

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Family ...why bother?

OPENING UP



Do you have an experience of being pleasantly surprised by the outcome of something that appeared to be undesirable?

TEXT



Is My Family Too Messy | Genesis 50:15–21 (ESV)

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you."' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

MESSAGE OUTLINE



Big Idea: God reigns over the chaos in our relationships.

1. The Family's Chaotic Condition
2. God's Providential Control
3. Christ's Redeeming Work

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. Have you ever made a big decision that impacted your entire family—positively or negatively? If so, what was that situation like?
2. Have you experienced favoritism in a relationship that mattered to you?
3. Where does jealousy tend to surface in your life, and how can the gospel correct those thoughts?
4. How does Joseph's recognition of God's work in his horrifying circumstances help you understand God's hand in your life?
5. How might this story (of Joseph and God's redemption in it) foreshadow and help us see more clearly the ministry and life of Jesus?

LIFE CHALLENGE



God is at work, whether we realize it or not. You don't even have to ask him. He is at work—wonderfully bringing about his great redemption throughout the world. Consider your own life and the people in it. Are the circumstances challenging? Do you find yourself crying out to God from what feel like impossible circumstances? With Joseph's story of God's grace in mind, how can your perspective of your situation be changed into a posture of trust in God? And who are the people around you who might need encouragement in the midst of their own circumstances?

CLOSING PRAYER



Lord, you are here in my life, in the lives of those around me... Sometimes in ways I can see, and sometimes in ways that are wholly imperceptible... Help me to walk by faith. Even if you never cleanly tie off the story of my life like you did in Joseph's life, I put my trust in you. Help me to be a safety to those who are suffering, as I continue to learn and relearn your presence and sovereign power in my life.