A Summary of the Bible

In the beginning, the all-powerful, personal God created the universe. This God created human beings in His image to live joyfully in His presence, in humble submission to His gracious authority. But all of us have rebelled against God and, in consequence, must suffer the punishment of our rebellion: physical death and the wrath of God.

Thankfully, God initiated a rescue plan, which began with His choosing the nation of Israel to display His glory in a fallen world. The Bible describes how God acted mightily on Israel’s behalf, rescuing His people from slavery and then giving them His holy law. But God’s people—like all of us—failed to rightly reflect the glory of God.

Then, in the fullness of time, in the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself came to renew the world and to restore His people. Jesus perfectly obeyed the law given to Israel. Though innocent, He suffered the consequences of human rebellion by His death on a cross. But three days later, God raised Him from the dead.

Now the church of Jesus Christ has been commissioned by God to take the news of Christ’s work to the world. Empowered by God’s Spirit, the church calls all people everywhere to repent of sin and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. Repentance and faith restores our relationship with God and results in a life of ongoing transformation.

The Bible promises that Jesus Christ will return to this earth as the conquering King. Only those who live in repentant faith in Christ will escape God’s judgment and live joyfully in God’s presence for all eternity. God’s message is the same to all of us: repent and believe, before it is too late. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe with your heart that God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>God Redeems Betrayal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td><strong>God Redeems Adversity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>29</td>
<td><strong>God Overrides Evil with Good</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td><strong>Christmas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 30</td>
<td>47</td>
<td><strong>The Prince of Peace</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td><strong>God Hears His People</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 13</td>
<td>65</td>
<td><strong>God Frees His People</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>75</td>
<td><strong>A Test in the Wilderness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>84</td>
<td><strong>A Leader’s Wisdom</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td><strong>A Law for God’s People</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 10</td>
<td>103</td>
<td><strong>An Image of Idolatry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>112</td>
<td><strong>A Place for God’s Presence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24</td>
<td>121</td>
<td><strong>A Picture of Atonement</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Books of Genesis and Exodus are meant to be read together, providing an important clue for our approach to the rest of Scripture. The story begins in Genesis and unfolds with breathtaking speed, but then the pace slows as the rest of the book tells us the story of four generations of the one family through which God promised to bring blessing to the world.

As Genesis winds down, we encounter Joseph, one of Abraham’s great grandsons, and see that God’s promises are not always easy for His people. But through Joseph’s difficulties, we encounter the vital concept of redemption. His life was one of setbacks, frustration, and disappointment. But all the while, we see that God was at work through Joseph’s adversity, not despite it. God brought about redemption for Joseph and his family; God is always bringing glory to Himself and good to His people through their hardships, even by overriding their sins.

Then as we move from Genesis to Exodus, we pass over nearly four hundred years to a time when God’s people are enslaved. The stage is set for an even greater display of God’s desire and ability to redeem His people. When they cry out to God for deliverance from their slavery in Egypt, He provides a rescuer in Moses to free His people and to provide for them.

God’s deliverance of Joseph and the nation of Israel were the early stages of a beautiful crescendo of God’s plan to redeem His people that culminated in Christ Jesus. In Him we have experienced redemption from the slavery of sin and death. As we study these sessions, let us pray that the Holy Spirit stirs our hearts anew so that we are captivated by the love, grace, and mercy of God made known to us in our redemption through Christ so we can share Him with others.
About the Writers

Matt Chandler (unit 4, sessions 4-6; unit 5, session 1) is a Lead Pastor at The Village Church, president of Acts 29, and author of several books, including *Take Heart: Christian Courage in the Age of Unbelief*. Matt and his wife, Lauren, have three children: Audrey, Reid and Norah.

Jennifer Grisham (unit 6, sessions 1-2) serves as managing editor and administrator at Doxology & Theology. She’s a graduate of Baylor University and is currently pursuing a masters degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Andrew Hall (unit 6, session 3) is the Lead Pastor of Community Bible Church, located in Ilderton, Ontario, Canada. He is a graduate from Southern Seminary. He and his wife, Melanie, have four children: Noelle, Ava, Calvin, and Brita.

