

## COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER 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](http://mercycharlotte.com/connect).*

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

## INTRODUCTION

**LEADER NOTES:** *This is simply a guide to help discussion about the Scripture that was preached over the weekend. You are not bound to it. Ultimately our hope is that God in His infinite grace would transform our heart to look more like Jesus and fall more in love with Jesus. We should always be in prayer that God would do this every time we meet as a community. So if God redirects your group's time away from the Community Group Guide that is great. Please do not abandon a fruitful conversation for the sake of getting all the questions answered.*

### 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

**LEADER NOTES:** *These questions are here to help your group get their minds re-engaged with the passage and teaching points from the weekend message. Think of this as “priming the pump” for a more interactive discussion in your time together. Don’t feel the need to answer all of these.*

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.

**LEADER NOTES:** *The following questions will help you work through the passage(s). Have someone read the passage(s) aloud, dividing among two or three people if needed. If there is a good, fruitful conversation going, you do not have to cut it off to get back to the questions.*

### 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?  
*The first answer people will likely say is “God.” And while that is true,*

*remind them he clearly credits the brothers with selling him into Egypt. He gives both God and the brothers responsibility for what happened to him.*

4. How does seeing God's involvement in everything that has happened to him empower Joseph to forgive his brothers?  
*What's important here is to remember that this doesn't mean Joseph's pain was misplaced. It was ok for Joseph to hurt! God hurts when we do. But, because he was able to see God was doing something bigger, he is able to release his need for vengeance on them. God's sovereignty in this case frees him to be able to forgive.*
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?  
*Jesus has paid our infinite debt with His own blood. It is impossible for us to pay for our sin. However, through Christ's sacrifice we are forgiven. Since have been forgiven so much, we are called to forgive others who have offended us. Jesus took the eternal punishment that we deserve upon Himself so that we could be reconciled not only to God, but to our brothers and sisters in Christ.*
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.

**LEADER NOTES:** *The following is designed simply as an outline for you to use in your group prayer time. Feel free to make this your own and adjust it to fit your group.*

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.