

4 WEEKS

THE GRUDGE





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SHAME



week 1

SMALL
GROUP
STUDY

Kicking it off:

Share a time from when you were a kid and you got in hot water with your parents.

Big Idea:

Guilt says I did something bad, shame says I am bad.

Key Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 7:10

"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death."

Luke 22:59-62

"About an hour later another asserted, 'Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.' Peter replied, 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly."

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Philippians 1:6

"... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Discussion:

1. Is it easier for you to forgive yourself or other people?
2. Think about a time when you felt guilty. How did that guilt affect you?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. What are some ways you could start viewing guilt as an opportunity to grow closer to God?
4. What are some differences between shame and guilt?
5. What guilt have you been carrying lately?
6. Read Luke 22:59-62. Peter knew the deep pain of guilt and shame. Why do you think it's so hard to forgive ourselves when we've messed up? What can you do to start forgiving yourself?
7. Read 1 John 1:9 and Philippians 1:6. What are God's promises when we mess up?

8. What steps could you take this week to let go and accept God's forgiveness?

Wrapping It Up:

Don't carry around the burden of guilt for another week. Pray and ask God to forgive you and remove your guilt. Then embrace the freedom He offers.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for everything You've done for us. Thank You that, because of Christ's sacrifice, we don't have to dwell on our past or carry around our guilt. Help us to accept the forgiveness You freely offer each of us and let our guilt go. In Jesus' name, amen.

Memory Verse:

"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death."

2 Corinthians 7:10

BITTERNESS



week 2

SMALL
GROUP
STUDY

Kicking it off:

What's a small thing that always annoys you?

Big Idea:

Small offenses left unchecked can lead to bitterness in your life.

Key Scriptures:

Proverbs 19:11

"A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."

Proverbs 10:12

"Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses."

Proverbs 17:9

"Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."

Ephesians 4:2

"Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love."

Discussion:

1. Read Proverbs 19:11, 10:12 and 17:19. How do you do in the patience department? Are you quickly annoyed or more easy going?
2. What can you put in the gap between an hurtful or frustrating action and your reaction?
3. Read Ephesians 4:2. Share about a time when someone was patient with you when you messed up. How did the love they showed you affect you?
4. Are you currently holding on to an offense? How can you make a conscious effort to let that offense go?
5. How can you more intentionally fill those gap with love?

Wrapping It Up:

Practice being patient with others this week and give them the benefit of the doubt.

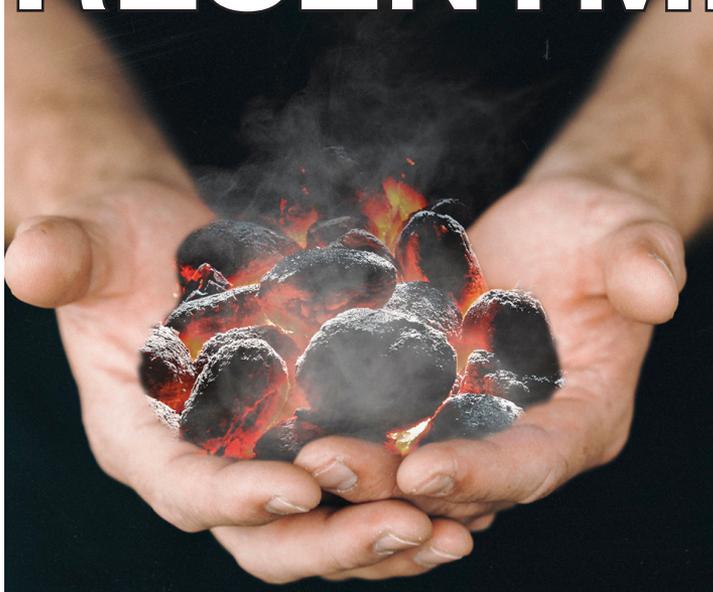
Prayer:

Father, thank You for never holding grudges against us. Help us to follow Your example by letting go of offenses. Help us to see that our lives are too short and our callings too great to be offended by something small. In Jesus' name, amen.

