



Joseph's Sons Blessed Level C

Genesis 48:1-22

Ages 11-14

Life Focus: I can celebrate the Lord's blessings.

Story Summary: Joseph heard that his father Jacob (Israel) was sick and took his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to see him. Jacob sat up in bed, greeted Joseph and told him that Ephraim and Manasseh would be treated as *his own* children. Joseph presented his sons, and Jacob offered to bless them. Joseph approached with his sons, guiding his elder son, Manasseh, to his father's right hand and his younger son, Ephraim, towards his father's left hand. Jacob crossed his hands and stretched his right hand towards Ephraim and his left hand towards Manasseh and blessed Joseph. When Joseph realized what his father had done, he tried to switch Jacob's hands back, but Jacob would not let him do it, and he blessed both Joseph's sons.

Lesson 7

Materials needed

		Supplied with Lesson	Additional Materials
1. Getting Started (2-3 min)	Welcome Warm-up Activity	Welcome Warm-up Activity directions p. 62	
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. 62	Bible or copy of Genesis 48: 1-22
3. Engage with the Word choose 1 or 2 activities (15-20 min)	Action Replay partners act out scenarios depicting both integrity and a lack of integrity and replay the action to resolve issues with integrity	Acting with Integrity directions p. 63 <i>Act with Integrity</i> reading p. 66 for each student; <i>one Act with Integrity</i> scenario card p. 67 for every two students	
	Character Study learn about Joseph	Who is Joseph? directions pp. 63-64 <i>Who Is Joseph</i> pp. 68 <i>Who Is Joseph Answers</i> p. 69	Bibles, 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 Sons Blessed Door Hanger p. 70	color version available at www.newchurch.org/youth-journey-programs

1. Getting Started

Welcome Warm-up Activity

Open Mind

Draw an outline sketch of an empty head on a board or large piece of paper. Ask students to write words or draw symbols or pictures that illustrate the thoughts and feelings of a person who is acting with integrity. If students need help getting started, suggest that they think about Joseph's qualities. In what ways could people see that Joseph acted with integrity? Encourage students to add to the diagram until it shows a fairly complete picture of a person you would describe as having integrity.

2. Focus on the Word

Read **Genesis 48: 1-22**

**Talk
About It**

Joseph welcomed his family in Egypt. They were a large group. His brothers arrived with their wives, children, flocks of animals and all of their possessions. Joseph's father, Jacob (also called Israel), made the journey as an elderly man. Imagine the happy reunion they must have had!

At 147 years of age, Jacob knew he would soon die. He called for Joseph to come to him so he could lay his hands on him and bless him before he died.

What does the word 'blessing' mean? Blessings are things that make us happy, or blessed! They are both natural and spiritual. Stretch students to think about spiritual blessings. The Lord wishes to bless us with a daily sense of usefulness, of being loved, and the happiness, salvation and heaven.

The eldest son usually received a special blessing. This blessing would have been given by the father laying his hands on the son's head while he said a special blessing. The right hand stands for power and strength, and the touch of the right hand pictures a transfer of power from one person to another.

Joseph intentionally arranged his sons so that his elder son, Manasseh, would be by Jacob's right hand. Why did Jacob cross his hands? He wanted the younger son to receive the blessing of the firstborn.

Can you think of another story in the Word in which a similar switch was made in the blessing of an elder and younger brother? Jacob himself stole his brother Esau's birthright and blessing.

Have you witnessed someone giving a blessing where one or both hands are placed on the receiver's head? This kind of blessing is included in services of baptism, marriage, ordination and sometimes the Holy Supper. It is sometimes called the "laying on of hands."

The highest blessing the Lord wishes to give us is the blessing of our salvation—an eternal life in heaven. We receive this blessing by following the path of integrity which He lays out in His Word.

3. Engage with the Word

Choose one or two activities



Acting with Integrity

No matter what happened to Joseph, he acted with integrity. We, too, experience many challenging situations. The Lord calls on us to respond, like Joseph, with integrity. Students will work in pairs to act out scenarios for the class. The teacher freezes the action at a heated point for a guided class discussion. Action resumes with one student saying, "I'm sorry, let me start over" and concludes with a resolution that shows integrity.

