

Discussion Questions

INTRODUCTION

Forgiveness is a subject that touches every human being—no matter who they are. How well we understand and practice forgiveness has a huge impact on our happiness and the quality of our relationships. The Bible has a lot to say about forgiveness and gives us hope and a plan if we are feeling defeated in this area.

GETTING STARTED

1. Have you made a loan to someone that you could not collect on? Or have you ever been cheated without restitution? What did that feel like?
2. Who do you have to say “I’m sorry- please forgive me” to the most?

BIBLE IDEA

3. How do you usually handle it when someone has wronged you? (ignore them, confront, get even, withdraw, tell others, forgive, hold a grudge, talk to God)
4. Read Matthew 18:21-35.
 - From this parable, what principles can you find for dealing with someone who has wronged you?
 - Nathan’s main point was that we should “Let go and forgive.” How did Nathan’s illustration of the monkey trap impact you?
5. Read Ephesians 4:32
 - What is the basis for our forgiveness?
 - Which is hardest for you to do? Ask for forgiveness, give forgiveness, forgive over and over, or forgive and let it go? Who do you find it hardest to forgive?
6. How do our feelings impact our willingness to forgive? What steps can we take when we don’t feel like forgiving? How can the offended party deal with the offense? (See 1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:22)
7. See Matthew 5:43-48 Romans 12:14-20; and 1 Peter 3:8-9.

Do these commands seem crazy or radical to you? If we choose to *not* seek revenge but instead pray a blessing and do good to those who offend us, what might the impact be on the offender? What might the impact be on us? What does it cost us? What does 1 Peter 3:9 promise us if we will give a blessing?
8. Read Matthew 18:15. Here Jesus describes the next logical step after forgiveness. If you’ve been wronged what is your responsibility? What is God trying to accomplish?

NEXT STEPS

9. Who is someone you either need to offer forgiveness to or receive forgiveness from? How can we support you?

The 4 Promises of Forgiveness: (*The Peacemaker, by Ken Sande*) 1. “I will not dwell on this incident” 2. “I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you.” 3. “I will not talk to others about this incident.” 4. “I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.”

LET GO

Matthew 18:23-23 "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents^[a] was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' 27 The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. 28 "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii.^[b] He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. 29 "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' 30 "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. 32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Main Point: _____ and _____!

Ephesians 4:32

Here are 3 ways to start letting go and avoid the "Grudge Trap."

A. _____ up!

2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:105

B. Pray _____ on them!

Matthew 5:43 – 44; Romans 12:14

C. Seek out _____.

Matthew 18:15