



FORMED BY WHAT MATTERS

Lessons in Character through Joseph

#integrity • #kindness • #wisdom
#perseverance • #servanthood • #humility



FORMED BY WHAT MATTERS

What kind of person am I becoming?

Character is often shaped most deeply when life is difficult, unfair or outside our control. Joseph moves from favoured son to slave, from slavery to prison, and eventually to enormous responsibility in Egypt. Through each change, he must decide what kind of person he will become.

Will disappointment make him bitter? Will success make him proud? Will power become an opportunity for revenge or a chance to serve? Joseph's story asks: What kind of person am I becoming, whatever my circumstances might be?

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET



READ

Read the key passage in your Bible, then Joseph's story.



THINK

Notice what the story reveals about character and faith.



TALK

Use the questions to listen, discuss and learn from one another.



LIVE

Choose one practical action and carry it into the week.

Within the LIVE section you will find Put It Into Practice and Prayer prompts.

Bible references are provided for each devotion. Read the passages in your Bible.





JOSEPH

CHARACTER THROUGH CHANGE



Joseph's circumstances change again and again: favoured son, slave, prisoner and eventually leader. Yet across those changes, his story repeatedly raises the question of what kind of person he will become. Joseph's life shows us that circumstances do not have to determine our character.

01 Doing Right When No One Is Watching

#integrity

Genesis 39:6-12

02 Generosity, Forgiveness and Care for Others

#kindness

Genesis 45:4-7

03 Seeking Knowledge and Understanding from God

#wisdom

Genesis 41:15-16

04 Standing Firm When Life Is Hard

#perseverance

Genesis 39-41

05 Looking Beyond Ourselves to Others' Needs

#servanthood

Genesis 41:47-49

06 Depending on God and Using Influence for Good

#humility

Genesis 50:19-20

“Your circumstances may change. The person you are becoming still matters.”



01 Doing Right When No One Is Watching

#integrity



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 39:6-12

Far from his family, Joseph serves in Potiphar's household. Potiphar trusts him with considerable responsibility. Then Potiphar's wife repeatedly pressures Joseph to betray that trust. Joseph refuses. His decision is about more than whether he will get caught. It concerns who he is becoming and his relationship with God. Eventually, he runs from the situation rather than compromise.



Integrity means doing what is right even when the wrong choice seems easier. Joseph has no family nearby watching him, and Potiphar is not in the room. Yet he chooses faithfulness. Integrity grows when we decide what matters before pressure arrives. Sometimes the wisest response to temptation is to walk away rather than stay and debate with it.

#integrity





Q1 What does integrity look like in daily life?

Q2 Why is it sometimes difficult to do the right thing?

Q3 How can we build a habit of integrity?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one situation this week where honesty or integrity may be difficult. Decide beforehand what doing the right thing will look like.

PRAYER

God, help me become someone who chooses what is right whether people are watching or not. Give me wisdom to recognise temptation and courage to walk away when I need to. Amen.

"Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before."

C. S. Lewis

"Outside of the will of God, there's nothing I want..."

A. W. Tozer

#integrity



02 Generosity, Forgiveness and Care for Others

#kindness



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 45:4-7

Years after selling Joseph into slavery, his brothers arrive in Egypt needing food. They do not immediately recognise him. Joseph now has power. He could humiliate them, punish them or send them away. Instead, he reveals who he is and chooses reconciliation. The people who once harmed him are now vulnerable, and he uses his position to help them.



Kindness becomes harder when we have been hurt. Joseph does not pretend that his brothers' actions were acceptable. They caused enormous suffering. But he refuses to let their past actions decide who he will become. Forgiveness means refusing to build our future around revenge. Sometimes kindness is strongest when we have the power to hurt someone back and choose not to.

#kindness





Q1 How can kindness transform relationships?

Q2 Why is forgiveness an important part of kindness?

Q3 Who can you show kindness to this week?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Think about a relationship where you have been holding onto anger or resentment. Consider one small step toward forgiveness, peace or kindness.

PRAYER

God, help me respond to others with grace rather than revenge. When I have been hurt, give me wisdom, courage and compassion. Help me become someone who brings peace. Amen.

"In forgiving, rather than retaliating, you make a choice to bear the cost."

Tim Keller

#kindness



03 Seeking Knowledge and Understanding from God

#wisdom



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 41:15-16

Joseph leaves prison to stand before Pharaoh, whose disturbing dreams nobody can explain. Joseph could use this moment to make himself look impressive. Instead, he makes clear that the wisdom Pharaoh needs comes from God. Joseph recognises both his ability and its source. He listens, interprets the dreams and later offers a wise response to the crisis Egypt will face.



