushed through all the hard things that happened to him—write, "Go Joseph!"
- Have kids draw or write something Joseph's brothers did that was wrong and cruel to him (took his coat, threw him in a pit, sold him to slave traders, told their dad he was dead). Joseph was able to forgive his brothers because he knew God had a bigger plan.
- Tell kids they can erase whatever they draw on the boards. That's like God's forgiveness—the bad things we do are erased in His eyes. As great as Joseph's story of forgiveness is, the greatest story of forgiveness actually came from Jacob's family line. Jesus Himself was born from Jacob's family line.
- Have kids erase boards again then draw something wrong they've done (big or small). Tell them that because of what Jesus did on the cross, they are forgiven!
- Then have kids erase what they drew. Tell them that God's forgiveness and grace through Jesus means that those wrong things we do no longer separate us from having a relationship with God. They're gone! They can't come between us and God. Just like it is no longer on their slate, Jesus has wiped it away, too.

What You Say:

"Isn't it so cool that Joseph forgave his brothers? He could have chosen to be angry with them and sent them away hungry, but he held on and pushed through to forgive his brothers. What Joseph didn't know throughout all of his story is that he was part of a bigger story God was writing—a story to save Joseph's own family and also the world through Jesus. You can **[Bottom Line] hold on because there's a bigger story.**"

3. Upside Down

What You Need: Bible marked at Galatians 6 and a ball (1 per group)

What You Do:

- Guide kids to stand in a circle with their shoulders turned toward the middle, each kid facing the back of the kid in front of them.
- Invite a volunteer to open the Bible where marked.
- Read the verse aloud, encouraging kids to say it with you.
- Give one kid the ball.
- Lead kids to pass the ball BACKWARDS over their heads and under their legs as you chant the words of the verse.
- Encourage the kids to say it with you as they learn it.
- Add interest by reversing the direction the kids pass the ball.

What You Say:

"God can see the bigger story, even when we can't. He can turn things that SEEM upside down into things that are GOOD. And when we know that God has a bigger story, we can hold on and 'not become tired of doing good.' So don't give up! **[Bottom Line] Hold on because there's a bigger story.**"

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Use the conversation below as a guide to lead kids into a responsive prayer where they finish the Bottom Line when you stop at different points.

What You Say:

“The thing to remember today is to **[Bottom Line] hold on because there’s a bigger story**. Joseph held on through some pretty difficult times, didn’t he? (*Hold up a new finger—keeping your thumb tucked into your palm—as you say each of the following.*) He held on when his brothers threw him into a pit. He held on when his brothers sold him into slavery. He held on when he was in jail even though he hadn’t done anything wrong. And he held on when he was forgotten.

“But God flipped all of the bad things that happened to Joseph UPSIDE DOWN (*curl your fingers down to your palm and point your thumb out*) and turned them into something GOOD. (*Give a thumbs-up.*) He used EVERYTHING that happened to Joseph to put him in the right place at the right time to save his family. God can turn the bad things in your life upside down, too. So remember to **[Bottom Line] hold on because there’s a bigger story**. Let’s pray.

“Dear God, help us remember to **hold on because there’s a bigger** (*pause*). When bad things happen, help us remember to **hold on because there’s a** (*pause*). When sad things happen, help us remember to **hold on because** (*pause*). When things happen that we don’t understand, help us remember to **hold on** (*pause*). No matter what happens, help us always remember to (*lead kids to say entire Bottom Line with you*). We love You, Lord. Amen.”