



Joseph's Brothers Bow Level C

Genesis 42

Ages 11-14

Life Focus: I can get help from the Lord by going to the Word.

Story Summary: Jacob sent his sons to buy food in Egypt, but kept Benjamin home. In Egypt the brothers bowed down to Joseph, not knowing him. He recognized them but treated them as strangers and accused them of spying. Testing their story, Joseph imprisoned his brothers and then, after three days, he offered to keep one brother while the others took food to the family in exchange for promising to bring Benjamin. The brothers believed this was a punishment for how they had treated Joseph. Joseph commanded that his brothers' sacks be filled with grain and that each man's money be put back in his sack. The brothers were dismayed when they found the money. They told Jacob what had happened, but Jacob would not let Benjamin to go. He thought he would die of grief if Benjamin was harmed.

Lesson 4

Materials Needed

Supplied with Lesson

Additional Materials

	<i>Supplied with Lesson</i>		<i>Additional Materials</i>
1. Getting Started (2-3 min)	Welcome Warm-up Activity	Welcome Warm-up Activity directions p. 38	
2. Focus on the Word use all activities (5-7 min)	Read the Word Talk About It story discussion	Talk About It discussion guide p. 38	Bible or copy of Genesis 42
3. Engage with the Word choose 1 or 2 activities (15-20 min)	Group Activity set up a maze that students can only get out of by asking for help; follow up with a discussion on asking for help	Escape the Maze directions p. 39 <i>Escape the Maze</i> p. 42	lengths of rope or a large ball of yarn; a blindfold for each student; objects to tie rope around at waist height to create a maze, e.g. trees, chairs, etc.
	Discussion Joseph appeared angry with his brothers; explore ways in which reality is not as it seems!	Exploring Appearances directions pp. 39-40 <i>Exploring Appearances</i> p. 43	pens or pencils
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 min)	Take the Message Home a door hanger with a summary of the lesson and activities	Joseph's Brothers Bow Door Hanger p. 44	color version available at www.newchurch.org/youth-journey-programs

1. Getting Started

Welcome Warm-up Activity

Value Shuffle

Assign a value to each corner of the room: agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree. Ask students to respond to the following statements by moving to the corner of the room that best reflects their response.

1. Reading a good book is better than hiking.
2. Helping people makes me grow spiritually more than reading the Word.
3. What a person believes is more important than what he or she does.

Briefly discuss why students chose the corner of the room they did.

2. Focus on the Word

Read Genesis 42 (choose selections)

**Talk
About It**

Have you ever had a hard time recognizing someone you have not seen for a long time? What was it like?

Why didn't Joseph's brothers recognize him? They did not expect to see Joseph. He had become an important ruler in Egypt and wore Egyptian clothes and had an Egyptian hairstyle. He spoke Egyptian (not Hebrew), and used an interpreter.

How did Joseph's accusation of spying affect his brothers? Initially they seem to have panicked and complicated their defense by saying they were twelve brothers when there were only ten of them there. They felt guilty about how they had treated Joseph and thought this might be why they were being accused.

How might you respond if you were accused of doing something you had not done?

One way to understand this story is to think of Joseph as representing the Lord. In what ways does the Lord challenge you to think about what you are doing? Through the Word, conscience, and through other people. He challenges us to take a look at what we are doing from His perspective—the perspective of heaven.

The brothers spent three days in prison. How do we become spiritually imprisoned? False ideas cause mental conflict (temptation) and imprison our minds, preventing us from being free to see, believe and act from true ideas.

When the brothers arrived at an inn, one brother went to feed his donkey and discovered his money! Who did the brothers think had done this? God—they thought He had done it to get them in trouble.

Does God punish people who do something wrong? No. The Lord is not capable of doing anything evil to anyone. He is love itself, mercy itself, goodness itself (*True Christianity* 651). However, evil actions bring their own consequences.

Why did Joseph's family go to Egypt? They were hungry and did not want to starve.

Many people in the Bible went to Egypt—including Jesus. Egypt symbolizes true ideas from the Word. Egypt provided food during famines just as the Word provides spiritual food to a mind that is starved for true ideas. In what ways is going to the Word like taking a journey? Each time a person goes to the Word, he or she is going to the Lord. The Lord is there, ready to feed and sustain each person on his or her life's journey. The Lord is present with us...constantly urging us to receive him (*True Christianity* 498).

