

APPLICATION

- Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins? If not, what is stopping you?
- Are there any sins in your life, or any things that you feel guilty about that you have not asked Jesus to forgive you of yet?
- Are there any people that you know you need to forgive but haven't? If not, don't let their past actions hinder you from moving into the good future God has for you. Ask God to help you forgive them.
- Have you chosen to forgive someone but still have some hard feelings remaining towards them? If so, ask God to help you with that too.

Prayer

Oh Lord Jesus, we know that all of us have done wrong at various moments in our lives. Lord we don't want to carry around the guilt and shame for those actions any longer. Lord please forgive us for our sins and set us free from guilt and shame. And Lord help us to forgive others, whether they meant to hurt us or not, we choose to forgive them so that we can be free to move on. Lord help us to truly forgive and not hold their past against them just as you forgive us and don't hold our past against us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Freedom Groups were created with the belief that we are all on a journey through life and that our heart's desire is to be free to be all that we can be. Yet there are many setbacks, heartaches and road blocks along the way. Trying to overcome the issues we face in life by ourselves just does not work. We are all the same, no one is different. We need others to help us successfully walk our journey to freedom. Everyone is invited on this freedom journey. Join in!



FORGIVENESS

NOTES

WARM-UP

- When you were a child, what was one of the worst things you ever did?
- Have you ever felt guilt about doing something? Is it something you can share with the group?
- Did you ever have someone come and confess to you something they did wrong? If so, what was your response?

WORD

Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 2 Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit. 3 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And You forgave the guilt of my sin. 6Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found. Psalm 32:1-3, 5-6a

Forgiveness can be such a tough issue for all of us. Each of us has been wronged at some point in our lives. Sometimes people unintentionally, and sometimes intentionally, do things to us that are wrong. Often these are issues that are not that big of a deal and we just let them go, but sometimes the wrongs are very significant and can hurt us deeply. These hurts can "eat at us" and cause us long-term pain. The reality is that we have wronged others too. Each of us have at times hurt other people. Most of the time we do not mean to, but, if we are honest, sometimes we do things to intentionally hurt others. All this adds up to a bunch of hurt and guilt that we all feel. But God has an answer to the hurt and guilt. It is called forgiveness.

1 - Unforgiveness eats away!

*"... my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.
"Psalm 32:3b*

I am sure many of us have experienced things that just "ate at us" as the saying goes. Sometimes they are things we did. Other times it's what others did that we just mull over and over in our heads. It is so easy to do. We think thoughts like, "Why did I do that?" or "I cannot believe they did that!" or "They were just trying to _____ (hurt, embarrass, anger, frustrate, etc.) me!" Have you ever experienced this "eating away" and if so what were the results of thinking like this?

2 - Forgiveness gives freedom!

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37

Mulling over wrongs we have done, or that have been done to us, in the past only keeps us from moving freely into our future. Psalm 32 tells us that the blessings are for the forgiven. Luke 6 tells us that we will only be forgiven, and therefore blessed, if we forgive others. If we are blessed through forgiveness, why is it so hard to ask for forgiveness and to give it to others?

3 - Prayer is the answer!

... "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And You forgave the guilt of my sin. 6Therefore let all the faithful pray to You while You may be found. Psalm 32:5-6a

Unconfessed and unforgiven sin will eat away at us but God promises He will forgive us and bless us if we confess our sin to Him, ask forgiveness and forgive those who have wronged us. This can be hard but it will bring freedom. Can you think of a time you asked God to forgive you or to help you forgive someone else? If so what was the result?