



Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Genesis 50:14-21

OPEN

What has stuck with you the past five weeks from the Average Joe sermon series and group discussions?

Have you applied any principles from the teaching/series? What has been your experience?

DISCUSS

We conclude this series by looking at the end of the story of Joseph's life in Genesis 50.

- To refresh your memory, list the major events of Joseph's life in Genesis 37, 39:1—50:14.

Now, read Genesis 50:14-21.

- Why were Joseph's brothers worried to the point they needed to make up a story from their now deceased father?
- How does Joseph respond (Gen 50:19-20)? Does this surprise you? Why or why not?
- Pooling your collected knowledge of the Old Testament, why was Joseph's response (forgiveness and reconciliation) so important to the story of God? What did forgiveness, reconciliation, and provision enable to happen?

Which is easier for you: asking for forgiveness or granting forgiveness? Why?

How does forgiveness benefit:

- The one who extends forgiveness?
- The one who needs to be forgiven?

Do you hold yourself to the same standard you apply to others? What is Jesus' warning in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat 7:1-5)?

How has God exercised forgiveness in your life? (See Luke 23:34; Romans 5:8; Col 3:13)

PRAYER: Spend 5-10 minutes in silent prayer as a group as each person examines their own heart in light of the verses above.

Some of God's most transforming work in our lives will only come through the forgiveness. Sometimes it may be easy and bring an instant feeling of release. Other times, it can be extremely hard, involving a longer process of working through deep wounds. Whichever, or in between the two, we know we are to exercise forgiveness in our lives.

Here is your challenge: Take the risk. Ask for support of others to pray for you if you need. But take the steps towards forgiveness and be amazed at what God can and will do (take it from Joe!).

NEXT STEPS

- Read the whole story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50) this week. What is impressed upon your heart now after the six-week sermon series?
- Ask yourself this honest question: Are there people in my life that I am withholding forgiveness? Make a list and try to identify the barrier(s) to forgiving them.
- What will you do now?