3. Engage with the Word

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Escape the Maze

The Lord alone prepares us for heaven. We cannot get to heaven without Him. Our job is to accept His invitation to follow Him and do the work that this takes. The Heavenly Doctrine teaches that the brothers thinking they were buying their grain is like a person believing he can earn heaven by his own effort. This activity simulates what it is like to try to get to heaven without asking for the Lord's help. Follow the activity with *Escape the Maze* discussion (p. 42) about the importance of asking for help.

1. Before class, create an enclosed "maze" (really a corral with an exit you will close off after all the students are inside) large enough for your group to walk in at the same time. Wrap a rope, string or yarn tightly around trees, barrels, chairs or other objects at waist height. Make sure there are no obstacles on the ground that could trip someone. If there unavoidable obstacles such as tree roots, station a sighted monitor to guide people safely around them.
2. Blindfold students. Guide them one-by-one to a spot on the rope. Place them around the rope facing in different directions.
4. Players must keep one hand on the rope and the other hand in front of their faces at all times, so as not to get hurt if they run into another person.
5. Once all players are situated, close the entrance.
6. Announce that the object is for each player to figure a way out of the maze. They may not untie or go under the rope. They must follow the rope around the obstacles.
7. Once everyone is in place ready to start say, "If you need help during the activity, raise your hand." **Note to Leader:** *This is the key to the whole activity—and the solution to the problem. The ONLY way to get out of the maze is to ask for help.*
8. If a player raises his or her hand and asks, "Is there a way out of here?" the answer is "Yes!" and the game keeps going.
9. In order to escape the maze, a student must raise a hand and ASK for help.
10. Once a player asks for help, go into the maze, take the student's hand or put your hand on their shoulder and lead them out either by opening the "gate" or helping them under the rope.
11. Players who get out must not laugh, talk or disturb others. They may take off their blindfolds.
12. The activity ends when it is no longer beneficial to continue. Keep an eye out for students who are frustrated because they cannot figure out how to escape and are aware that they are one of the last ones left in the maze.
13. Distribute copies of *Escape the Maze* (p. 42) for students to share and discuss.

Choice

Exploring Appearances

Joseph appeared to treat his brothers as if he was angry with them. He accused them of spying and threw them into prison, but it is clear that this anger was not the real Joseph. Students will explore appearances like this in the Word and in their personal lives.

Directions on next page.

Important Note!

Set up the maze where the students will not be able to look at it ahead of time. Blindfold students before leading them to the maze.

Materials

space to make a large maze, a copy of *Escape the Maze* p. 42 for each student, a blindfold for each student, rope or yarn

Preparation

Set up a maze using rope or yarn wrapped at waist-height around objects such as trees, chairs, etc. Look for obstacles that might trip people (such as tree roots) and station a monitor there to guide people around them.

New Church Concept: Only the Lord can get us to heaven

A person is unable of himself to come near the Lord and be joined to Him; rather the Lord has to come near the person and be joined to him. Since the Lord draws a person towards Himself, the appearance is that the person does of himself come near and join himself. This happens when the person refrains from evils, because not doing evils is a person's own choice. When this happens good from the Lord flows in. This good is never lacking; it is present within the life a person has from the Lord. The good accompanying that life is received only in the measure that evils have been removed. The Word is the means by which the Lord's presence among people is achieved because the Word unites a person to heaven and through heaven to the Lord (see *Arcana Coelestia* 9378).

