

BIG IDEA

As we forgive, we are forgiven.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO KNOW?

Think of a time when you were forgiven and didn't deserve it. How did it make you feel?

Spend the first 10-15 minutes of your Life Group discussion searching the Bible for scriptures about forgiveness. How many did you find?

Have each member of your group read *at least* one passage. What themes or patterns are you noticing?

Revisit the main passage from this week's message, **Matthew 18:23-34**. Why might Jesus have told *this* story to teach his followers about forgiveness?

WHAT IS MY INITIAL REACTION?

If God only forgave you to the extent that you forgive others, what debts would you still owe to him? Is this a trade-off you are willing to make?

What are the perceived benefits of unforgiveness? Why do we choose unforgiveness despite the clear command from Jesus to be merciful and forgiving people?

Do you trust God to deal appropriately with the people who have hurt you? Would you be upset if God showed them mercy?

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

Spend the last portion of your Life Group discussion talking about **The Process of Forgiveness** and **How Can You Tell You Have Forgiven?** resources on page 2 and 3 of this Sermon Companion.

Keep this question in mind as you talk: *What is your refusal to forgive others costing you?*

Note: These resources are tools that you can use over and over again. Keep them handy so you can refer to them in the future when you need to practice forgiveness.





THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS

1. *Recognize and admit that an offense occurred or that a person sinned against you.*
2. *Clearly describe to yourself the actual offense or sin committed. Write it out.*
3. *What am I forgiving this person for?*
4. *List the effects on your life because of the person's sin against you.*
5. *Recognize that you have feelings about the sin that was committed against you. Embrace those feelings.*
6. *Acknowledge the full extent of the anger, hurt, both towards you and towards the other person.*
7. *Share the feelings with appropriate others. Grieve the anger, loss and hurt connected to the offense or sin against you.*
8. *Forgive the person.*
9. *Make a decision about what kind of a relationship, if any, you can have with the person.*





HOW CAN YOU TELL YOU HAVE FORGIVEN?

Answer the following questions:

1. Have I stopped secretly hoping they get what they deserve?
2. Have I quit talking about them to others?
3. Have I quit replaying my revenge?
4. Have I stopped frequently thinking about them and what they did?
5. Am I glad when something good happens to them?
6. Am I more open and trusting toward people?
7. Am I less angry, depressed, or resentful?
8. Have I quit blaming them for how my life has been?
9. Do I feel sorry when something bad happens to them?
10. Do I feel more comfortable with my feelings?

If you answered “NO” to two or more of these questions, it is likely that there is still some forgiveness work to be done.

