

LESSON 6 | THE BEGINNINGS

WEEK 6: DAY 1

THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” - John 3:16

This week, you’ll read about Jacob and a little about Joseph as well. Think of this as the next ‘phase’ in God’s plan to call a people to Himself. But what you’ll learn is that the journey was a bit rocky at times. And not because of anything God did. God kept His promise. But people (just like us) kept messing things up.

Of all the verses in the Bible, John 3:16 may be the “most memorized,” if that is even a thing. But sometimes, we can hear something so often that it loses its power. We become too familiar with the words, and we overlook the power contained in them. Don’t let that happen today.

God’s plan is perfect, even when His people are not. God would eventually send Jesus into the world to provide a once-and-for-all solution for our sin problem, and throughout His plan, you can see hints at this big news. This verse is a perfect expression of what this decision means for us.

Today, memorize John 3:16.

If you’re artistic or creative, try writing it down and then illustrating or decorating some of the keywords.

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WEEK 6: DAY 2

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“And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.” - Genesis 25:21

Let’s be honest: movie sequels are often terrible. It’s so difficult for directors, producers, and actors to recapture the magic that made the original movie a success. So why do movie studios continue to make sequels? Well, the only thing better than making piles of money off an idea for a movie is making piles of money twice off the same idea!

Read Genesis 25:19-28.

This sounds familiar, doesn’t it? Abraham’s son Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, are unable to have children. God intervenes and blesses them with a son. Kind of sounds like what God did for Abraham and Sarah, doesn’t it? In fact, it’s almost an EXACT repeat of the story. But this sequel is one of the rare ones that is JUST as good as the original! Watching God work His miracles never gets old.

Why did God allow this to happen in consecutive generations? While we can’t know His exact reasoning, it seems like maybe God was leaving no doubt that He is the one responsible for the blessings we experience. God is fully capable of pushing forward with His plan and is not derailed by things that seem massively impossible to us. There is no challenge too great for God to handle.

Something To Think About . . .

- What are some ways that you underestimate God and His power? Why do you think we are prone to doubt His power?
- How would your outlook on this week change if you really believed that God was able and willing to change your life? How would your prayers change?

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WEEK 6: DAY 3

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His mother said to him, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, bring them to me."
- Genesis 27:13

Drama. It can be exhausting trying to keep up with the complex relationships happening all around you. Culture may tell you that someone's opinion is unacceptable, or a parent may tell you not to date a certain person, or you may find out that a huge fight in your friend group has left you to decide which side you're on. What if I told you that relationship drama is not just a 21st-century thing but that it has always existed? Check out this story from the Bible.

Read Genesis 27.

This story is crazy, right? It features a mother demonstrating extreme favoritism, a son manipulating his father and stealing from his brother, and it boils over into one of the biggest sibling rivalries of all time! This sounds more like a show on television, not the Bible. Drama, drama, drama.

Here is the craziest part: God was at work through all of it. Don't be confused. God does not support deception. But His plan won't be thwarted by it, either. God works in spite of our shortcomings. And while our sin has consequences, it can't ultimately stand in the way of God accomplishing what He sets out to do. God had a plan for Jacob. In spite of Jacob's sin, God acted to faithfully see His plan through. God will do the same for you in your life. God will work for your good and His glory, even when you blow it. Which is a pretty good thing to remember.

Something To Think About. . .

- What are some circumstances in your life that seem too big to handle? What looks as though it will never get better? How does it make you feel to know that God can work through even the most extreme circumstances?
- How do you need to move forward trusting God in your circumstances? Pray that God would help you to trust Him every step of the way.

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WEEK 6: DAY 4

THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

“Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” - Genesis 28:15

Have you ever been comforted by someone’s presence? Maybe they didn’t say anything groundbreaking or do anything amazing... perhaps they were simply there when you needed someone to be there. It could be that your best friend sat with you and ate ice cream when your boyfriend dumped you. Or a parent that made you laugh when you were nervous about a test. There are other examples from your own life. Sometimes, presence can be incredibly powerful.

Read Genesis 28:10-22.

Do you remember the covenant God made with Abraham? Here God extends the same covenant to Abraham’s grandson, Jacob, in a dream. Verse fifteen holds the key. God promises He will be with Jacob and reaffirms He will do all that He promised.

We could say it another way: God reassures us that He will be faithful to His promises by giving us His presence. Jesus says it this way to His disciples in John 15:4, “Abide in me, and I in you.” As followers of Jesus, we have His presence with us. He goes with us as we go. Here’s good news for you today as you go through your life’s journey: God is with you.

Something To Think About...

- How would it change how you lived today if you truly believed that God was going with you? What specific things might be different?
- What is something you could do today to remind you that God is with you?

LESSON 6 | THE BEGINNINGS

WEEK 6: DAY 5

THE THREAD

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“But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.” - Genesis 37:4

We are surrounded by an unbelievable amount of stuff. It's easy to start to evaluate our lives based on what we have: the newest phone, the coolest car, or the cutest date. When we lack what other people have, jealousy can quickly develop.

Read Genesis 37:1-28.

Today we're introduced to a new character. In this passage, we meet Jacob's favorite son, Joseph. This had to be one of the worst days of all time. Joseph not only experienced rejection from his brothers, but they physically abused and tormented him and sold him off as a slave. Why? Because they were jealous of all the attention he received from their dad, which Joseph had very little control over.

Now, everybody wants to be a hero, like Joseph. But the stark reality is that this passage should make us ask if we are being unfair in our assessment of someone else. In other words, do you have a relationship where you resemble Joseph's brothers more than you resemble Joseph? Are you jealous? Envious? Is it leading you to wrong someone else?

It's not fun thinking about our weaknesses. But if we want to live as imitators of Christ, we have to constantly evaluate our hearts and our actions. Your desire should be to live a life pleasing to God. Don't let envy or jealousy get in the way of that.

Something To Think About...

- It isn't easy to evaluate yourself. But spend some time today thinking about your attitudes and actions toward others. Is there anything you need to repent of?
- What is the danger of allowing jealousy and bitterness to take hold in our lives?