

SESSION 2 - FORGIVING

SERIES BIG IDEA

Jesus' life and teaching can help us simplify our lives and experience a clutter-free soul.

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

We can be freed from our hurt, bitterness, and anger by learning to forgive.

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 18:21-35

ICEBREAKER

Share an embarrassing story that happened in the last couple weeks.

OPENING THOUGHT

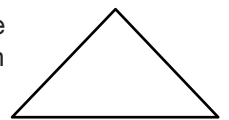
Some of us has been through significant trauma and often think that forgiveness is about forgetting, excusing, or reconciling. Sometimes it includes reconciling, but forgiveness is radically different than forgetting or excusing – it's about moving forward from pain and anger into God's healing. Have you ever had anger or bitterness keep you from experiencing the goodness of life? If so, how?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read Matthew 18:21-35. What stood out to you or struck you?
2. Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive people who have sinned against him. What significance could his wording have?
3. How does the parable explicitly connect forgiveness?

LIFE APPLICATION

4. What are some ways we mistakenly view forgiveness?
5. Do you know someone who has forgiven you? What does that feel like?
6. Author and theologian Lewis Smedes said: "To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you." How has this been true or not true in your life?
7. Forgiveness is partially about acknowledging a debt, a hurt, or a wound and then bringing God into the equation. We often view our relationships as linear transactions, but bringing God into the mix can turn that simple line into a triangle. We then have to account for our actions in two different ways, to God and to our fellow person. How does that change how you view forgiveness?
8. Do you have someone who has been extremely hard to forgive? Could you share the story or why it's hard to forgive him or her?



CHALLENGE

Forgiveness can be a multi-step process. It takes courage and time to acknowledge our wounds and hurts. It can take more time to decide we want to cancel the debt and even more time to ask God to empower us to cancel it. What steps can you take this week toward forgiveness?