

Storied

The Mind Bender- Session #3

Small Group Notes

Introduction:

What is something that happened to you that you hoped you would get an apology for but you never did? What was the last time that you had to go ask for an apology? What made it difficult to do?

Which is harder for you, to forgive others when they have wronged you or seek forgiveness from others? Why?

Forgiveness: Releasing others from the small offenses because God has released you from your massive offenses!

Discuss: Read Matthew 18:21-35

1. Forgiveness is not...

- A feeling to wait for but a command to obey! Read Luke 17:3-6
- Forgetting the hurt. Read Genesis 8:1
 - o Forgiveness involves turning your focus to something else (1 John 3:1)
- Removing the consequences
- Reconciliation
 - o We are called to forgive everyone, but we may not be reconciled with everyone.

Explain: Just as forgiveness is a call for us to be proactive in its administration in our relationships. It is also a recognition that God is the initiator of forgiveness as shown in the story of Noah as he remembered him and began to subside the waters. We also see that forgiveness involves our focusing on the greater truths in our lives and not living being forgetful as much as it is preventing bitterness from taking root.

Ask:

What do you think Peter expected Jesus to say when he asked if someone should forgive a brother seven times (v. 21)? What did

Jesus' answer reveal about Peter's motives in asking the question (v. 22)?

What can be our motivation in seeking forgiveness? As the offended or offender?

What has been a prior misconception that you have had regarding forgiveness? What did it take for you to learn what true forgiveness is?

2. Forgiveness is:

- Refusing to seek my own revenge. Read Romans 12:17-20
- Refusing to bring the offense up to them or to others anymore. 1 Corinthians 13:4-5
- Refusing to be consumed by the past. Ephesians 4:30-32
- Praying God's best in their lives.

Explain: While we learn that forgiveness is a proactive step that we take, we also learn that there are correct ways in which we are to forgive others. These steps involve us not taking matters into our own hands (Romans 12); letting what happened in the past remain forgiven (1 Cor 4 and Ephesians 4). A true measure that someone has been forgiven in your life is whether you can begin to pray for God's best in their life.

Ask:

How would you describe the servant's response to the king's decree (v. 26)? What would you be feeling if you were the servant? Has there ever been a time when you felt like that? When someone greatly forgave you?

What do you think leads you to lack mercy and compassion like the servant? How does this speak to how we allow bitterness to remain in our hearts?

How does this parable emphasize Jesus' point about forgiveness?

Is there anyone in your life that you need to forgive right now? What is keeping you from giving forgiveness?