

In the Pits Because of my Family

by Abby Kline and Carol Duerksen

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Copies of the skit
- Make name tags for the characters in the skit.
- Bibles
- A small table, mallet, and robe for the Judge in the skit
- Notecards and pens
- Write the prayer in the Respond section on whiteboard or newsprint so students can copy it

SESSION OUTLINE

FOCUS:

Welcome students, then go around the room and ask them to say the first thing that comes to mind to complete this sentence:

My family is the pits when _____.

CONNECT:

Say: There's a play-on-words between the question I just asked you and our Bible story for today. Does anyone know what it is?

Hints if needed:

- It's about a bunch of brothers.
- Key word is "the pit"

Ask students to open their Bibles to Genesis 37.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

Read the chapter, then do the skit at the end of the session. Give students nametags so everyone knows who they are portraying.

After the skit, discuss:

- What would you have done if you were the judge?
- What do you think of his judgment?
- Do you know what happened in the story, as told in the next chapters in Genesis? Who “won”?

APPLY:

Ask for a volunteer to portray God and put on the Judge’s robe. Then invite students to tell “God” their completion to the sentence: “My family is the pits when _____.”

Encourage “God” to give them an answer/resolution that God might actually give. How would God work in this situation? How can this difficult family situation be improved? Open up the discussion to the whole group. Use the Bible to find references if possible.

RESPOND:

Ask students to copy this prayer onto note cards and pray it today, then take it home and continue to pray it.

Lord God, I pray for my family.

Lord God, you know when I am hurt by them. Help me to forgive them.

Lord God, help me to be understanding of my parents.

Lord God, I thank you for everyone in my family. (Name them.)

Lord God, give me peace and love for them all.

Session Reproducibles

SKIT

Parts:

- Judge — wearing a robe, seated at small table, mallet in hand.
- Reuben and Judah — seated to one side
- Joe and Jacob — seated on the other side

Judge pounds mallet on table: The court will convene! Our hearing this morning is between Judah and Reuben, the defendants, and Jacob and Joe, the plaintiffs. We will hear first from the plaintiffs. You may step forward. State your name and your case:

Jacob and Joe step forward.

Joe: My name is Joseph. I am here to accuse my brothers of sibling harassment. They threw me in a pit, and then they hauled me out and sold me like I was a goat or something.

Judge: Thank you. And you, sir?

Jacob: My name is Jacob. Like my son said. His brothers dissed him big time.

Judge: His brothers ... are also your sons?

Jacob: Yes.

Judge: So why is there such dissension between your sons?

Jacob: Well ...

Judah stands up: Your honor!

Judge: Yes?

Judah: May I say something?

Judge: Come forward, state your name, and your case.

Judah: My name is Judah. One of the brothers. My father has always treated Joe better than the rest of us. He's always been Daddy's special little boy. And Joe eats it up and lords it over us. You won't believe the stuff he tells us ...

Joe: It's all true. I don't say anything that isn't true!

Judah: You think your stupid dream about us bowing down to you is true? Give me a break!

Joe: I can't help it that these dreams come to me!

Judge: Order in the court! Let's hear from the other defendant.

Reuben: My name is Reuben. Another brother. I really didn't want to throw Joe in the pit. He's irritating, that's for sure. You might say he has a "little bit too much self-confidence." But despite all his words, he's harmless. So he didn't deserve to be harmed.

Session Reproducibles

Joe: Exactly. I didn't deserve what they did. Maybe if they would have warned me, I could have backed off a little.

Judah: Maybe if you would have listened, you would have heard us telling you to cool it.

Joe: You never said that.

Judah: Did too.

Joe: Did not.

Judah: Did too!

Judge: Order! (pounds mallet). Now back to Jacob. Why do you think there are so many bad feelings between your boys?

Jacob: I will admit that I may tend to favor Joe. He is the son of my favorite wife, and he is the son of my old age. Yes, I may spoil him a little bit, but that is a father's prerogative. But I treat my other sons well. Ask them. They cannot deny it.

Judge: Our issue here today is not how you treat them, but how THEY treated JOE. I think I get the picture. Joe is spoiled, he lords it over his brothers, they got fed up, and that was the pits for Joe. (Judge laughs at his own joke.) My judgment is for ... (he looks at both sides) ... neither of you! (pounds mallet) You work it out for yourselves!