

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

*How Success Occurs*  
Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

## Leaders' Responsibilities:

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.
2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)
3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## Prior to this Coming Session:

**Gathering Time Leader:** The two songs suggested for use in the Gathering Time speak of faithfulness. They should set the scene for the Bible study and worship. Use them worshipfully and powerfully. Read the Scripture verse with passion. You may enlist another person to read the verse. Do that with anticipation; avoid giving a verse to someone to read at the last minute.

**Bible Study Leader:** The outline of the Bible Study is given following the Worship Time materials. You may write these on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or make individual copies for each participant.

**Worship Time Leader:** Give the words to **A Charge to Keep I Have** to readers ahead of time. Since there are four verses, four different people can be involved. Use older children or youth if possible for the first three verses and an adult to conclude with verse four.

## **Music Sources:**

**Find Us Faithful**, CCLI # 18259, *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #598 (Chorus only)

**Let It Be Said of Us**, CCLI # 1855882, *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #597

**A Charge to Keep I Have**, CCLI # 118850. *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #596

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***How Success Occurs*****Focal Text**

Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57

**Background Text**

Genesis 40-41

**Main Idea**

Through God's actions and Joseph's faithfulness, Joseph rose to power and prominence in Egypt

**Question to Explore**

How does success occur?

**Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to compare events of their lives to the ways by which Joseph rose to power and prominence.

**Gathering together:**

Sing "A Charge to Keep Have I" and "Let It Be Said of Us"

**First thoughts:****How Success Occurs**

Achieving success in our human endeavours is important to us. We measure success by salary raises, promotions, awards and approval. By these measures, at points in time in Joseph's life, he was very successful. At other points in time, he was not a success at all. However, the Genesis account of the life of Joseph is one of the most powerful stories in the Bible. Our study of it leads us to consider today the elements of true success in Joseph's life and in our own.

**Closing the Gathering Time:**

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

# 2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### *How Success Occurs*

#### Focal Text

Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57

#### Background Text

Genesis 40-41

#### Main Idea

Through God’s actions and Joseph’s faithfulness, Joseph rose to power and prominence in Egypt

#### Question to Explore

How does success occur?

#### Teaching Aim

To lead participants to compare events of their lives to the ways by which Joseph rose to power and prominence.

### **Introduction to your personal study:**

We are quick to attribute success to people based on success in the business world or athletics or entertainment. Yet success in God’s eyes is measured in faithful service throughout life. The Biblical story of Joseph is one of the most powerful examples of one who remained faithful to God through difficulties and through times of immense worldly success. It may be as hard to be faithful in successful times as it is in difficult times. This is a lesson which speaks to every day people.

### **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

For several years Joseph served faithfully in Potiphar's household, finally serving as his right-hand man. Then Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and thrown in prison (Genesis 39). Even in prison God continued to bless Joseph's faithfulness and give him success. In the course of his duties, Joseph met two other prisoners, Pharaoh's former baker and cupbearer. All three were held in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, Potiphar (39:1). God enabled Joseph to interpret an unusual dream of each of these former servants. Since he had been falsely accused, Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him to Pharaoh when he was restored to his position. Three days later at Pharaoh's birthday party (incidentally the first birthday party mentioned in Scripture) the cupbearer was reinstated by Pharaoh. Yet the cupbearer ***“did not remember Joseph; he forgot him”*** (40:23). With those sobering words the chapter ends. Joseph was discarded by his brothers; imprisoned by his employer; and now forgotten by one whom he had greatly helped. Can you feel Joseph's discouragement and pain?