A clever person may know a lot. A wise person understands how knowledge should be used. Joseph combines understanding with humility and recognises that God is the source of his wisdom. Wisdom often begins when we are willing to say, "I don't know everything." It grows when we pray, listen, seek advice and think carefully before acting.

#wisdom





Q1 Why was Joseph willing to give God credit before Pharaoh?

Q2 What is the difference between being intelligent and being wise?

Q3 Where do you need God's wisdom at the moment?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Seek God's guidance in a tough decision this week. Choose one decision you are facing. Pray about it and speak with a trusted, wise person before you act.

PRAYER

God, you are the source of wisdom. Help me listen before I act, seek good advice and recognise that I do not have every answer. Guide my decisions this week. Amen.

"Wisdom is the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it."

J. I. Packer

#wisdom



04 Standing Firm When Life Is Hard

#perseverance



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 39-41

Joseph's brothers betray him and sell him into slavery. Later, a false accusation puts him in prison. Even after helping Pharaoh's cupbearer, Joseph waits before anyone remembers him. For long stretches, nothing seems to improve. Yet he continues to live faithfully and use his abilities. He cannot control his circumstances, but he can decide how he responds to them.



Perseverance means continuing with what is good even when results take time. Joseph's story reminds us that difficult seasons can still hold worthwhile growth. Patience forms, skills develop and trust grows as character faces testing. We often want to skip the difficult chapters. Sometimes those are the chapters in which we are being formed most deeply.

#perseverance





Q1 Which part of Joseph's journey would have been hardest to endure?

Q2 Why is it easy to give up when we cannot see progress?

Q3 What is one area of your life where you need to keep going?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Keep trusting God through difficulties. Identify one difficult but worthwhile thing you are facing. Rather than focusing on the whole problem, decide what the next faithful step looks like.

"There is a certain kind of maturity that can be attained only through the discipline of suffering."

Don Carson

PRAYER

God, help me keep going when life does not turn out as I expected. Give me strength for the next step and help difficult experiences shape good character in me rather than bitterness. Amen.

"Our heavenly Father sends us frequent troubles to try our faith. If our faith be worth anything, it will stand the test."

Charles Spurgeon

#perseverance



05 Looking Beyond Ourselves to Others' Needs

#servanthood



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 41:47-49

Joseph moves from prison to one of Egypt's most powerful positions. With authority, resources and influence comes responsibility. Joseph knows that years of famine are coming. During the good years, he organises food collection and storage. His planning helps preserve countless lives. Joseph's influence becomes valuable because he uses it for something bigger than himself.



Servanthood changes how we think about ability and influence. Instead of asking, "What can I get from this?" we ask, "How can I use what I have to help?" You do not need to run a country to serve. Your time, skills, friendships or energy can help others. Character shows in what we do with what has been placed in our hands.

#servanthood





Q1 How did Joseph use his position for the good of other people?

Q2 Why can power or influence tempt people to think mainly about themselves?

Q3 What ability or resource do you have that could help someone else?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Serve in a practical way this week. Help without being asked, include someone, explain something, clean up, encourage someone or make another person's job easier.

PRAYER

God, help me see what I have as something I can use for others. Give me a servant heart and teach me to notice practical opportunities to help. Amen.

"Worship is love on its knees before the beloved; just as mission is love on its feet to serve the beloved."

N. T. Wright

#servanthood



06 Depending on God and Using Influence for Good



#humility



READ



JOSEPH'S STORY

Key passage: Genesis 50:19-20

The balance of power has reversed. Once Joseph was helpless before his brothers. Now they fear what he might do to them. After their father dies, they worry that Joseph will finally take revenge. Joseph refuses. He recognises that his power does not give him the right to decide everything. He acknowledges God's place in the story and responds with mercy.



THINK

Humility matters when we succeed. Depending on God can feel harder when we feel capable or respected. Joseph has enormous influence, yet he does not make himself the final judge of everyone around him. Humility means recognising our strengths and remembering our responsibility to use them well. The real test of power is what we do when we could make everything about ourselves.

#humility





Q1 Why might Joseph have been tempted to take revenge on his brothers?

Q2 What does Joseph's response show us about humility?

Q3 How can we remain humble when something goes well for us?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Practise humility in your successes. The next time something goes well, deliberately thank someone who helped you and resist the temptation to take all the credit yourself.

PRAYER

God, thank you for the gifts and opportunities you give me. Help me stay humble when things go well and use success to bless others rather than make myself more important. Amen.

"At every stage of our Christian development and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, pride is the greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend."

John Stott

#humility





Joseph

WHAT IS GOD FORMING IN ME?

Bring your whole life to God —
and let him shape who you are becoming.