

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

IDENTITY Joseph #5: "I CAN'T BUT GOD CAN"

CONNECT IN with one another and CONNECT UP with God

- If God showed up and nothing were impossible, what would you do with the next five years of your life?
[Help for leaders: Write what people say on a flipchart or on a large piece of paper. Take plenty of time on this exercise, encouraging people to dream dreams in God. For many people this will be a difficult exercise, as many of us forget how to dream as we get older. As you help people articulate the dreams God has placed in their heart, you will rekindle their faith.]
- **Read Genesis 41:1-16 & 38-40.** Joseph's sudden promotion from *Prisoner* to *Prime Minister* makes for pretty inspiring reading. He explains how it happened for him in v16: "*I can't but God can.*" That's a pretty good summary of the journey God is taking us on as a church too: "*Everyday People, Extraordinary God.*" Pharaoh isn't about this way of thinking at all. He is all about "*I can.*" But how can we tell that isn't working out for him?
[Help for leaders: Pharaoh means Great House in Hebrew. We can hear this boast in practice in Exodus 5:2. Yet he cuts a pretty pathetic picture in this passage. He trembles in his pyjamas over two dreams and has to beg one of his prisoners to help him out. The writer of Genesis doesn't even tell us Pharaoh's name, but lists 70 of Jacob's descendants in 46:8-27!]
- Let's be honest with one another. God has showed up and nothing is impossible, so how much of the fact we haven't seen our dreams come true is due to our belief that "*We can*"?
[Help for leaders: Don't rush over this question, because pride is a bigger factor than we'd like to admit. Our failure to advance as Christians and as ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven is seldom caused by it being too difficult, but by our failure to confess that it's more than difficult – it's impossible. Admitting "I can't" is always the precursor of a move of God.]
- Ask different group members to read **Matthew 10:27**, **John 6:45**, **John 10:3-4** and **Acts 2:17-18&39**. Take time to explore what God is promising you through each of these verses.
- The chief cupbearer isn't about "*I can't but God can*" either. He is governed by fear rather than by faith. He has allowed his past imprisonment by Pharaoh to affect his willingness to speak up today. How much of the fact we haven't seen our dreams come true is due to our failure to believe that "*God can*"?
[Help for leaders: Again, don't rush over this, because unbelief is a far bigger factor than we'd like to admit. When we read verses such as John 14:12, John 14:13-14, 2 Corinthians 1:20 and Philippians 4:13, why do we rush so quickly to the small print, to the extent that the small print looms larger in our minds than the Bible promise itself]

CONNECT OUT with the non-church people around you

- Let's go back to our flipchart and pull out the dreams we have together for our Life Group. Having read Genesis 41 and seen what God did through Joseph's faith, what other dreams might we want to dream for our Life Group and for its impact on our local area?
- How big a factor is *self-reliance* in preventing us from seeing these dreams realised?
- How big a factor is *unbelief* in preventing us from seeing these dreams realised?
- Let's pray fervently together for God to do to our Life Group what he did to Joseph – the equivalent of taking him from *Prisoner* to *Prime Minister* in a single day.
- *[Help for leaders: One of the signs that your Life Group has fallen into wrong thinking is if you struggle to dream bigger than a slightly better version of continuing to meet together. Use this Life Group gathering as an opportunity to dream about planting out a new Life Group together into a new street in your area or into a new area altogether. Use it as an opportunity to think of groups of people that you might gather if you planted out a new men's Life Group, a new daytime Life Group, a new Freedom In Christ course Life Group, etc.* **Anatole France:** "*To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.*"