

Study Series: Detours

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Lesson Title: “Their Pattern and Purifying” (pp. 19-31)

Session 2

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The main point of this lesson is:While detours are personalized and specific, they tend to have the common elements of testing, training, and temptation.

Focus on this goal:To help adults see their detours as preparation for their greater destiny

Key Bible Passage:Genesis 39:1-20

To the Leader: Remember to retain and display from Session 1 the map and poster you began.

Before the Session

Display several exercise items (shoes, jump rope, weights, etc.). (Step 1)

Have a marker available*.* (Steps 3, 4, and 6)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Say: I’ve decided to get in shape. I’m going to use these items to help achieve my goal.

Pick up each item individually and talk yourself out of using it. (For instance, you might say: Jumping rope is really boring, and I don’t know that it’s good for my knees.)

After dismissing all the items, say: I guess I’ll just try to get healthier without really doing anything. Do you think that will work?

Say: Today, we consider the tools God uses to prepare us for His plan and how well we accept their effects in our lives.

Step 2. The Pattern of Detours, Part 1

Read the author’s detour story (p. 19) or share a similar story of your own.

Say: This is a parable about a traffic detour meant to help us understand our life detours: sometimes we get to the place God has for us faster and more equipped if we accept detours.

Invite testimonies of how a traffic app saved someone from sitting in traffic; then invite testimonies of how a “chance occurrence” allowed a member to get to a new level of faith through an unexpected life change.

Briefly recount the story of Joseph through Genesis 37, pointing out he was in a pit created by himself and his family with no foreseeable way out.

Explain that today’s lesson will focus on the testing, training, and temptation of detours.

Step 3. The Pattern of Detours, Part 2

Add *Test* to the key words from last week.

Read the definition of a test in the opening lines (p. 21).

Invite a volunteer to read the paragraph (p. 21) beginning, “God already knows ….”

Recount the author’s heart test and any physical tests you receive on a regular basis.

Say: In the same way that our doctors use scientific tests to assess the health of our bodies, God uses detours to test the health of our faith.

Share a time when you thought you were on solid footing spiritually, but God exposed an issue at a time of testing.

Point back to how Joseph’s testing developed him and prepared him for the future. Stress our tests do the same.

Step 4. The Purifying of Detours, Part 1

Add *Train* to the key word list.

Hold up an exercise item and ask if anyone feels pretty experienced with that item. Ask how many hours per week or years of use the person has put into it.

Say: Just as we train our bodies, our detours also train our faith*.*

Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 39:2,21,23.

Point out the repetition that the Lord was with Joseph.

Say: God doesn’t test us and put us through training detours all alone; He is always there to give us the strength, comfort, and peace we so desperately need*.*

Share how you got stronger in your own faith as you experienced God with you while going through a difficult time.

Step 5. The Purifying of Detours, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 39:1-6. As a group, consider how the years Joseph spent in Potiphar’s house served as training for the young man who would later be second in command of all of Egypt.

Read the opening two paragraphs of Day Four (p. 25).

Lead learners in discussing how Joseph’s attitude, bitterness, or anger could have ruined this opportunity to learn and grow.

Invite a volunteer to read the opening sentence from the third paragraph of Day Four (p. 25): “Training for greater things always takes place in lesser things.”

Share a time in your life when a “lesser” thing (such as cleaning a house or doing manual labor) prepared you for a greater thing. Invite similar testimonies.

Ask: How well do we do at living like Joseph: responsible, faithful, content, and hard-working?

Step 6. The Purifying of Detours, Part 3

Add *Temptation* to the list.

Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 39:7-20.

Use the opening paragraphs from Day Five (p. 27) to define temptation and differentiate it from testing.

Point to the map from last week and say: If I’m here (point to a spot) and God wants me here (point to another place pretty far away)*,* a detour takes me out of my comfort zone. Satan wants to use that detour as a temptation to take me away from God’s will, never to make it to my destiny. God wants to use it as a time to test me, reveal what’s in my heart, and prepare me for the next step.

Have adults read the paragraph from Day Five (p. 29) beginning, “Joseph would have never requested ….”

Ask how that paragraph relates to our own growth through detours.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Point back to the terms test, train, and temptation that you wrote on the paper. Say: At times of detour, it’s helpful and biblical to have a godly mentor in our lives; they see things from a different perspective and help us navigate our detours. But we also need to consider that younger believers may want us—yes, us—to be their mentors for the same reason.

Challenge learners to prayerfully consider being mentored and mentoring as part of their spiritual growth and preparation for detours.

