

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



PRINCE
OF PEACE
Called to Connect



speak

Speak ... Forgiveness

February 3 & 4, 2024

To speak repentance is hard, but it can be equally difficult to speak forgiveness. Speaking forgiveness means letting go: releasing the pain, releasing the desire to get even, releasing the sense of being bound. Forgiveness can bring healing to both the forgiven and the forgiver.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: ACTS 7:59-60, GENESIS 45:5, GENESIS 33:3-9

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

We get absolute clarity about forgiveness from Jesus as he teaches extensively on this through his own words and actions, and through the parables he tells. The apostle Paul also gives us clear teaching on forgiveness in his letters. But actual stories of regular folks forgiving regular folks in the bible are few. But these few are incredibly powerful.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What have you learned about forgiveness from Jesus and/or the Biblical letters from the Apostle Paul? Besides the Bible, where else have you learned about forgiveness? Who has been a role model of forgiveness for you personally? What did you learn about forgiveness from this person?
- ***The Story of Stephen (Acts 6 & 7) teaches us about forgiveness in real time. To speak forgiveness in the midst of someone throwing stones at you is hard because the temptation is to throw stones back.*** Share about a time that you were physically or verbally attacked. How did you respond? Were you able to forgive in the moment? Why or why not?
- ***In the story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50), Joseph is able to see God at work, bringing good out of a bad situation.*** When have you, in retrospect, been able to see God at work, bringing good out of a bad situation? Did this recognition make it any easier to forgive? Why or why not? Share about a time that forgiveness freed you from the “unforgiving burden”: The burden of retribution. The burden of revenge. The burden of anger.
- ***In the story of Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25-33) we see that despite everything that happened between them, Esau held no bitterness ... no resentment ... just love. Forgiveness helps us see ourselves as a new creation with new possibilities ... not tied down to some past event.*** What bitterness or resentment do you need to let go of so you - like Esau - can move into your future with hope and be a blessing to others?

CHALLENGE: Read more about forgiveness in the Gospels, in the letters from the Apostles, and in the three stories highlighted in this week’s sermon.