Pat Hood (unit 5, sessions 2-3) is the Senior Pastor at LifePoint Church in Tennessee. He and his wife, Amy, have five children. Pat is the author of *The Sending Church*, which challenges every church to send and every Christian to live sent.

Sung Jin Park (Christmas session) and his wife, Alice, have three kids. He is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and earned a PhD from Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion.

David Roark (unit 4, sessions 4-6; unit 5, session 1) is the Communications and Resources Director at The Village Church and writes on faith and culture in notable publications. He and his wife, Taylor, have two daughters: Leigh and Lainey.

Robert Smith Jr. (unit 4, sessions 1-3), PhD, is the Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School. He is the author of *Doctrine That Dances* and *The Oasis of God*. He is married to Wanda Taylor-Smith (PhD), and they have four adult children with one in heaven.
THE GOSPEL PROJECT
A Journey Through the Storyline of Scripture

Fall 2018  In the Beginning
Creation and the Fall (Genesis; Job)
God Establishes a Covenant People (Genesis)
God Grows His Covenant People (Genesis)

Winter 2018-19  Out of Egypt
God Redeems His People (Genesis; Exodus)
God Provides for His People (Exodus)
God Receives Worship from His People (Ex.; Lev.)

Spring 2019  Into the Promised Land
God Guides His People (Num.; Deut.)
God Gives His People a Home (Joshua)
God Delivers His People (Judges; Ruth)

Summer 2019  A Kingdom Provided
God Provides a King (1 Samuel)
God Provides a Godly King (1–2 Sam.; Psalms)
God Provides a Wise King (1 Kings; Eccl.)

Fall 2019  A Nation Divided
God Speaks to His People (1–2 Kings)
God Judges the Sin of His People (2 Kings; Prophets)
God Shows Mercy to His People (2 Chron.; Prophets)

Winter 2019-20  A People Restored
God Sustains His People (Daniel)
God Restores His People (Ezra; Prophets)
God Prepares His People (Neh.; Esth.; Mal.)
Spring 2020  
**Jesus the Messiah**
Jesus Comes into the World (Luke)
Jesus Begins His Ministry (Gospels)
Jesus Among the People (Gospels)

---

Summer 2020  
**Jesus the Servant**
Jesus the Healer (Gospels)
Jesus the Teacher (Gospels)
Jesus the Miracle-Worker (Gospels)

---

Fall 2020  
**Jesus the Savior**
Jesus and the Kingdom (Gospels)
Jesus the Savior (Gospels)
Jesus the Risen King (Gospels)

---

Winter 2020-21  
**The Mission Begins**
The Holy Spirit Comes (Acts; Epistles)
Fundamentals of the Faith (Acts; Epistles)
New Life in Christ (Acts; Epistles)

---

Spring 2021  
**The Church United**
Living Like Jesus (Acts; Hebrews)
The Sent Church (Acts; Epistles)
Don’t Forget (Acts; Epistles)

---

Summer 2021  
**All Things New**
Paul in Prison (Acts; Epistles)
Facing Adversity (Acts; Epistles)
Jesus Will Come Again (Revelation)
Gather with your group for Bible study and fellowship. Use the **Group Time** in your Daily Discipleship Guide to follow along and participate in the session. Mark up the Scripture passages, answer the questions, fill in the blanks, do the activities, write out questions and thoughts—Make this guide yours!

At the conclusion of the session, use **My Mission** to respond to the truths from God’s Word. Choose at least one of the questions on the page to drive your response in faith, in community, and in mission for Jesus Christ, the center of God’s Word and our purpose in life.
Finally, **Encourage One Another** provides a brief guide for small groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. Meet up with a group once a week for fellowship, encouragement in the faith, and mutual accountability.
Unit 4

God Redeems His People

*Genesis; Exodus*

**Memory Verses**

*But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people.”*

—Genesis 50:19-20
God Redeems Betrayal

SESSION IN A SENTENCE: Family strife can shatter a family, but God works even through the sinful choices of humanity to bring about good.

MAIN PASSAGES: Genesis 37:3-8,18-28

What memories from your childhood evoke strong emotions? How do these memories and emotions affect you even today?

