



## **Killers of Faith - Part 4**

### **Group Leader Guide**

#### **Opening Prayer**

Begin your group time by asking God to soften hearts and give wisdom as you discuss the difficult topic of forgiveness.

#### **Watch Video Message – Question to ask.**

What is something small that happened this week that you chose to let go of rather than hold onto? How did that feel?

#### **KEY SCRIPTURE**

Proverbs 4:23 - "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

Matthew 6:15 - "But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

#### **RECAP & KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. Unforgiveness is a killer of faith - It consumes us and brings chaos into our lives, pushing faith to the background.
2. Unforgiveness grieves the Holy Spirit - When we harbor bitterness, we open the door to the enemy and close the door to the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts.
3. What flows from an unforgiving heart:

- o Bitterness
  - o Wrath
  - o Anger
  - o Clamor
  - o Evil speaking
4. Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling - Just like love, forgiveness is a decision we make regardless of our emotions.
  5. Forgiveness protects your heart - It's not about justifying wrong behavior; it's about giving retribution to God so our hearts remain soft.

## **Discussion Questions**

### **Understanding Unforgiveness (15 minutes)**

1. Read Proverbs 4:23 together. What does it mean practically to "guard your heart"? What are we guarding it from?
2. The message lists five things that flow from unforgiveness (bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking). Which of these do you struggle with most when you've been hurt?

### **Recognizing Unforgiveness (15 minutes)**

Four signs of harbouring unforgiveness:

- You replay what they did to you
  - You enjoy imagining them get punished
  - You talk about it often
  - You feel justified staying hardened
3. Which of these warning signs resonates most with you? Why do you think we sometimes hold onto unforgiveness even when we know it's harmful?
  4. Have you ever experienced the "chaos" that unforgiveness brings? Share (as comfortable) how holding onto bitterness affected other areas of your life.

### **The Process of Forgiveness (20 minutes)**

5. The sermon states that "forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling." Why is this distinction so important? How does this change the way we approach forgiving others?

6. What does it mean that forgiveness "does not justify what that person has done"? How can we forgive someone while still acknowledging that what they did was wrong?
7. Tiaan mentions that "making the decision to forgive does not automatically mean freedom." What do you think this means? What comes after the decision to forgive?
8. Jesus commands us to love our enemies. How does loving your enemies relate to forgiving them? What might this look like practically?

### **The Hardest Forgiveness (15 minutes)**

10. Tiaan ends by saying "the most difficult person to forgive is yourself." Why do you think self-forgiveness is so difficult?
11. How does unforgiveness toward yourself affect your relationship with God and your faith?
12. What would it look like to extend the same grace to yourself that God extends to you?

## **PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

### **This Week's Challenge**

Choose ONE of the following actions to take this week:

#### **Option 1: Identify**

- Spend time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to reveal any unforgiveness in your heart
- Write down what comes to mind without judgment
- Bring this list before God

#### **Option 2: Decide**

- Make a conscious decision to forgive someone who has hurt you
- Write out a prayer releasing them and giving the situation to God
- You don't need to contact the person; this is between you and God

### **Option 3: Practice Self-Forgiveness**

- Identify one thing you've been holding against yourself
- Meditate on scriptures about God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9, Psalm 103:12)
- Write yourself a letter from God's perspective, extending grace

### **Option 4: Guard Your Heart**

- When thoughts of resentment come up this week, immediately pray for the person who hurt you
- Replace replaying the offense with reciting Scripture or declaring truth

### **Accountability Questions**

- Who do you need to forgive?
- What is one specific step you will take this week toward forgiveness?
- Who in this group can you share this with and ask to check in with you?

### **MEMORY VERSE**

Ephesians 4:31-32 - "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

### **CLOSING REFLECTION**

Forgiveness is not weakness; it is strength. It is not excusing wrong; it is entrusting justice to God. It is not a feeling; it is obedience. And it is not optional for those who follow Christ.

When we choose unforgiveness, we choose to carry a burden God never intended us to bear. When we choose forgiveness, we choose freedom, faith, and the fullness of God's presence in our lives.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Pray together, asking God to:

- Reveal any hidden unforgiveness in your hearts
- Give you the strength to make the choice to forgive
- Heal the wounds that make forgiveness difficult
- Help you extend to yourself the grace He freely gives
- Restore faith where unforgiveness has killed it

### **NOTES FOR GROUP LEADERS**

- This topic can bring up painful memories. Create a safe space and remind participants they can share as much or as little as they're comfortable with.
- Have tissues available.
- Be prepared to pray with individuals after the meeting.
- Remind the group that forgiveness is a process, not a one-time event.
- Emphasize that forgiveness doesn't mean reconciliation is always required or safe.
- If someone shares about abuse or ongoing harm, connect them with appropriate pastoral care or professional help.