Materials

Exploring Appearances p. 43 for each student

Exploring Appearances *continued*

1. When Joseph first sees his brothers after a long separation he appears to be angry with them. He accuses them of spying and throws them into prison. Compare the appearance that Joseph is angry with the way parents sometimes appear to treat their children harshly, e.g. if a child is in danger.
2. Do you think that parents are expressing love for their children when they are treating them this way? Why or why not?
3. What are some of the ways we can respond when a person gets angry?
4. The Heavenly Doctrine tells us that anger boils up inside us when something challenges what we love or want (*Arcana Coelestia* 5034; *Apocalypse Explained* 693:2 - see below). How can knowing this help us understand our own anger?
4. The Heavenly Doctrine also tells us that when the loves of good people are attacked they respond with zeal, not anger. It is called anger in the Word, but inwardly it is “charity, goodness, and mercy” (see *Apocalypse Explained* 693:2 below). What is the difference between anger and zeal?
5. When we are angry, how can we tell whether good or evil loves are motivating our own feelings?
6. Distribute a copy of *Exploring Appearances* (p. 49) and a pen or pencil to each student. Have students divide into pairs and complete the page together.
7. Gather the group together and share responses.
8. Today’s story is part of a longer story. In the lessons ahead we will find out what was really in Joseph’s heart as he treated his brothers so harshly!

Anger arises or is aroused in someone when the love linking him to some other person, or to some particular object, is offended by that person or object. When the link is broken, that person flares up or becomes angry, as though something in his life that gives him delight, and thus something of his own life, has been lost. This sorrow turns into grief, and the grief into anger (*Arcana Coelestia* 5034).

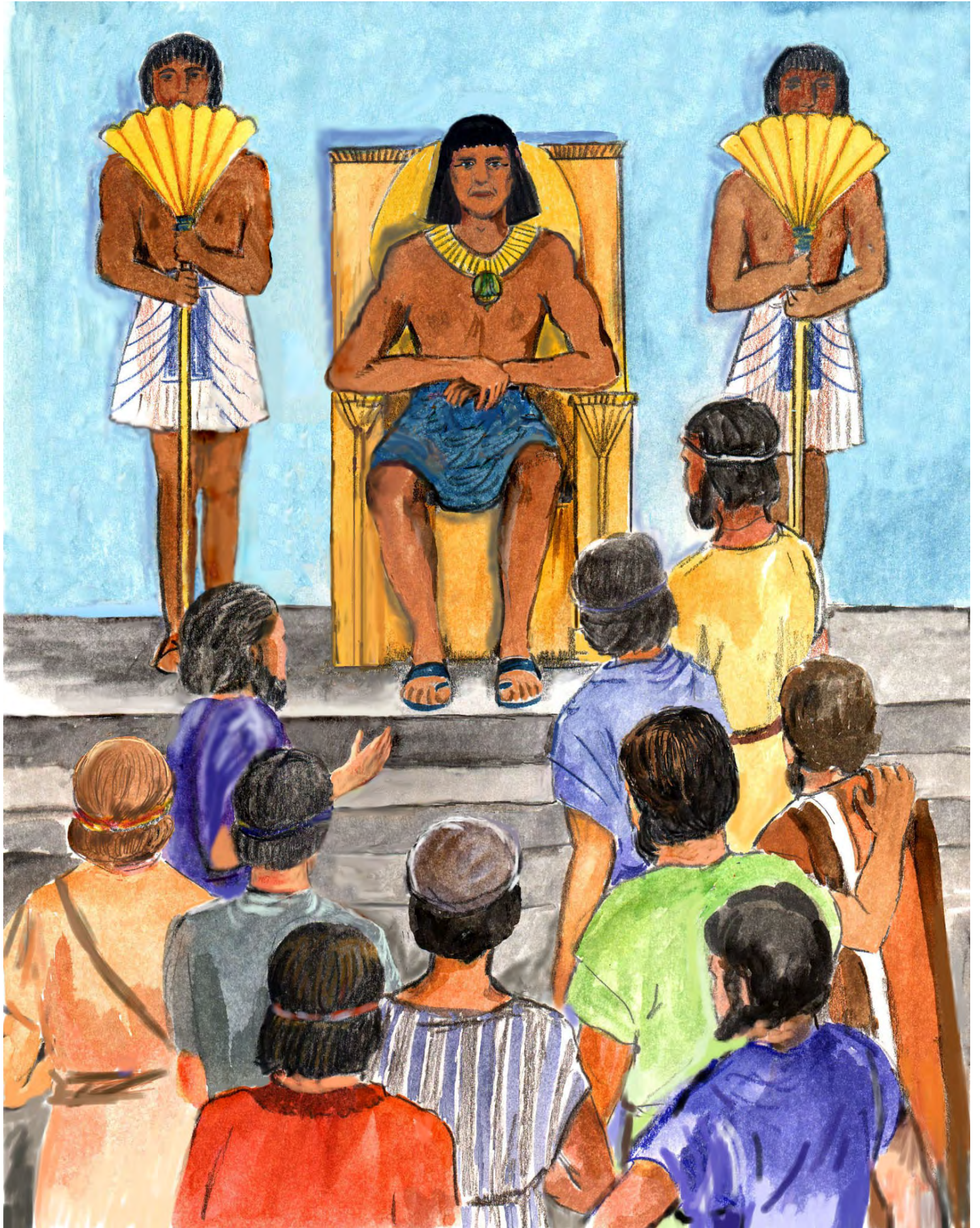
Everyone is angered when his love and the delight of his love are assaulted, this being the cause of all anger. What a person loves is his life and so to hurt what someone loves is to hurt his life. Hurt causes commotion of mind and anger. When a good person’s love is assaulted, he has zeal and not anger. This zeal is called anger in the Word, but it is not anger. It is called anger because it appears outwardly like anger, but inwardly it is nothing but charity, goodness, and mercy. Zeal does not, like anger, continue after the one towards whom it was kindled repents and turns away from evil (see *Apocalypse Explained* 693.2).

