



- The depth of your love defines the **source** of your love.

"Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other." John 13:34-35 (Msg)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

- Can I love others if I choose not to **know** others?

Let's not just talk about love; let's practice real love. 1 John 3:18 (MSG)

Love...keeps no record of wrongs... 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

- Every relationship you have will bring **hurt**.

- The **church** must be an environment where we practice forgiveness.

If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God. Matthew 5:23-24 (Msg)

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:12-13 (NIV)

- Our **commitment** to each other calls us to forgive each other.

**The reason forgiveness is so hard is...**

- To forgive someone else is to absorb the **cost**.

**Important things about forgiveness:**

- How we **forgive** determines how we're forgiven.

...and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.... 14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:12,14-15 (NIV)

- Forgiveness does not change the **person** that hurt you.

- Forgiveness is not an **emotional** response.

... when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too. Mark 11:25 (NLT)

He [God] does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. <sup>11</sup> For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; <sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Ps 103:10-12

**Forgiving simply means:**

- Refusing to seek **revenge**.

...never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for he has said that he will repay those who deserve it. Romans 12:19 (TLB)

- Refusing to **nurture** the hurt.
- Giving others what **God has given me**.

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

**Forgiving simply means**

- I Trust that God is has a **purpose** for the pain.

His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; so they hated him and couldn't speak to him on friendly terms. Genesis 37:4

"Please, come closer," he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt. But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives." Genesis 45:4-5 (NLT)

So it was God who sent me here, not you! Genesis 45:8

**Joseph's Lessons on Forgiveness:**

- Joseph had to forgive his brothers years before he **faced** his brothers.

- In all of Joseph's disappointments he recognized that God was in **control**.

- Only when we experience **healing** from God are we able to recognize the **plan** of God.

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. Genesis 50:20

- God had not **forgotten** Joseph because Joseph had not forgotten God.

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## TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

*These questions also work well for personal time with God.*

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- In your own words, what does it mean that the depth of your love defines the source of your love?
- As a part of The Quest, do you feel that you are cared for? Explain.
- When was the last time you had to forgive someone that hurt you?
- How does our commitment to each other call us to forgive each other?
- What does this mean to you: To forgive someone is to absorb the cost.
- Talk through the points under the sub-heading "Important things about forgiveness".
- When we trust that God has a purpose in the pain, how does that help us to forgive?
- Have you read the story of Joseph? (Genesis 37-50) what are some things that stand out to you about the forgiveness in Joseph's life?
- In Joseph's story who would be hardest to forgive? Explain.
- Do you believe that Joseph had to forgive his brothers before he faced his brothers? Why?
- How does recognizing that God is in control help us to live in forgiveness?
- In Genesis 50:20 do you think that Joseph had to be healed to recognize God's plan? If Joseph was not healed from the hurt what would he have been focused on in your opinion?

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Love Forgives

Sunday, August 13th, 2023

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