

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Whiplash

Week 7: Extending Forgiveness
Genesis 50:15-26

Week of October 3, 2021
(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Throughout our study of Joseph's life, we see God equip us to survive life's ups and downs. Today our focus is on how to practice the art of grace and forgiveness when we've been wronged.

Kicking it off: In many ways, extending forgiveness can be like having a super power. If you could be one of the Avengers or another super hero, which super power would you want the most?

Discussion:

1. Read Genesis 50:15. If you found yourself in Joseph's brothers' shoes, how do you think you would have responded to such genuine kindness? (Especially after you'd wronged them in such horrendous ways?)

"When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?'" (NIV)

2. Now think if you were in Joseph's shoes, or more recently Nate Saint's shoes: Would you naturally be more likely to extend grace or to hold a grudge and want revenge for how you were treated? How long have you known that about yourself?
3. Read Romans 12:18-19. What does it mean to say that "God is our avenger?"

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord." (NIV)

4. Let's shift gears to think about situations where justice is the rightful solution, such as for a major crime. What role does God ideally give to police and government authorities, according to Romans 13:1-3? How do you think we should respond to that truth? Do you believe forgiveness and justice can co-exist? Why or why not?

"Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you." (NLT)

5. In Genesis 50:20, Joseph acknowledges God's plans for good, despite the awful circumstances that happened to him. When have you seen this principle played out in your life, or someone close to you?

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people." (NLT)

Wrapping It Up: Jeff described two ways we can express forgiveness: *What You Do* and *How You Speak*. Ask each group member to share one way you plan to demonstrate real forgiveness to someone in your life in the coming weeks (or potentially to help a friend process their deep hurts).