SERIES DISCUSSION GUIDE

FORGIVE THE UNFORGIVABLE
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To view the message, visit rpc.me/messages.

CONNECTION

- When was a time someone showed you kindness or grace when you didn't expect it? What happened?

LEADERS A NOTE FOR THIS WEEK

Forgiveness can be a sensitive topic, especially for those who have experienced betrayal, abuse, or significant loss. Create a safe place allowing people to share only what they're comfortable sharing.

MESSAGE RECAP

This weekend message challenged us to move beyond knowing we should forgive to understanding how we can begin. Through Jesus' words on the cross, “Father, forgive them; for they don't know what they are doing,” we were reminded that forgiveness often begins when we ask God to help us see something we haven't been able to see. Seeing beyond someone's actions doesn't excuse the hurt they've caused, but it can change how we respond.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Forgiveness is something most of us know is important, yet letting go of grudges, hurt, or bitterness can be difficult. Why do you think we sometimes hold on to anger or resentment, even when we know it's impacting the way we think, feel or treat others?
2. What makes forgiveness feel risky or vulnerable?
3. **Read Matthew 5:43-44.** Jesus calls us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. How might praying for someone who has hurt us begin to change our hearts, even if the situation or the other person doesn't change?
    - Have you ever experienced this? If so, what changed for you?
4. **Read Luke 23:33-34.** While Jesus was being crucified, He prayed for those responsible. The people who hurt Jesus knew what they were doing but didn't really know what they were doing meaning they didn’t fully understand the significance of their actions.
    - What does Jesus' response teach us about forgiveness?

- Sometimes, to forgive someone, we need to see something we haven't been able to see. What do you think that means?
- How is trying to understand someone's perspective different from excusing or approving of their behavior?

5. **Read John 11:45-53.** The religious leaders feared what might happen to their nation if Jesus continued gaining followers. Their decisions were influenced by more than what they saw Jesus doing.
   - What fears or concerns were influencing their decisions? *(They feared losing their influence as religious leaders, that Rome would intervene, and that their temple, nation, and way of life would be threatened.)*
   - How can fear, past experiences, or misunderstandings influence the way we treat others?
6. Forgiveness doesn't require an apology. How might waiting for someone to apologize keep us from beginning the healing process?
7. Forgiveness isn't always easy, and sometimes we're not ready to forgive. What is one step we can take toward healing, even when we're not ready to forgive? *(Start with prayer. Ask God to help you see what you haven't been able to see, soften your hearts, and help you want to forgive.)*

APPLICATION QUESTION *(This section is designed to invite group members to reflect on and do on their own.)*

1. Is there a hurt, resentment, or relationship you need to bring before God? This week, begin by asking God to help you see what you haven't been able to see, change your heart, and show you what your next step toward forgiveness might look like.

A simple prayer to begin: “God, help me see what I haven't been able to see, and show me what my next step toward forgiveness looks like.”

LEADERS - UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY

Meals for Kids | Saturday, November 14

Serve with your group to package meals for children in need-both locally and around the world. Meals for Kids is a hands-on service opportunity that allows you to make a global impact right here in your own community and its kid friendly. Our goal is to package 200,000 meals! Register at rpc.me/events.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

God, thank you for the forgiveness You've shown us through Jesus. You know the hurts we carry. Help us find healing, see what we haven't been able to see, and take our next step toward forgiveness. Remind us that forgiveness isn't about changing someone else. It's about allowing You to bring healing and freedom to our own hearts. Give us the courage to trust You in the process. In Jesus' name, Amen.