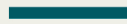


# JOSEPH

*From DREAMER to DELIVERER*



**R.C. SPROUL**

# Joseph

STUDY GUIDE



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*Joseph Study Guide*

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# How to Use This Study Guide

This study guide includes a chapter synopsis, a lesson objective, key passages, key points, and discussion questions from each chapter in *Joseph: From Dreamer to Deliverer*, as well as questions that focus on a relevant passage of Scripture from each chapter. Participants should first read each corresponding chapter of the book in order to make the best use of this guide.

**Chapter Synopsis:** This section summarizes the material in the chapter and provides a reminder of what the chapter covered. It serves to help readers remember what they've already read in the book.

**Lesson Objective:** This section explains the purpose of the chapter and the intended outcome of the study guide lesson.

**Key Passages:** This section quotes several passages from the chapter so that readers can remember some of the more significant things the author said. It can also serve as a starting point for discussion if the group leader would like to ask questions or provide thoughts related to excerpts from the book.

**Key Points:** This section outlines many of the basic ideas that the author mentioned in the chapter. It helps readers recall not just the big idea of the chapter but also its supporting ideas and their flow.

**Scripture Reading:** This section highlights one of the chapter's key points in God's Word. It helps readers identify the scriptural basis of important Christian doctrines and develops their ability to understand Scripture through questions about the reading. These questions are also ideal for group study.

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**Reflection Questions:** This section provides readers with questions that could be asked of themselves or in a small-group setting. The questions are designed to help readers understand the chapter and apply that knowledge to their lives.

**Prayer:** This section closes the study with an opportunity to come before the Lord in prayer based on what readers have learned.

# The Dreamer

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

Joseph is an extraordinary character in the Bible because of his extraordinary character. Joseph's virtue sets him apart from many other people in Scripture. Joseph was the son of Jacob and Rachel. He enjoyed the favor of his father but, on account of it, faced the hatred of his brothers, which was further aggravated by a dream that he received from the Lord.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will introduce you to the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis so that you understand the significance of Joseph in the Bible and the family dynamics surrounding him.

## KEY PASSAGES

*So extraordinary is Joseph's virtue that throughout church history, many interpreters have seen him as a type or forerunner of our Lord Himself. (pp. 1–2)*

*Early in the narrative of Joseph, we are introduced to the salient point that for whatever reason, his brothers despised him. . . . They despised Joseph because of the special affection he received from their father. (pp. 4–5)*

*To make matters worse, Joseph received a gift not only from his earthly father but from his heavenly Father. He was endowed with the ability to interpret dreams. (p. 6)*

*We cannot know for certain whether his relating of the dream was out of obedience to God or out of spite. (p. 8)*

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### KEY POINTS

**Joseph's Exceptional Virtue** (pp. 1–4): Joseph stands out among the Old Testament patriarchs, prophets, and even kings for his virtuous character. The Bible does not shy away from telling us about the sins of saints such as Abraham and David. Joseph was not sinless, but unlike its treatment of others, Scripture does not highlight his sin. Because of his sterling character and other features of his life, he is often seen as a type or forerunner of Jesus.

**Joseph's Favored Status and Sibling Rivalry** (pp. 4–6): Joseph was Jacob's son from "his old age" (Gen. 37:3), which caused him to love Joseph more than his other sons. In addition, Joseph was Jacob's son from Rachel, for whom Jacob had a special love. Jacob showed favoritism toward him, and this led to envy and hostility from his brothers. This favoritism was made especially known through a special and costly robe.

**Joseph's Dreams** (pp. 6–8): Not only did Joseph receive this special robe from his father, Jacob, but he also received prophetic dreams and the ability to interpret them from God, Joseph's heavenly Father. One of Joseph's dreams depicted a strange scene that meant that his brothers and even his father would bow down to him. Sharing these dreams led to further resentment from his brothers and an initial rebuke from his father.

**Joseph's Motives** (pp. 8–10): We don't know for sure what motivated Joseph to share his dreams from the Lord so boldly. Perhaps Joseph did so out of arrogance or spite toward his brothers, but he could also have done so out of obedience to God. Throughout Scripture, God often reveals something to someone so that it will in turn be revealed to others.

### SCRIPTURE READING

**James 2:1, 8–10** My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. . . . If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

- Why is partiality or favoritism sinful?
- How is the destructiveness of partiality on display thus far in Joseph's story?