## **Focusing on the Meaning:**

### **The Cupbearer Remembers (Genesis 41:1-14)**

The Bible is silent about what occurred in the interim, but two full years later, Pharaoh had a dream (41:1). When none of his magicians or wise men could interpret the dream, Pharaoh's cupbearer suddenly remembered Joseph (41:9). Two years have passed; two more birthday celebrations for Pharaoh. It seems incredible that the cupbearer could let that much time pass and never think of Joseph. Perhaps he had remembered him but was afraid to jeopardize his position by asking for favours. Perhaps he was so caught up in pleasing Pharaoh that he thought of no one else. Perhaps God had more lessons for Joseph to learn; perhaps He was waiting for Joseph to mature in his leadership. One thing we can know for sure, God does not forget us (Isaiah 49:14-16). His sovereignty does not depend on some man's memory. He will prompt someone's memory when the time is right.

### **Pharaoh Sends for Joseph (Genesis 41:15-22)**

As soon as Pharaoh heard about Joseph he summoned him (Genesis 41:14). Joseph was quickly brought from the dungeon, and prepared to meet Pharaoh. When Pharaoh explained that no one could interpret his dream, Joseph answered that although he could not interpret it either, God would give the interpretation (15-16). Pharaoh told Joseph of his first dream in which seven scrawny, lean cows ate up seven sleek, fat cows; and his second in which seven withered, thin heads of grain swallowed up seven full good heads of grain.

### **The Interpretation and Advice (Genesis 41:23-45)**

Without any recorded hesitation, Joseph explained to Pharaoh the God had given him a vision of His plans for the immediate future in which there would be seven years of great abundance with plentiful harvests. Following those seven years, Joseph explained, would be seven years of severe famine in the land; so severe that the years of abundance would be forgotten (26-31). Then he explained that the dream was given in two forms to emphasize its certainty (32). This is also a good rule of Biblical interpretation; when God repeats something in His Word we need to pay attention!

Presumably Pharaoh had only asked Joseph for an interpretation to these dreams that had stumped all the rest of his advisors (15). But Joseph boldly suggested a strategic plan to deal with the abundance and prepare for the famine. First he advised Pharaoh to find a **“discerning and wise man”** to put in charge of the land (33). Then he suggested reserving 20% of the harvest in the years of abundance to be used during the seven years of famine (34-36).

Pharaoh and all his officials approved of Joseph’s plan (37). Moreover; they recognized that the Spirit of God was with Joseph (37). Then Pharaoh acknowledged that Joseph’s wisdom and discernment came from God (39). Perhaps God had developed such wisdom and discernment during all those long years he served in Potiphar’s house and prison. Approximately thirteen years have passed since we first met Joseph as a prideful, tale bearing teenager (37:2,7,9). During those thirteen years God was with Joseph, each step of the way. Joseph began as a household slave, and then gradually gained more and more responsibility (39:6). He rose to a position of authority in prison (39:23). Now, at 30 years of age, he was recognized as a man of wisdom and discernment (41:39)/ Joseph had been faithful in little; now God gave him much to care for (See Matthew 25:21).

Contrary to popular opinion, the reward for doing a good job is often more responsibility. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of his palace, his people, and the whole land of Egypt (39-41) . He gave Joseph symbols of authority: his signet ring, a gold chain and robes of fine linen (another cloak!) (42). Pharaoh made Joseph his second-in-command; authorized him to give orders; gave him an Egyptian name and wife; then put him to work throughout Egypt (43-45).

### **Putting the Plan to Work (Genesis 41:46-49)**

As he had proposed to Pharaoh, Joseph traveled throughout Egypt storing up a portion of the grain produced in the years of abundance (41:46-48). Finally, he stopped keeping records because he had such huge quantities of grain (49).

### **Years of Abundance (Genesis 41:50-52)**

Also during the abundant years, Joseph’s two sons were born (41:50). Joseph named the first son, Manasseh, or “forget” because he said God made him forget all his trouble and his father’s household (51). The younger son was named, Ephraim, or “fruitful.” Joseph said that God had made him fruitful in the land of his suffering (52) In spite of his



heavy responsibilities, Joseph must have rejoiced in this time of blessing. Yet he was naïve to believe that he could truly forget his past; or that God wanted him to.

