

Ephesians 4:30-32; Ephesians 5:1-2; Matthew 18:21-27

1. Forgiveness starts with me and God.

Matthew 18:27; Romans 3:23-26; Romans 5:6-11; 1 John 1:8-10

2. Forgiveness isn't fairness.

Matthew 18:28-30; Matthew 6:14-15 (AMP); Colossians 3:12-13

3. Forgiveness brings freedom.

Matthew 18:31-35; John 13:34-35

Declaration: From this day forward I choose to deal with it. I choose to forgive! I choose to forgive others of their reckless and willful sins, and not hold those sins against them. I choose to no longer nurture hurt and anger, but, instead, I choose to love others just as God has loved me. My love for others will show the world that I am God's! Amen!

Small Group Outline & Discussion Questions

Celebrate and Care:

Have each person share a high and low from this last week.

Big Idea:

We are to forgive out of the reservoir of forgiveness we have received from God.

Open Up:

Share a movie that highlights forgiveness. What was it like before the choice to forgive was made? And what was it like after?

Discuss:

Choose one or two questions for your group to discuss as time allows.

- ▶ Our main scripture for this series comes from Ephesians 4:30-32 which ends with "...forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you." List some of the characteristics of how Christ has forgiven us.
- ▶ What could it say to our culture if all Christians practiced active, healthy forgiveness?
- ▶ Can you forgive someone but still experience hurt feelings? Why or why not?
- ▶ Rather than "forgive and forget" what does it mean to "remember and release"?

Engage:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with these questions then share your thoughts.

***It may not be appropriate to share Engage responses in the group this week.**

Think of something God forgave you for and take a moment to thank him for that, or is there something you need to ask and receive forgiveness for?

Ask God to reveal any obstacles that have been keeping you from extending forgiveness and if there is anyone you need to forgive.

Close in prayer by reading the declaration of forgiveness together.