

Note for the facilitator: We are in week 3 of the series “PLOT TWIST” this week. Even though Joseph experienced hurt, pain, and disappointment at the hands of others, he still had a choice in how he would respond. Forgiveness is not minimizing hurt or pain or burying our heads in the sand about it, or the absence of consequences. Forgiveness is to surrender the right to hurt others in response to the way they’ve hurt us.

Worship: In preparation for Life Group or during your quiet time, listen to the worship song [Touch of Heaven by Hillsong Worship](#). As you do this open your heart to Him, surrender to Him the things that are on your heart and mind and allow Him to bring healing, to speak life and grace into your life.

Check-In: Since hearing about Joseph’s unwavering faith in an unwavering God last week, share with the group how you have seen God at work in the past week in your life or in the lives of your family as you trust Him to work out all things for His good.

Bible Readings: Genesis 50:15-21 (NIV); Hebrews 9:22 (NIV); Colossians 3:13; Acts 7:60 (NIV); Matthew 5:43-45; Matthew 11:28-30.

Preparation and Discussion for Group Time:

What can we learn from Joseph?

We heard in the recap on Sunday that Joseph had many reasons to harbour unforgiveness, but we see that he still chose to forgive, to be kind, and to let go and allow God to judge.

Tony shared with us 5 Truths about Forgiveness:

- a) *Forgiveness doesn’t always mean reconciliation or restoration.*
- b) *Forgiveness is costly.*
- c) *Forgiveness liberates the perpetrator and victim.*
- d) *Unconditional forgiveness is only possible with God’s strength.*
- e) *Forgiveness empowers us to pray for those who persecute us.*

1. There are many reasons why we may struggle to forgive, here are just a few: we may have the wrong idea of forgiveness, we don’t think it’s fair, and we don’t think we can do it. Tony shared what forgiveness is and is not. Share with the group, why you struggle to forgive.
2. Think about your relationships, are you protecting your heart from experiencing pain and hurt, have you built up a wall? Have you taken an offense, or are you harbouring unforgiveness? Consider what Jesus did for you on the cross, and then share with the group who you need to forgive. (Perhaps you did this on Sunday during the service, then share what this meant to you to do this and how you feel.)
3. Share with the group if you have been able to pray for those who have persecuted you. What happened in your life as you did this?

Check out and Prayer:

We can never forgive others more than God has forgiven us. We have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23). Take 2 mins of silence, then write down the name/s of those you need to forgive on a piece of paper. Then pray this prayer of forgiveness as you ask God to forgive you.

Prayer of Forgiveness

“Lord, instead of loving, I have resented certain people, and I have unforgiveness in my heart. Forgive me for my sin of holding on to offense. I ask you, Lord, to give me the power to forgive those who have hurt me. I release them to you now. Give me the strength to pray for them, bless them, and want the best for them. Thank you for breaking these chains off my life. In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen.” Freedom Book

Love God:

- The memory verse for this week is Isaiah 2:22 “Stop trusting other people to save you. Do not think too highly of them; they are only humans who have not stopped breathing yet.”
- For personal study, here are suggested RightNow Media and YouVersion devotionals:
 - [Life Apps By Andy Stanley \(Forgiveness App\)](#)
 - [Living Changed: Forgiveness](#)
 - [Choosing forgiveness](#)

Love People:

- During your prayer time this week, ask God to:
 - Help you fully trust Him in every area of your life.
 - Help you to have unwavering faith in Him who is unwavering.
 - Help you with any feelings of anger, confusion, hurt, bitterness, and sadness that you may be experiencing because of a Plot Twist you’ve experienced.
 - To help you identify others in your world who may need encouragement or support during a difficult time.
 - To forgive those you need to forgive.
- There are several next steps you can take on your discipleship journey over the coming weeks:
 - take a step of obedience - Baptism,
 - join a serve team; there are various areas where volunteers are needed.
 - pay for a teen to attend Elevate Imagine Camp 2023 or sign up to serve.
 - sign up online via Church Center or the [website](#).