### **Prepared for Trouble (Genesis 41:53-57)**

Because of Joseph's careful preparations, the land of Egypt was ready for the years of famine (53-54). Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of food distribution for the people of Egypt and surrounding countries (55-57). Often in our lives, times of plenty are followed by times that test our faith. A wise person is one who prepares for difficult times. When preparation has been made, the difficult times are easier to endure. They are not always avoidable, but can be faced with confidence in God's provision.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

This study should lead participants to compare events of their lives to the ways by which Joseph rose to power and prominence. Although few will have experienced the dramatic hardships and the eventual rise to power and responsibility that Joseph experienced, we should be able to identify with hard times and good times in our lives and see those through the lens of God's protective care and leadership.

### **For Personal Reflection:**

**What have I learned from this study?**

**What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

**What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***How Success Occurs***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the ***Focal Text*** in their Bibles. Also, share with them the ***Main Idea*** to be learned from the Scriptures, and the ***Questions to be Explored*** by the group.

### **Connect with Life:**

Say: We all spent time waiting. Ask: What are some important things we wait for? List these on the board or flip chart. (Some answers might be: a child, job promotion, diagnosis, news from a loved one.)

Have a volunteer read Isaiah 40:31.

Encourage discussion: What does it mean to “wait for the Lord?” (Suggested answers may include: resisting the impulse to move ahead until you see God at work; not forcing matters but waiting for Him to fulfill His promises in His time.)

Say: Today we are going to continue with the story of Joseph and see how God blessed his waiting.

### **Guide the Study:**

You may want to use the following outline to direct the study. You may copy it on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or provide copies for each participant by copying the outline given after the Worship Time material

### **How Success Occurs Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57**

**The Cupbearer Remembers (Genesis 41:1-14)**

**Pharaoh Sends for Joseph (Genesis 41:15-22)**

**The Interpretation and Advice (Genesis 41:23-45)**

**Putting the Plan to Work (Genesis 41:46-49)**

**Years of Abundance (Genesis 41:50-52)**

**Prepared for Trouble (Genesis 41:53-57)**

Share the background information from the "Background" notes in the **Teacher Preparation** section.

Then have a volunteer read Genesis 41:1-14.

Ask: What could Joseph have been doing over the two years since he interpreted the dreams for the cupbearer? Seek suggestions as to what he was probably thinking about the experience he had gone through, his future, or other things.

Note that God will not waste any experience but will use it for our good and for His glory.

Ask if anyone knows a scripture verse in the New Testament where that promise is clearly spelled out. (Romans 8:28).

Discuss the need for us to grow in our faith and mature in many ways to be most effective.

Have a volunteer read Genesis 41:15-24.

Point out Joseph's reply in verse 16. Compare his previous reply in Genesis 40:8.

Comment: God continues to speak in dreams, especially to people in the Muslim world. Missionaries have reported many stories of seekers who have had dreams about Jesus and His Word.

Have someone read Joseph's interpretation in Genesis 41:25-31.

Search for an answer: What other times do you remember that dreams had played a role in Joseph's life.

In Genesis 37:5-8, 9-10, Joseph dreamed about his brothers and parents.

In Genesis 40:9-11, Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's cupbearer's dream.

In Genesis 40:16-17, Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's baker's dream.

Request a person to read verse 41:32

Share: Often God repeats a phrase or a command.

Ask: How should we respond when we come across repeated words? Note that when commands are repeated we should pay special attention.

Have someone read Joseph's advice to Pharaoh Genesis 41:33-37.

Discuss the importance of preparing for the future.

Ask: How does having a full pantry, an emergency fund, a buffer of time in your day help you be prepared for unexpected events?

Have a couple of volunteers read Genesis 41:38-49. Note that the reward for doing a good job is often more responsibility.

Encourage the group to list the symbols of responsibility and authority that Pharaoh presented to Joseph. These included his signet ring, gold chain, and robes (more robes!)

Now have someone read verses 50-57 to the group.

Let the group briefly discuss this key question: How well did Joseph's plan work?

