

DISCUSSION GUIDE

AUG-SEP

***I cannot, but GOD
WILL!***





AUGUST 20TH, 2025

I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Since we're born, humans experience a constant battle with the different problems of life. As students in middle and high school, there are massive battles they're confronted with such as: Sexual sin, pain/wounds from family members, peer pressure, social media, mental health and so much more. Because of these challenges, students turn to many things to find some sort of rest or an "answer". The truth is, that over time, no one is strong enough or good enough to overcome sin by themselves. If they can't do it, then who/what can? For the months of August and September we will be focusing on a series titled "I cannot, but GOD WILL". The meaning behind this is that we must recognize that we can't do it on our own, but need God himself to lead us to overcome sin. So, what does it take to overcome the sin and temptation we're faced with everyday? Will you continue fighting on your own? Will you continue fighting the wrong way? Lean into the only way, God's way! You may not be able to, but GOD WILL!

KEY POINTS / VERSES

Problem: If I and others can't overcome the problems I face, then who can?

Introduction to Joseph & the challenges he faced:

Hated || Genesis 37:5 (NLT)

Wanted Dead || Genesis 37:18 (NLT)

Sold into Slavery || Genesis 37:27 (NLT)

Falsely Accused || Genesis 39:17 (NLT)

Thrown into Prison || Genesis 39:20(a) (NLT)

Lessons learned from Joseph on how to overcome problems

1. Run Away - to God || Genesis 39:9 (NLT)

Joseph was tempted when he was ALONE & FREQUENTLY EXPOSED

1. Stick with God || Genesis 39:21 (NLT)

How do we "stick with God"? By spending time with Him!

1. OVERCOME WITH GOD || Genesis 41:16 (NIV)



01. Overcoming Sexual Sin || I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Overcoming sexual sin can be really tough, because it pulls on our natural desires and often promises quick happiness that doesn't last. The Bible says sexual sin is different from other sins because it hurts not only our bodies, but also our hearts and our closeness with God. Even though it's hard, God calls us to live in purity—not to take away our fun, but to protect us and help us experience love/relationships the way He designed them. Winning this battle doesn't happen alone; it takes God's strength, the help of the Holy Spirit, and being honest with trusted people who can encourage us. The good news is that with Jesus, freedom and healing are possible, and living pure brings real peace, joy, and a stronger connection with Him and others.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NLT) 18 **RUN** from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NLT) Avoiding Sexual Sin 12 You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.

Sexual sin outside of marriage can be exciting, but it will **NEVER** be enough.

How do I overcome Sexual Sin?

1. Run to God and Confess (admit) the Sin || 1 John 1:9-10 (NLT)
2. Confess to the right person || James 5:16 (NLT)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 39:1-20, what stands out? How does this story regarding sexual sin relate to us today?
2. Joseph ran away to honor God, why do you find it difficult to run away from sexual sin, and run to God?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What sexual sin makes me "sick" and has kept me living in darkness?
- Do I want to be free from sexual sin? Why or why not?



Overcoming Family Pain || I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Overcoming family pain can be one of the hardest struggles in life. Families are supposed to be places of love, safety, and encouragement, but because of sin and brokenness, they can also become sources of hurt, disappointment, or conflict. Carrying that pain can make it difficult to trust others, to feel secure, or even to understand God's love.

From a Christian perspective, it's important to face and overcome family pain because God desires healing and restoration. The Bible reminds us that God is a perfect Father who never fails, and through Jesus, we are welcomed into His family where we find unconditional love and acceptance. Healing doesn't happen overnight—it takes prayer, forgiveness, and sometimes the support of wise, trusted people—but God promises to bring beauty from brokenness. Choosing to surrender family pain to Him allows us to experience freedom, peace, and the ability to create a new legacy of love for future generations.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

Our family can be one of the greatest sources of pain and conflict.

Family pain is real and often may feel unfair, but it doesn't have to destroy us.

Lessons from Joseph on Overcoming Family Pain

1. Trust God's Bigger Plan

God can use even the deepest pain in our families to shape us and bring about His purpose.

2. Choose forgiveness over bitterness

When Joseph had power over his brothers, he didn't take revenge. Instead, he forgave them and provided for their needs. Forgiveness frees us from being chained to the pain of the past.

3. Keep your integrity despite hardship

Even though Joseph was mistreated by his family/falsely accused, he held on to his faith and lived with integrity. Our family's brokenness doesn't have to define our character—God does.

4. Use pain to bring healing to others

God can transform our family pain into a testimony that blesses and heals others.

