


1 **How would you define forgiveness?** Think ahead and then work together as a group on a definition.

 Read Genesis 45:1-15 and Genesis 50:15-21. Joseph models forgiveness in amazing fashion. From his story, what can you learn about forgiveness?


 Joseph's brothers experienced forgiveness. Can you learn something about being forgiven through their experience?

2 **Jesus taught and modeled forgiveness perfectly.** Read the following passages and discuss forgiveness from Jesus' perspective. Matthew 6:7-15, Matthew 18:21-35, Luke 23:32-38.

 What aspects of forgiveness are hardest for you to give or receive?

 What would it look like for you to imitate Jesus' heart forgiveness that He displayed while on the cross?

3 **What makes forgiveness possible?** (See Ephesians 1:7 and Ephesians 4:32)

 If you keep close to your heart the fact that you have been forgiven by God (if indeed you are saved), how will you behave when people sin against you?

🗨️ Respond to the following quote from C.S. Lewis “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” Does that remind you of any particular verses on forgiveness?

4 **We all struggle to forgive or seek forgiveness.** Sometimes pastoral or professional counseling is necessary, and sometimes we need self-counsel. Listed below are truths to meditate on, truths you can speak to yourself.

✍️ Forgiveness is a command of God. If I refuse to forgive, I endanger my fellowship with God (Matthew 6:14-15) “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

✍️ Forgiveness is my first step towards sowing to the future and reaping a harvest of peace and freedom (Philippians 3:13b-14) “...But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

✍️ There is a link between forgiveness and trust. I can forgive others because I trust God. He is the judge: He will repay. He loves me and He wants to use this circumstance to produce something good and glorious. (Romans 12:19) “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’” (Romans 8:28) “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

5 **Someone once said that forgiveness is easiest to grant when the offender’s apology includes the 5 R’s – regret, responsibility, restitution, repentance, and a request for forgiveness.** What do you think of those 5 points? Are any missing? Which ones are the most important to you in an apology and why?

6 **In your life’s journey, you have had to forgive and be forgiven.** Spend time thinking about your salvation testimony, thanking God for His forgiveness. Also, take time to pray about your need to forgive others. Is there anyone in your life that you have not forgiven? Is there anyone who needs to forgive you?