Søren Kierkegaard, a nineteenth-century Christian philosopher, said, “Life must be understood backwards … it must be lived—forwards.” Time offers us a better perspective, a clearer lens, from which to understand what we experience today, whether good or bad. But while tomorrow can give us the gift of understanding, it cannot give us the gift of healing; that only comes from God.
Group Time

**Point 1: Favoritism leads to hatred and strife (Gen. 37:3-8).**

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than his other sons because Joseph was a son born to him in his old age, and he made a robe of many colors for him. 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not bring themselves to speak peaceably to him.

5 Then Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. 6 He said to them, “Listen to this dream I had: 7 There we were, binding sheaves of grain in the field. Suddenly my sheaf stood up, and your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.”

8 “Are you really going to reign over us?” his brothers asked him. “Are you really going to rule us?” So they hated him even more because of his dream and what he had said.

Favoritism, hatred, and strife plagued Abraham’s family for generations. Isaac favored Esau while Rebekah favored Jacob. Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. Jacob favored Joseph, the firstborn son God gave his beloved Rachel. Because of favoritism, Jacob struggled to have peace in his family.

? How have you seen favoritism harm you or others at home, at work, or in some other setting?

**Family Relationships:** God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The marriage relationship ____________ the way God relates to His people. Parents are to ____________ their children spiritual and moral values and to ____________ them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to ____________ and ____________ their parents.
Point 2: Jealousy leads to an opportunity for sin (Gen. 37:18-22).

18 They saw him in the distance, and before he had reached them, they plotted to kill him. 19 They said to one another, “Oh, look, here comes that dream expert! 20 So now, come on, let’s kill him and throw him into one of the pits. We can say that a vicious animal ate him. Then we’ll see what becomes of his dreams!”

21 When Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from them. He said, “Let’s not take his life.” 22 Reuben also said to them, “Don’t shed blood. Throw him into this pit in the wilderness, but don’t lay a hand on him”—intending to rescue him from them and return him to his father.

Joseph’s brothers were blinded by jealousy and hatred, and Jacob was blind to just how deep their jealousy went. Sending Joseph to report on them, the doting father had given his vengeful sons the opportunity they needed to dispense with their “beloved” brother, and they devised a plan to murder him. As King Solomon would later warn, “Fury is cruel, and anger a flood, but who can withstand jealousy?” (Prov. 27:4). Joseph and Jacob would soon see the wisdom of that proverb.

Why can jealousy be more harmful than anger or fury, as Solomon warned?

The sin of jealousy led each of the brothers to view Joseph not as a brother or a person but as an obstacle. Even Reuben’s seemingly heroic actions fell short of God’s expectations for His people. As believers, God has called us not to jealousy and fear but to love as we confront sin in our lives and in our culture. We are to know the truth, live according to the truth of God’s Word, and be bold as we stand for truth in this world.

How might spending more time in God’s Word motivate us to stand against sin and for the gospel in our culture?
Point 3: Bitterness leads to betrayal (Gen. 37:23-28).

23 When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped off Joseph’s robe, the robe of many colors that he had on. 24 Then they took him and threw him into the pit. The pit was empty, without water.

25 They sat down to eat a meal, and when they looked up, there was a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying aromatic gum, balsam, and resin, going down to Egypt.

26 Judah said to his brothers, “What do we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? 27 Come on, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay a hand on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh,” and his brothers agreed. 28 When Midianite traders passed by, his brothers pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took Joseph to Egypt.

In the end, the brothers did not murder Joseph, at least not with their hands. But they did murder him in their hearts (see Matt. 5:21-22) as they sold him into slavery and then deceived their father, Jacob, concerning his fate. Even so, God would turn their plan around. He would accomplish a **redemptive reversal**.

How have you seen God redeem situations for His glory and our good?

We are more like Joseph’s brothers than we care to admit: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But God, who is rich in mercy, provided salvation to us through His greatest act of **redemptive reversal**—the rejection and crucifixion of His Son followed by His resurrection from the dead. The blood shed by Jesus on the cross covers our sin—not in an attempt to hide it as Joseph’s brothers had done but as a satisfaction of our sin debt owed to God.