5. Rely on God's presence

When family hurts us, God's presence is constant, and He never abandons us.



02. Overcoming Family Pain (Continued) || I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Forgiving family pain is one of the hardest things we can do, because the hurt often comes from the people who should love and protect us the most. Betrayal, rejection, or harsh words from family can leave deep scars that don't go away easily. Forgiveness is still essential—not because the pain wasn't real, but because holding on to bitterness keeps us trapped. Jesus calls us to forgive as He has forgiven us, offering grace even when it feels undeserved.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing what happened, but choosing to release the hurt into God's hands and trusting Him to bring justice and healing. When we forgive, we not only find freedom and peace for ourselves, but we also open the door for God to bring restoration, and we reflect His love to others—even in the most broken parts of our family story.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

Genesis 50:20 (NIV) 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Even though we may not understand the pain/evil, God will turn it for the Good.

Ephesians 4:32 (NLT) 32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Forgiveness is the bridge to restoration.

When we forgive, we're releasing being the judge of the situation and allowing God to take control

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 1

1. Read Genesis 37:12-27, how do you think Joseph felt regarding the things he went through with his brothers?
2. Have you ever felt hurt, rejected, or misunderstood by your family? What happened and how did it affect you?
3. Read Genesis 50:15-21 and then go straight into the reflection questions.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. List all of the things that you can remember that your parents have done, that have hurt you.
2. Read Ephesians 4:32. What is one step you can take towards forgiving your family?



03. Overcoming Peer Pressure || I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Overcoming peer pressure is difficult because everyone wants to fit in, be accepted, and avoid standing out as “different.” Friends, classmates and culture can influence the way we talk, act, and make choices, sometimes pulling us toward things we know don’t honor God. It’s important to resist negative peer pressure because our identity isn’t found in what others think, but in who God says we are. Romans 12:2 reminds us of this. Choosing God’s way may feel lonely at times, but it leads to freedom, confidence, and a stronger testimony to others. When we stand firm, we not only protect our relationship with Christ, but we also show others that it’s possible to live with courage and integrity.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

John 1:12 (NLT) 12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

I cannot be identified by God, until I **believe in Him** and **accept Him**.

Romans 12:2 (NLT) 2 Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Becoming a new person begins by renewing our mind, with the Word of God. You will never “live right” until you allow God to help you “think right”.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does it feel so important to “fit in”?
2. Give us an example of how you’ve been negatively peer pressured in the past and how did it affect you?
3. Why did you feel the need to do what others were doing?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Read Romans 12:2, what stands out?
2. Do I want to know what God’s purpose for my life is?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS P2

1. How can we allow God to help us “Think Right”, which will lead us to “live right”!
2. Schedule a time for Sunday Night to do a Facetime/Zoom Call with your group, and read Psalm 27 together (SOAP IT)!



04. Overcoming Anxiety & Depression || I cannot, but GOD WILL!

SUMMARY

Overcoming anxiety and depression is difficult because these struggles affect not only how we think, but also how we feel and live each day. They can make us feel alone, hopeless, or stuck in negative thoughts. It's important to remember that these battles are real, but they don't define our worth or our future. The Bible reminds us to cast our cares on God because He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7), and that He gives peace that goes beyond understanding (Philippians 4:6–7). While prayer, Scripture, and trusting God are powerful, it's also wise to seek help from pastors, leaders, counselors, or trusted friends when needed. The importance of overcoming anxiety and depression is that it allows us to experience God's joy, freedom, and purpose again. With Christ, we can find hope in the darkest times and the strength to keep moving forward.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

Anxiety is just as much a spiritual battle as it is mental and physical experience.

The root of anxiety is a need to feel control.

The first step to overcoming anxiety is surrendering my trust to Jesus.

Jeremiah 17:5-8 (NIV)

Philippians 4:6-9 (NLT)

1. CONFESS – Acknowledge your control/pride and seek help.
2. CONFRONT – Deal with the root not the fruit
3. COMMIT – Fight back with God's strategy daily

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Philippians 4:6-7 and discuss what stands out.
2. Why does "Order Matter" in receiving God's peace? (It can only come after we run to Him, by spending time with Him).

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Share the lyrics with your group of the song "Peace be still" by Lauren Daigle.
Take a moment in silence to listen to the song as a group and follow along the lyrics individually.
2. Read Philippians 4:8-9, what stands out?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS P2

1. Discuss Philippians 4:9, "Keep putting into practice...then the God of peace will be with you".
2. What has God taught you in the series "Overcoming". How can you put this into practice?