

## VBS 2017: Journeys of Joseph

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by Wayne Goff

Every lesson in our upcoming VBS comes from the background of Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel (Genesis 37-50). Although determining ancient chronology is difficult, it is estimated that Joseph lived around 1800 B.C. Thus, his life's story is more than 3817 years old! Yet every single story is as riveting and contemporary as any TV soap opera you would care to watch. The events in Joseph's life reveal the same kinds of **motives** that we see today, both good and bad.

1. **Envy.** Joseph was betrayed by his own flesh and blood because of their envy of him. Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors, which not only showed to the other brothers that Joseph was his favorite, but also that the Birthright might very well be given to him! "Envy" is a horrible motive, but very real and human. The Bible condemns it everywhere, yet it can be a wedge to destroy good will between one another. Solomon said that "*envy is rottenness to the bones*" (Proverbs 14:30). Envy crucified Jesus (Matt. 27:18). It might be wise to attend the VBS and study this nightmarish motive!
2. **Temptation.** While Joseph was a slave in Egypt, Potiphar's wife had eyes for this young, handsome, intelligent man (Gen. 39:6-7). Joseph resisted her advances, suffered greatly for his righteousness, but in the end all turned out as God intended. What a story for young people today who so easily give in to temptation! Come learn about the character which Joseph possessed which allowed him to do right even under great pressure!
3. **Wisdom.** Joseph possessed great wisdom and yet realized that it was a gift from God. He told Pharaoh as he stood before his august throne: "*It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace*" (Gen. 41:16). How did Joseph possess such great wisdom while maintaining a heart of humility? It is a great understatement to say that Joseph was a man of great character! Come learn wisdom from his life through God's Word.
4. **Forgiveness.** If anyone should have exacted *revenge* from his enemies, then Joseph should have felt justified to do so! But he did not. Instead, he humbly forgave each of his brothers when the time was right. He tested their hearts to see if they had learned from their mistakes, but in the end he was loving,

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