1. Introduce the activity by reading the *Acting with Integrity Reading* page with the students.
2. Each person will act out a situation with a partner. One partner will respond to the situation with anger, hatred, gossip or harsh words. The other partner may choose to act this way as well, or may choose to act with integrity.
3. Divide students into pairs. Hand an *Acting with Integrity Scenario* to each pair. Allow about 3 minutes for groups to brainstorm their actions.
4. Partners will then take turns presenting their scenarios to the group.
5. Stop each scenario when it has become heated. Ask the observers three questions: 1) Is this kind? 2) Is this true? 3) Is this useful?
6. Following the discussion, resume the action. To re-start the action, one actor says, "I'm sorry, let me start over." Encourage the groups to choose a path that has integrity to solve their problem.
7. When all groups have finished, encourage the students to share insights they have gained as a result of the activity. Use the following discussion prompts to get started:
 - Certain ways of thinking about or responding to disappointments can temporarily shut out heaven from our minds. In what ways is shutting out heaven like an attempt to destroy heaven or the Lord?
 - It's often easier for us to see other people's negative behaviors than our own. In what ways could you reach out to someone who is experiencing an attack of destructive thoughts from hell?
 - How could you alert yourself to choices you might make that could limit the presence of heaven in your mind before the urge to make those choices overwhelms you?



Who Is Joseph?

Go on a quest to review Joseph's character! Using a Bible, look up references to events in Joseph's life and identify his character traits from the passages you find.

1. Divide the class into small groups or have students work individually.
2. Distribute a Bible, *Who is Joseph? Character Study* handout (p. 68), and pen or pencil to each group or individual. Assign each group one question to research.
3. Allow 5-7 minutes to complete research.
4. Gather students together to share their answers.

Materials

Acting with Integrity Readings p. 66 for each student; 1 *Act with Integrity Scenarios* card (p. 67) for every 2 students

Preparation

Cut apart the *Acting with Integrity Readings* and the *Acting with Integrity Scenarios* cards.

Materials for each group

Bible, *Who is Joseph? Character Study* p. 68, pen or pencil

Activity Hints!

If your class is small, be selective and use fewer questions.

Use a board or a large piece of paper to compile responses.

Circle words that summarize Joseph's character as you discuss the students' research.

Who Is Joseph? *continued*

5. Once groups have shared, try to identify one word that most accurately describes Joseph's character. (Numerous words work. "Integrity" is an option that encompasses all of Joseph's qualities.)
6. Which of Joseph's qualities would you most like to have?
7. Can you name another person in the Word with exceptional qualities like Joseph? (Various answers are possible.) People often compare Jesus and Joseph. (Brainstorm obvious similarities, e.g. loved by their father, sold for silver, 12 brothers/disciples, etc.)

4. Wrap It Up

Closing

Gather the students together. We are completing the story of Joseph with the blessing of his two sons. Their blessings were not what they expected! Sometimes we experience unexpected blessings too. Look for the blessings that come each time you make an effort to act with integrity.

Hand each student a copy of the *Joseph's Sons Blessed Door Hanger* (p. 70). Read the "The Path of Integrity" section at the top of the hanger with the students. Look at "Living in Harmony." Encourage the students to do one or more of the activities this week.

Note: a color version of the door hanger can be printed from www.newchurch.org/youth-journey-programs.



Acting with Integrity

Readings

Joseph did and said what he thought was true and good. He acted with integrity. This angered others, like his brothers and Potiphar's wife. They wanted to kill him and put him in prison. When we try to do what is good and right the hells attack and try to destroy these good qualities in us.

The hells are constantly attacking and trying to destroy heaven and the Lord is constantly protecting the heavens by restraining the people there from the evils that arise from their self-concern and by keeping them involved in the good that comes from Him.

I have often been granted a sense of the aura that radiates from the hells—an aura of efforts to destroy the divine nature of the Lord and so heaven as well. At times I have also perceived forces boiling up from certain hells, made up of efforts to break free and wreak destruction. On the other hand, the heavens never attack the hells, since the divine aura that emanates from the Lord is a constant effort to save everyone.
see Heaven and Hell 595

The Lord is constantly protecting us from the forces of hell. True ideas we have learned from the Word provide part of the means for the Lord to work in our minds. As we try to live by the true ideas we know, the Lord forms a “new heart” within us. When we reach out to others from the “new heart” our actions will be kind, honest, useful and freely done because we will want to act in this way.

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Acting with Integrity Scenarios

<p>Choosing a movie to watch</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Choosing food for a party</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>
<p>Discussing a curfew with a parent</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Moving a heavy object</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>
<p>Bargaining in a market</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Talking to a sales person on the phone</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>
<p>Cleaning up after a meal</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Taking care of a brother or sister</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>
<p>Doing homework with a friend</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Long wait for service in a store/restaurant</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>
<p>Choosing a guest list for an event</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>	<p>Pitching a tent, digging a ditch, weeding a garden or some other shared task</p> <p>“I’m sorry, let me start over.”</p>