4. Wrap It Up

Closing

Gather the students together. Why is it important for us to recognize our need for the Lord’s help? In what way might asking for help change your life? In what way can the Word have an important impact on your life?

Hand each student a copy of the *Joseph’s Brothers Bow Door Hanger* (p. 50). Read the “You are an instrument of God” section at the top of the hanger with the students. Look at “Give and Receive.” Encourage the students to do one or more of the activities this week.



Escape the Maze

1. How did it feel to be stuck in the maze?
2. What was your biggest challenge in trying to find your way out?
3. Can you think of a time when you felt trapped by emotions or thoughts that you could not escape?
4. Which of the following have you tried when you had a problem or made a mistake? How did it work out?
 - trial and error
 - talking to someone (friend, parent, etc.)
 - hiding it and hoping that nobody would find out
 - talking to God
 - thinking through the first step of a possible solution and starting to work on that
 - reading the Word
5. Jacob's family had a problem. They had no food. Picture their intense hunger. What solution did Jacob suggest?
6. Everyone has a body—but your body is not the real you! Your body is a container for your spirit while you live in the world. Your spirit is the “real” you—the you that lives forever! And your spirit needs spiritual food, just as your body needs natural food. Spiritual food is understanding true ideas and wisely practicing them. Angels are nourished by this food (see *Arcana Coelestia* 5576).
7. What setting might lead a person your age to recognize a spiritual hunger?
8. Jesus said “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7). Why can't a person go to heaven without the Lord's help?
9. What are some ways you can ask the Lord for help?

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Exploring Appearances

Choose a partner. Brainstorm things that may have a different appearance from the reality. These can be appearances in the natural world (such as that the sun revolves around the earth), ways that people behave (for instance an adult yelling and seeming angry with a child who is in danger of being hit by a car), or a passage in the Word (such as Exodus 32, where the Lord says “Leave Me alone so that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them....”). Write your ideas in the chart.

The Appearance	The Reality

...that we may live...

Joseph's Brothers Bow

Cut out the
shaded
doorhanger.
Fold it in half
and hang it over
a door.

You Are an Instrument of God

"God loves each and every human being; and because He cannot do good to them directly, but only indirectly by means of other people, He therefore breathes into people His love."

True Christian Religion 457

It may seem surprising, but the Lord actually needs people to help Him accomplish His work in this world. Your kindness can be an expression of His Divine Love.

You can also receive the Lord's love through the kindness and care of people around you. It can be hard to ask for help, but the Lord wants us all to be of use to one another. Learning to receive help as well as give it is part of His plan for your life.

Give and Receive

I can offer help by...

Think of a way you can help someone today—with a physical or mental task or with emotional support and encouragement.

I can ask for help with...

Is there some activity or relationship that is challenging for you? Look for people who can help—give them the opportunity to give!

I feel the Lord's love when...

Think of an event that made you aware of the presence of the Lord's love, working through you or another person.

GIVE

and

RECEIVE