**Temptation and Sin:** Jesus was tempted like we are, and yet, He never sinned but faithfully ____________ temptation and ____________ the will of His Father. Knowing our weakness, we are to be on guard against temptation that may lead us to sin, and we pray for God to deliver us from evil.

---

© 2019 LifeWay Christian Resources
My Mission

Because we are fully accepted by the Father in Christ, we fight selfishness and sin to live in a way that brings honor and praise to God’s Son and guides others to become part of God’s family.

- What are some ways you will fight against selfishness and sin in your life this week?
- How can your group reach out to those who have been wronged and rejected by others?
- How can you use past times of redemptive reversal in your life to point others to God’s work in the gospel?

Notes
You would think Jacob would have known better. He had seen how favoritism could tear apart a family. It was the story of his upbringing in a home where his father favored his brother, Esau, and his mother favored him.

And yet, the only thing Jacob seemed to learn from that was how to play favorites. He did it with his wife Rachel. He did it with his son Joseph. It is no surprise to see the results were the same: a family divided.

It is natural that we learn from Jacob’s mistakes and seek to put the sin of favoritism to death in our families. We should do this. We need to do this. The unity and harmony of our homes depends on it. But as important as that is, there is much more at stake here. As we consider a father’s unequal love for his children, we should be drawn to delight in the Father’s equal and steadfast love for His children. God does not play favorites within His family. All of us who have trusted in Christ are invited to approach God as our loving Father. And as we do, we are to be drawn toward one another as well. We are to seek to love all of our brothers and sisters in Christ as God does, with the love that He gives us. There is no place for partiality within the church, from God or from one another.

How might you be prone to exhibit the sin of favoritism at times toward some of God’s family, either in your heart or through your actions?
Day 2: Read Genesis 37:12-22

Jacob appears to have been clueless about the sinfulness of his favoritism toward Joseph, but that was not all he couldn’t see. He also seems to have had no idea how deeply his favoritism wounded his other sons. So Jacob most likely was clueless to the peril he placed Joseph in when he sent him to check on the brothers once more. He had no idea of the destruction his poor decision would cause. How Joseph would be rejected by his brothers, betrayed, and nearly killed. Had he only known.

But there was a Father who did know the perils His Son would face because of His decision to send Him to His own. He knew His Son would be rejected and betrayed and that He would not escape death but would be executed while His people mocked Him. Of course, we are talking about God sending Christ Jesus. This all-knowing Father not only knew what would happen but was at work providentially to bring the cross to pass so that we might experience salvation from our sin.

How does God knowing what Jesus would experience and working to bring it to pass deepen your understanding of the gospel and your love for Him?

Day 3: Read Genesis 37:23-28

Joseph’s brothers were so wounded by their father’s favoritism that they wanted to kill their younger brother. It was only because of Reuben, the oldest brother who probably felt some semblance of responsibility, that the brothers abstained from their plan and threw Joseph into a pit instead. But his life was still in peril as they callously sat down and ate a meal as their brother pleaded with them (see 42:21).

But then a new opportunity arrived. When Judah saw a caravan of traders approaching, he asked his brothers what they would gain by killing Joseph. Instead, they chose to make a few bucks off of their brother and sold him to the Midianites. But as we see how sin was wreaking havoc in yet another generation of Abraham’s family, we will also see that there was a way to break the chain. God would be at work in Joseph and the brothers to change them. Sin is inherited and many sins are learned behaviors. But God’s grace and mercy made known to us in the gospel are greater. Christ has crushed sin under His heel, and in doing so, He has freed us from its power in our lives.

What sins do you feel enslaved to that you need to repent of and trust in Christ for deliverance?
Day 4: Read Genesis 37:29-36

One of the wonderful things about the Book of Genesis, and the Bible as a whole, is how raw it is. We see this rawness in how Jacob responded when his sons told him that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourned for days. That is to be expected. But when all of his sons and daughters tried to comfort him, he refused. Instead, he was determined to carry his grief with him all the way to the grave. This is how death affects people. This is real. And apart from the gospel, this is how death would impact us. Death would be a crushing blow, leaving us without hope and without joy. Because Christ has gone before us in death and has put death to death, we can respond differently, especially when it comes to grieving the death of a fellow believer. Death does not have the final word (see 1 Thess. 4:13).

