

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

This study guide is meant to help you learn and apply the truths of Scripture to your life right now, both individually and with your community group. To get the most from these guides, work through it on your own before gathering with your community group. If you aren't in a community group, consider attending the next Starting Point at Mercy Church, where you can take the next steps to connect with a community group in your area. RSVP at mercycharlotte.com/connect.

For Our Good: The Life of Joseph - Part 5 You Sold Me, God Sent Me

INTRODUCTION

THE BIG IDEA:

- **God's sovereignty frees us to forgive others.**
- **We must be reconciled to others because Christ reconciled us to God.**

This weekend we looked at Genesis 44 & 45, where Joseph encountered his brothers for the first time since they sold him into slavery. Just as Joseph had dreamed back in Genesis 37, his brothers were bowing down to him. Joseph could finally pay them back for the evil they had done to him, which caused him so much suffering. Instead, Joseph forgives them. What an incredible act. He did not pay back evil for evil but instead he is reconciled to his brothers. Joseph can do this because he knows that God was in complete control of his circumstances. He knows that God is good and has been working all things out for his good and the good of the world.

Genesis 45:5 *"And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life."*

Jesus expands on reconciliation in Matthew 18: 21-35. He tells a parable of a slave whose incredible debt was forgiven by his master. Yet, that same slave would not forgive a small debt that a fellow slave owed him. When the master heard this he threw the slave in prison because even though he was forgiven an incredible debt, he would not forgive someone else's small debt.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. What stuck out to you in this weekend's message?
2. Was there anything in the message that you had never heard before?
3. Was there anything that was particularly convicting?

INVESTIGATING SCRIPTURE

The following questions are designed to help you gain understanding of what the Bible teaches.

Read Genesis 44:16 - 45:15

1. What is significant about Judah being the brother who offers to take Benjamin's place?
2. What does Judah teach us about true repentance?
3. Focus in on 45.4-8. Who does Joseph hold responsible for his journey from the pit to the palace?
4. How does seeing God's involvement in everything that has happened to him empower Joseph to forgive his brothers?
5. What is Joseph teaching his brothers, and us, about the character of God?
6. What can we learn about God from Joseph's trials and pain?

Read Matthew 18:21-35:

7. What is the point of this parable?
8. Why is unforgiveness such an offense to God?
9. How should Christ's sacrifice on the cross affect the grace I extend to others?
10. Why is it important for the Body of Christ to be reconciled?

TAKEAWAYS

These questions are intended to help you apply the truths from Genesis 45 and Matthew 18 to your own walk with the Lord.

1. What are some ways you can practice living with the knowledge that God is in control of your circumstances?
2. Are you currently struggling with extending forgiveness to someone?
3. Is there someone you need to ask for forgiveness from?

PRAYER

Prayer is an essential component of your life as a follower of Christ, and an integral part of any healthy church body. Divide up into groups of 2-3 people and use the following points to guide you through a time of prayer together.

1. Pray that God would humble us as followers of Christ to reconcile to those who have sinned against us.
2. Pray for God to continually fill us with joy in the truth that we have been reconciled to Christ.
3. Pray for a growing desire to see our city reconciled to Christ.