### **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

For applying the lesson note again to the group the importance of preparing our hearts and homes every day in order to be prepared to respond to ministry opportunities God presents to us.

Ask the class to give examples of areas in their lives in which they can make preparations.

Now look for suggestions as to how the church family can prepare to be ready to respond.

Suggest to the group to each one pray silently for a moment reflecting on areas of their personal life that need better preparation for yet unknown future events, crises, and opportunities.

Close with a very brief prayer for wisdom in preparing for the future that God knows is coming into our lives.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.** Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

### ***How Success Occurs*** **Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57**

**You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.**

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

### **How Will You Manage Success???**

Bill Gates would be considered one of the most successful businessmen entrepreneurs of modern days. The Bill Gates foundation recently announced that 10 billion dollars will be given over ten years to provide vaccines against childhood illnesses to children in poor countries around the world.

You probably won't have the business success which Bill Gates has had. But what are your dreams for success? If you were to achieve great success in human terms, what would you like to do for humanity?

What are you doing in your life today to improve life for those around you?

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***How Success Occurs***  
**Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57****Beginning the Service:**

Sing “Find Us Faithful”

Read 2 Timothy 4: 1,2

Say to the church: Before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom, I solemnly charge you: proclaim the message; persist in it whether convenient or not; rebuke, correct, and encourage with great patience and teaching.

**Offering:****Praying for the World:**

(Offer the opportunity for another person to share this prayer item with the church and to lead in prayer for the request.)

Soon after moving to northern Madagascar, missionary apprentices Michael and Michelle Allen began studying the northern dialect. Although they still have much to learn, they now feel ready to begin the work of surveying the northern part of the country to identify villages in which Bible studies (for the purposes of church planting) should be conducted. There are 90 villages that need to be surveyed. Many have had no access to the Gospel because they are geographically isolated. Please pray for Michael and Michelle’s safety as they travel difficult roads by truck and often turbulent waters by rented boats to access these places. But pray even more for the hearts of the people in these villages to be open to the Gospel as it is presented in their village.

**Sharing Guide:**

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

## ***How Success Occurs***

**Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57**

### **Introduction:**

For several years Joseph served faithfully in Potiphar's household, finally serving as his right-hand man. Then Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and thrown in prison (Genesis 39). Even in prison God continued to bless Joseph's faithfulness and give him success. In the course of his duties, Joseph met two other prisoners, Pharaoh's former baker and cupbearer. All three were held in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, Potiphar (Genesis 39:1). God enabled Joseph to interpret an unusual dream of each of these former servants. Since he had been falsely accused, Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him to Pharaoh when he was restored to his position. Three days later at Pharaoh's birthday party (incidentally the first birthday party mentioned in Scripture) the cupbearer was reinstated by Pharaoh. Yet the cupbearer ***"did not remember Joseph; he forgot him"*** (Genesis 40:23). With those sobering words the chapter ends. Joseph was discarded by his brothers; imprisoned by his employer; and now forgotten by one whom he had greatly helped. Can you feel Joseph's discouragement and pain?

These words written as an introduction to the teacher preparation for this lesson set the scene for this worship time. **"Can you feel Joseph's discouragement and pain?"** it asks. Joseph was a real person and he suffered as any person would when faced with difficult trials – especially when one trial follows another.

Our subject today for Bible study and worship is "How Success Occurs". In our small town newspaper this week is a full page advertisement "How to get rich in any economy, up or down". Five testimonials are included to indicate that this conference helps one to be "successful" in business. Joseph's story would probably not fit in the plan designated by this conference for it is a story of success which was dependent upon God's intervention.

Joseph's story reminds us that **God does not forget us**. Joseph was discarded by his brothers, unfairly accused and imprisoned by his employer and forgotten by one he had helped who was in a position to help him. Yet he stayed faithful to God and God, in his timing, used one person whom Joseph had helped to bring him to the attention of the Pharaoh himself.