Who Is Joseph? Character Study

Questions	Bible References	Answers
1. What does Joseph's name mean?	Genesis 30:22,24	
2. What occupations did Joseph have?	Genesis 37:2 Genesis 39:1-2 Genesis 39:22 Genesis 41:37-43	
3. List Joseph's admirable qualities and strengths.	Genesis 39:5-6,7-13, 23 Genesis 40:6-8 Genesis 41:15-16, 38-40 Genesis 45:5	
4. Did Joseph have weaknesses?	Genesis 41:38-40	
5. How did Joseph respond to messages from the Lord?	Genesis 37:5-11 Genesis 41:16	
6. How did Joseph respond in crisis situations?	Genesis 37:5-11 Genesis 39:7-12, 29-23 Genesis 41:47-57	
7. In what ways did Joseph influence others?	Genesis 39:3-4, 21-23 Genesis 41:38 Genesis 47:25	
8. What were Joseph's accomplishments?	Genesis 39:2, 22 Genesis 40:12, 56 Genesis 45:5 Genesis 47:11-12	

ANSWER SHEET
Who Is Joseph?
Character Study

Questions	Bible References	Answers
1. What does Joseph's name mean?	Genesis 30:22,24	<i>"The Lord shall add to me another son." Genesis 20:24 Joseph literally means "He will add."</i>
2. What occupations did Joseph have?	Genesis 37:2 Genesis 39:1-2 Genesis 39:22 Genesis 41:37-43	<i>Shepherd - Genesis 37:2 Slave in Egypt - Genesis 39:1-2 Ruler in prison - Genesis 39:22 Ruler of Egypt - Genesis 41:37-43</i>
3. List Joseph's admirable qualities and strengths.	Genesis 39:5-6,7-13, 23 Genesis 40:6-8 Genesis 41:15-16, 38-40 Genesis 45:5	<i>Trustworthy; managed his master's estate and the prisoners in prison - Genesis 39:5-6, 23 Refused to commit adultery - Genesis 39:7-13 Caring towards others - Genesis 40:6-8 Humble: giving credit to the Lord - Genesis 41:15-16 Discerning and wise - Genesis 41:38-40 Forgiving - Genesis 45:5</i>
4. Did Joseph have weaknesses?	Genesis 41:38-40	<i>Pharaoh comments "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God." Joseph is not reported to have weaknesses.</i>
5. How did Joseph respond to messages from the Lord?	Genesis 37:5-11 Genesis 41:16	<i>He shared his dreams with his brothers - Genesis 37:5 He credited the Lord with interpreting dreams - Genesis 41:16</i>
6. How did Joseph respond in crisis situations?	Genesis 37:5-11 Genesis 39:7-12, 29-23 Genesis 41:47-57	<i>Shared his second dream even when he was hated - Genesis 37:5-6 Fled from Potiphar's wife - Genesis 39:12 Continued to follow the Lord in prison - Genesis 39:20-22 Stored grain during plentiful harvests and distributed it during famine - Genesis 41:56</i>
7. In what ways did Joseph influence others?	Genesis 39:3-4, 21-23 Genesis 41:38 Genesis 47:25	<i>People in power over him knew he followed the Lord - Genesis 39:4, 21 Pharaoh was affected by him and said that the "Spirit of God" was with him - Genesis 41:38 People recognized that he had saved them - Genesis 47:25</i>
8. What were Joseph's accomplishments?	Genesis 39:2, 22 Genesis 40:12, 56 Genesis 45:5 Genesis 47:11-12	<i>Master of Potiphar's house - Genesis 39:2 Took charge and cared for prisoners - Genesis 39:22 Interpreted dreams - Genesis 40:12, 41:28 Saved Egypt and Israel during a famine - Genesis 41:56 Forgave his brothers - Genesis 45:5 Saved his family and brought them to Egypt - Genesis 47:11-12</i>

God will be with you

**Joseph's
Sons
Blessed**

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

The Path of Integrity

In the spiritual world a person's inner reality and outer appearance are brought into harmony, so that the internal and external become one, instead of being at variance and divided in two. They are divided in two in the natural world, and only in the case of people who have an honest heart do they become one. *Marriage Love 48:4*

Choosing to live with integrity is the way that we can be guided, more and more, by our higher nature. This is the part of us that is closest to God, that truly wants to follow His will and wisely love other people.

Following the path of integrity involves trying to act in a way that matches our higher nature. This takes a life-time of practice, but whenever we take a step on that path, our inner and outer selves are, for a moment at least, in harmony with each other and with God.

Living in Harmony

I want to be connected with my higher self...

Think about what kind of a person you would really like to be internally. Would you like to be courageous, generous, honest, etc.? Choose one characteristic or trait to focus on for now.

I can speak and act from my higher self...

For a few hours, try to react to everything that happens in harmony with who you would like to be internally. Before you act, stop and think "How can I respond to this courageously, or generously, or honestly?"

LIVING IN HARMONY

