



# FORGIVING CHALLENGE

## INTRODUCTION

We are about to embark on a 40-Day Life-Changing Journey Leading to Freedom called *Forgiving Challenge*. Before we begin our journey, take some time to go over the Group Promise together by reading it aloud. Make sure everyone understands the commitment.

## GROUP PROMISE

I commit to these basic *Forgiving Challenge* Group Promises. This is my “ALL IN” pledge to live out Jesus’ words, both in my own life and in helping my Group do so.

- ➡ I will be on time and show up with my whole heart.
- ➡ Especially due to the nature of the content in *Forgiving Challenge*, I understand that this Group is 100% confidential. Whatever is shared in the Group stays in the Group.
- ➡ I will respect other Group members by participating openly and speaking honestly, without dominating the discussions.
- ➡ I will not try to fix people, preach a sermon, or give unsolicited advice.
- ➡ When I share in the Group I will share primarily about myself and not about others.
- ➡ I will trust God to work in all of us as we explore the forgiveness of Jesus together!

Nearly everyone has a scar somewhere on their body. Tell the story behind one of your scars, and why it may or may not be meaningful to you.

**WATCH FORGIVING CHALLENGE SMALL GROUP VIDEO WEEK 1 - INTRODUCTION**  
[kingofkings.org/forgiving](http://kingofkings.org/forgiving)

## DISCUSSION

- 1 When it comes to forgiveness, do you have a harder time receiving forgiveness for yourself or giving forgiveness to others? Why?
- 2 If the death and resurrection of Jesus offers freedom to all, then why do so many Christians not feel free?

Zach says in the Introduction of *Forgiving Challenge*: “Jesus is known for grace. Christians are known for judgment. Grace and judgment, by definition, are polar opposites of one another. Grace is getting a free gift you don’t deserve. Judgment is getting exactly what you deserve.” Do you agree or disagree that Jesus is known for grace and Christians are known for judgment? Explain.





# FORGIVING CHALLENGE

## DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Read **John 20:19-29** *Jesus Appears to His Disciples* and answer the following questions:

- 1 Why do you think that God would allow the scars of Jesus to remain? What does God want to tell us through the scars of Jesus?
- 2 Even though the disciples were uniquely chosen by God and given a front-row seat to 3.5 years of His preaching, teaching, and miraculous healings, now they were cowering in fear and doubting the power of His resurrection. Can you relate to the disciples? Are there times, despite all that God has done for you, that you look back and feel guilt and shame over your fear, unbelief, or other action/inaction? Explain.
- 3 After receiving a second chance from Jesus through His grace, Thomas would go from a doubting disciple to a devoted disciple. Has the grace of Jesus changed you? How?

Zach says in the Introduction of *Forgiving Challenge*: “You cannot be forgiving of others until you have received forgiveness for yourself. We forgive others by learning to receive God’s forgiveness for ourselves.” Agree or disagree.

Do you have a favorite story of God’s forgiveness in the Bible? If so, what makes it so special for you?

In *Forgiving Challenge*, Zach will help you dive deep into the story of Jesus forgiving Peter, the leader of the disciples. What are some of the first words that come to mind about Peter?

During this 40-Day Challenge, you will be encouraged to see your life as a story that is unfolding. If someone were to read the story that you have told with your life up to today, what would others learn about you? What would others learn about God from your story?

*Forgiving Challenge* will explore the 5 Phases Leading to Freedom using the acronym SCARS:



Look up each of these words to find their definitions to help you have greater understanding of where we are headed on the journey.

What do you hope happens in your life over the next 40 days?





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## CLOSING THOUGHTS

Say: **To receive total freedom, the first step is knowing that God Himself has truly forgiven you.**

#FORGIVINGCHALLENGE   

Read: **Isaiah 53:4-5** *"<sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."*

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

Invite someone on this 40-Day journey with you.

Most of the greatest challenges that are conquered in life are not meant for individuals to tackle alone. Our hope is that you will do this Challenge with at least one other person, called your accountability partner. If you are joining in this Challenge with your small group or your church, it's still important that you have one person who can help to hold you accountable for the duration of this discipleship journey. Identify specifics with this person, such as how often you will check in with one another and what questions you will ask of one another at those check-ins.

## PRAYER

Spend time praying for your group as you all embark on the 40-Day Challenge together. Ask God for encouragement, strength, honesty, perseverance, and appropriate vulnerability to help you truly receive God's forgiveness and the freedom that He offers to you.

\*For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, purchase *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Life-Changing Journey Leading to Freedom* at [www.forgivingchallenge.com/shop](http://www.forgivingchallenge.com/shop) and read the Introduction, as well as Days 1-5.