

# DETOURS

## DETOURS, PART 1: REDIRECTION

A detour is an unexpected shift in the route we were trying to travel. We often think of detours that happen when we are in our cars, but sometimes our life takes a detour and we end up in a place we never dreamed. Yet God allows and uses detours to grow us and to get us towards our ultimate goal—to a place where we can be used by Him.

**BIG IDEA: The purpose of detours is to develop you for what God has for you.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you think of detours when you encounter them while driving?
2. How do you normally feel when your plans run into detours?
3. Do you ever take into consideration the purpose of a detour? Does that influence how you respond or react to the detour?
4. Chris said, “*Detours are inconvenient distractions from your original pre-planned route.*” When has your life been going one direction and then something happened to make it change course?
5. Chris said, “*Detours are good things that often feel bad.*” Is it ever a good thing to be inconvenienced while driving? In life?
6. The life of Joseph had some detours. At the end of Joseph’s story, How was his attitude towards some of the detours he experienced? *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 50:19-20:*

*But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid; I can’t put myself in the place of God. You plotted evil against me, but God turned it into good, in order to preserve the lives of many people who are alive today because of what happened.”* Genesis 50:19-20 (TEV)

7. *Some of the hard things that happen in our life—like Hebrew letters—are best understood backwards.* Starting at the end of Joseph’s life gives perspective and purpose for God’s plan for Joseph’s life. What can you see when you look backwards?
8. Chris said, “*These verses tells us something about God’s purpose and destination for your life—it includes evil and good.*” What low lights and highlights come to mind when you apply verse 20 to your life?
9. Joseph knew very well that his elevation to the office of prime minister of Egypt in Genesis 50:20 wasn’t the result of chance, coincidence, fate, or dumb luck. How can acknowledging that God is in control of the good and the bad give you that all-important perspective for the inevitable setbacks and even seeming disasters you may experience?
10. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 37:2-4.*

*This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father’s flocks. He worked for his half-brothers, the sons of his father’s wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing. Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe. But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn’t say a kind word to him.* Genesis 37:2-4 (NLT)

11. When you were a child, who was your favorite adult (*parent, relative, teacher, neighbor, pastor*)? Why?
12. When you were a child, what adult do you want to regard you as a favorite? Were you that person's favorite? How did that make you feel?
13. Joseph's family was dysfunctional. Chris said, "What you and I pass on to our children are not only our looks, but our habits—whether they be good or bad." What good habits do you hope to pass along to your children? Do you have any bad habits you would share that don't get passed along?
14. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Genesis 37:5-8.*

One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. "Listen to this dream," he said. "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!" His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.

*Genesis 37:5-8 (NLT)*

15. Joseph unwittingly made his situation worse by telling his family about his dreams. What made Joseph's brothers angry with him?
16. This was a God-given dream as we will see it unfold—where Joseph was going to be one day. God can place a dream or a vision in our heart that may seem too big to those around us. If you share it with others, you may get naysayers who try to talk you out of believing it. Not every vision God gives you is intended for those around you to know. Even though this was a God-given dream, do you think it wise for Joseph to share it? Why or why not?
17. Chris said, "When God is ready to move you to the next spiritual level, things may get worse before they get better." Where have you seen this principle played out in your own life?
18. Joseph is going to have to grow up before he can realize his dream. Which means he needs a detour. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Genesis 37:18-28:*

*When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!" But when Reuben heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said. "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to rescue Joseph and return him to his father. So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing. Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it. Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime. Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!" And his brothers agreed. So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt.*

*Genesis 37:18-28 (NLT)*

19. *Detours are designed to contribute to construction.* What do you think God was trying to do in Joseph's life to set him up for the purpose He had for his life?
20. When a detour occurs in your life, how have you generally reacted toward it?

## MOVING FORWARD

Few of us like to be stalled for any reason, even if it's just someone cutting us off in traffic and forcing us to slow down. But detours are necessary if any improvement is going to be made on the paths we travel or if any wreck is going to be cleaned up or hazard avoided. Detours are designed for our own good, regardless of how we view or feel about them.