Memory Verse:

"Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." Ephesians 4:2

RESENTMENT



week 3

**SMALL
GROUP
STUDY**

Kicking it off:

What is the most frustrating part about waiting for something?

Big Idea:

Unanswered prayers can lead to resentment toward God.

Key Scriptures:

1 Samuel 1:6-10

"So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the LORD had kept her from having children. Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would

not even eat. "Why are you crying, Hannah?" Elkanah would ask. "Why aren't you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me—isn't that better than having ten sons?" Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord."

1 Samuel 1:19-20

"The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the Lord once more. Then they returned home

to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the Lord remembered her plea, and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I asked the LORD for him."

Isaiah 40:31

"Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him, and he will direct your path."

Discussion:

1. Think about a time when you experienced a season of waiting. What was it like? How did you handle it?
2. When you look back at that season of waiting now, has your perspective of that time changed? If yes, how so?
3. Read 1 Samuel 1:6-10 and 19-20. Hannah didn't hold anything back when she prayed to God. How might her story challenge how you communicate with God in prayer?
4. Share a current situation in

which you are waiting and praying.

5. Read Isaiah 40:31 and Proverbs 3:5-6. What are some ways you can lean into God as you wait for Him to act?
6. If you've been holding on to a grudge against God, how can you let go of that hurt and choose to trust Him instead?

Wrapping It Up:

If you're in a season of waiting, don't stop communicating with God. Be honest about how you're feeling this week and continue to ask Him to act.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for stories like Hannah's, which illustrate how You're always at work, even in seasons of waiting. Free us from any grudges we've held against You. Help us to trust Your plan for our lives and believe that You are good. In Jesus' name, amen.

Memory Verse:

"Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

BETRAYAL



week 4

SMALL
GROUP
STUDY

Kicking it off:

When have you most felt betrayed?

Big Idea:

Forgiveness is giving another what God gave you.

Key Scriptures:

Luke 17:1, 3-5

"Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come ... So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come

back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them." The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Matthew 5:43-44

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Ephesians 4:32

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ Jesus, God forgave you."

Matthew 6:14-15

"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive

you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

Psalm 103:10-12

"He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Discussion:

1. How would you describe your relationship with forgiveness?
2. Read Luke 17:1, 3-5. Why do you suppose the apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith after His statement on forgiveness?
3. Matthew 5:43-44. Why do you think Jesus' teaching on forgiveness is so radical?
4. Are you currently wrestling with a betrayal? What would it look like for you to extend forgiveness in that situation?
5. Read Ephesians 4:32. What are some ways God's forgiveness has affected your life?
6. Forgiveness isn't fair and isn't forgetting, but it does mean giving others what God has given us. What are some

ways you can forgive and still set boundaries?

7. Read Matthew 6:14-15 and Psalm 103:10-12. How do these passages inspire you to seek to forgive others?
8. Share about a time when someone forgave you. How can you extend that kind of forgiveness to others?
9. Do you know someone struggling with a betrayal? How can you encourage them to find freedom in forgiveness?

Wrapping It Up:

If you're not ready to forgive someone yet, ask God to give you the faith you need to take that step.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the forgiveness You've offered each of us. Help us never to forget the love You've shown us. Give us the faith we need to extend that same love to others through forgiveness. In Jesus' name, amen.

Memory Verse:

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ Jesus, God forgave you."
Ephesians 4:32

NOTES:

NOTES:

Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
 - Take time to prepare.
 - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
 - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
 - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
 - What is the purpose of our group?
 - What is the vision for our group?
 - What are your expectations?
 - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
 - What are some things we value as a group?
 - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?
Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
 - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
 - Encouraging and challenging one another
 - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
- Childcare _____
- When we will meet (day of week) _____
- Where we will meet (place) _____
- We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be _____
- Date of this agreement _____
- Date we will review this agreement again _____
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____



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