## THE DREAMER

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

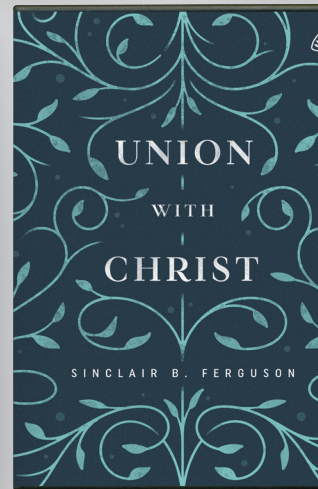
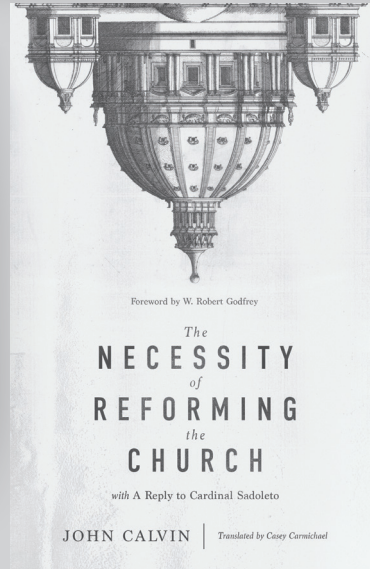
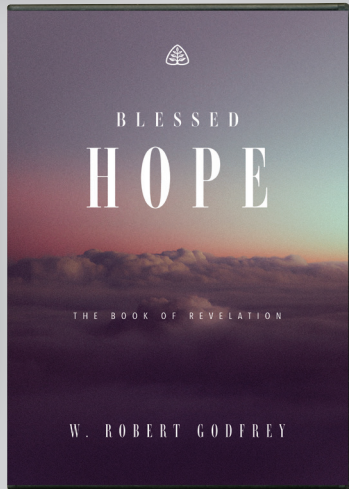
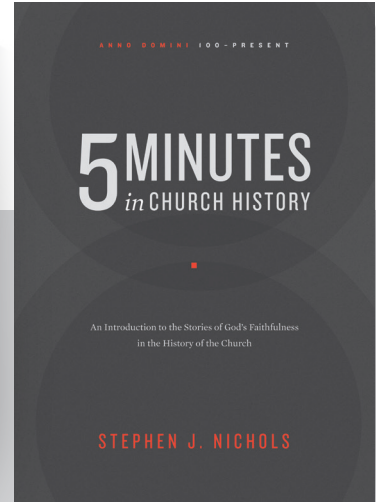
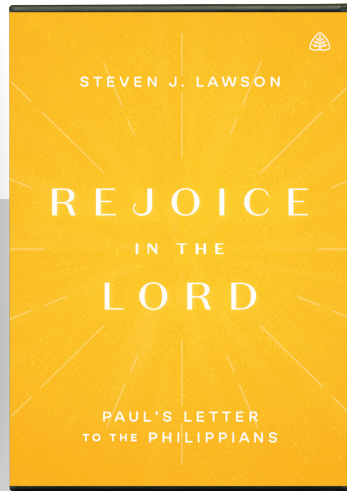
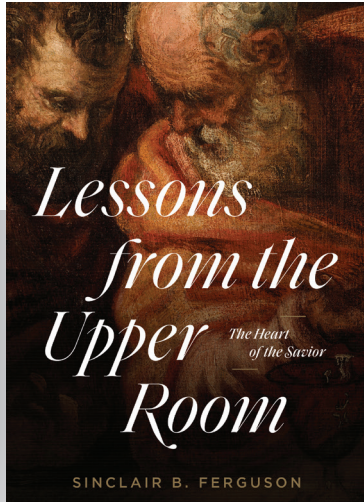
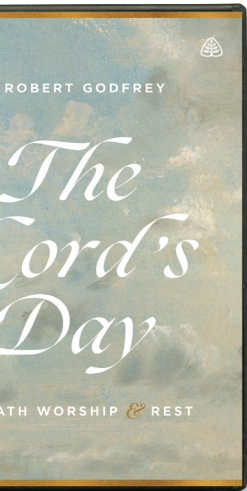
1. How can we cultivate and maintain a virtuous character? Considering the Scripture reading in this lesson, why also do we need the virtue of another?
2. Why was Joseph favored? How did Jacob's gift to him so display his favored status?
3. How do you handle envy and jealousy when others receive recognition or favor? What is a godly response to such emotions?
4. What do you think is the most likely explanation for why Joseph shared his dreams?

### PRAYER

- Praise God that He has given us the story of Joseph in His inspired Word.
- Confess any envy or favoritism you have toward others, especially toward family members.
- Thank God for the perfect virtue of Jesus Christ, through which alone we can be counted righteous.
- Ask God for help navigating difficult relationships or emotions, especially in your church family.



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