How do you tend to see death: through the world's lens or through the gospel's? Why?

Day 5: Read Genesis 38:1-30

Genesis 37 ends with a cliffhanger. We read that Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, the captain of the guards for Pharaoh. But when we turn the page and begin reading Genesis 38, it might feel as if a few pages of our Bible stuck together. We don’t read of Joseph in Potiphar’s house; instead, we read of a sordid account of Judah. And then Joseph’s story continues in Genesis 39. Why this interlude?

Remember, it was Judah who suggested the brothers sell Joseph into slavery. And yet, look at how Judah responded when Tamar provided evidence showing he was the father of the child(ren) growing inside of her. Here he doesn’t seek to maximize his gain from a situation; instead, he owns up to what he had done (v. 26). In this we find a hint that God was at work in Judah, growing him and changing him, as we will see Him do with his younger brother Joseph in Egypt. Joseph will carry our attention for the bulk of the remainder of Genesis, but we have to be careful to remember that God was not focused solely on the slave in Egypt. He was also at work in others, preparing them for their reunion a couple of decades later. Yes, God is at work in us, but not only us. He is changing us and others for His glory and our good.

For whom can you pray today that God would be working in him or her? How can you encourage this person?
Encourage One Another

Join together with 2-4 people from your group, or with your family, sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and you are responding.

Share your thoughts and reflections on the truths from Scripture in this session:

- Favoritism leads to hatred and strife (Gen. 37:3-8).
- Jealousy leads to an opportunity for sin (Gen. 37:18-22).
- Bitterness leads to betrayal (Gen. 37:23-28).

How have you responded to these truths from Scripture?

How has your mindfulness of the gospel led you to repent or avoid sins such as favoritism, jealousy, and bitterness this past week?

What actions can we take to help those who are hurting from the experience of conflict or betrayal?

Notes

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
UNIT 4

SESSION 1

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

CHRISTMAS SESSION

SESSION 4

SESSION 5
2. Letter to Diognetus, quoted in *Introducing Major Theologians*, by Michael Reeves (SPCK, 2015) [eBook].

SESSION 6

UNIT 5

SESSION 1

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

UNIT 6

SESSION 1

SESSION 2

SESSION 3
Want to go even deeper in your study?

Pick up this resource at your local LifeWay store

If you have enjoyed studying Genesis with The Gospel Project, we recommend reading *Read the Bible for Life* to see how all of the books of the Bible fit together as one story.

$10 off your $30 purchase including sale and clearance

50 pre-tax. One coupon per customer. Coupon must be presented and relinquished at time of purchase. Cannot be combined with any other discounts, including coupons and LifeWay Rewards. Available on in-stock items only. Cannot be applied to the following: price-matched items, eBooks, myMedia BurnBar CDs, gift cards, church supplies, Bible studies/curriculum, LifeWay-branded products, Living Proof Ministries, Bargain Buys, prior purchases, Willow Tree® products, Specialty Imprints, textbooks, robes, clergy wear, and pre-sell offers. LifeWay’s 800# is not available on Saturdays and Sundays. Valid Nov. 1, 2018-Feb. 28, 2019, only.

Read the Bible for Life

George H. Guthrie

PB 005242570

Valid at LifeWay.com

Stores Nationwide • 800.233.1123

© 2019 LifeWay Christian Resources
Out of Egypt

Abraham’s descendants, the people of God, lived in the promised land as sojourners until the time God worked good out of evil circumstances and led His people to Egypt, where He blessed them. But soon this favored family was subjected to slavery. They cried out to God, and He heard them. So He raised up a deliverer to lead His people out of slavery, just as one day He would send His Deliverer to redeem His people from slavery to sin and death.

The Lord led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the wilderness, where each day the people had to trust the Lord’s provision. At Mount Sinai, God provided for them yet again as He revealed His law for His people to obey. But they failed, demonstrating the need for a Savior to keep the law on our behalf.

Having received God’s Ten Commandments, the Israelites wasted no time in breaking them. But faithful to His promises, the Lord provided the place and the means by which His sinful people could find atonement for their sins and worship Him. Ultimately, however, true atonement is found only in the sacrifice of Jesus.