©2001-2005, H©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com) 16  
**How Success Occurs – 09-28-11-en**

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.



When Pharaoh told Joseph of his dream, Joseph immediately responded with wise interpretation and counsel. That wisdom could only have been given to Joseph by God.

**God helps us understand circumstances.** This is true of personal circumstances and of larger circumstances of the world in which we live. We probably will never be called upon to advise a ruler such as Pharaoh, but our daily lives lend themselves to our giving counsel and advice to our children, our friends and even those we know less well. That counsel needs to be always under God's direction. Only He can help us know the right thing to say at the right time.

Another teaching we see in Joseph's life is that **doing good may bring more responsibility and opportunity.** In an earlier worship time, we referred to the Jesus' teaching "***From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked***" (Luke 12 48b).

When Joseph rightly interpreted Pharaoh's dream and outlined a plan for avoiding the most devastating effects of the coming famine he was put in charge of overseeing the plan. Living the Christian life most often entails our being faithful in the everyday opportunities of ministry and witness. That faithfulness leads to new and bigger responsibilities and opportunities.

A final teaching from today's look at how success occurs is that **we can prepare for difficult times.** A young mother and her husband have faced a number of difficult circumstances. This young woman was active in a variety of mission endeavours before her marriage. In recent years she has struggled with a rare blood disease which has damaged her kidneys; she had a difficult pregnancy and now has a baby with severe neurological problems. Yet she is a much loved teacher of young girls and besides meeting with them on Sunday has a weekly talk session with them at a coffee shop. She assists in the English as a Second Language ministry of her church. As a child, a young person and young adult, she hid God's word in her heart and involved herself in ministry activities. God sustains her now because she is such a good friend of His. We can have that sustaining power, too. But, like this young woman, we need to be loving God and learning his Word and serving others when times are not so hard if we are to be prepared for the days when life is really difficult.

### **Call to Commitment:**

May we remember this week that God does not forget us, that God helps us understand our circumstances, that doing good often brings more responsibility and that we are preparing today for the future events of our lives.

### **Concluding the Service:**

Read the words to the old hymn by Charles Wesley "**A Charge to Keep I Have**".

(See Worship Time suggestions for ideas on how to use this).

A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify,  
Who gave His Son my soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,  
My calling to fulfill;  
O may it all my powers engage  
To do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care  
As in Thy sight to live,  
And now Thy Servant, Lord, prepare  
A strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray,  
And still on Thee reply,  
O let me not my trust betray,  
But press to realms on high.

Words: Charles Wesley, altered  
Music, Lowell Mason (Public domain)

## **“A Charge to Keep I Have”.**

A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify,  
Who gave His Son my soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,  
My calling to fulfill;  
O may it all my powers engage  
To do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care  
As in Thy sight to live,  
And now Thy Servant, Lord, prepare  
A strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray,  
And still on Thee reply,  
O let me not my trust betray,  
But press to realms on high.

Words: Charles Wesley, altered  
Music, Lowell Mason (Public domain)

You may want to use the following outline to direct the study. You may copy it on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or provide copies for each participant by copying the outline given after the Worship Time material

***How Success Occurs***  
**Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57**

- Genesis 41:1-14 The Cupbearer Remembers**
- Genesis 41:15-22 Pharaoh Sends for Joseph**
- Genesis 41:23-45 The Interpretation and Advice**
- Genesis 41:46-49 Putting the Plan to Work**
- Genesis 41:50-52 Years of Abundance**
- Genesis 41:53-57 Prepared for Trouble**

***How Success Occurs***  
**Genesis 41:15-16, 25-45, 53-57**

- Genesis 41:1-14 The Cupbearer Remembers**
- Genesis 41:15-22 Pharaoh Sends for Joseph**
- Genesis 41:23-45 The Interpretation and Advice**
- Genesis 41:46-49 Putting the Plan to Work**
- Genesis 41:50-52 Years of Abundance**
- Genesis 41:53-57 Prepared for Trouble**