

Cell Group Material Inner Healing and Forgiveness

Welcome : Who is your favourite sports person and why?

Worship: Hymns and Songs

Amazing grace. My song is love unknown. Praise my soul the King of Heaven

Thank you for the Cross, He is the Lord, Jesus Christ I think upon your sacrifice, Lord I lift your name on high

Word

Emotional damage

“As I sit along side an emotionally damaged person I feel that I am praying for a sick person as much as if that person was suffering from the after effects of a severe burning. The only difference is that the scarring is on the inside and therefore invisible”

Caused by

The consistent damaging attitude of others in the past probably parents but could be brothers and sisters or spouses

- Lack of praise
- Criticism – being put down continually
- Withholding of physical affection
- Sarcasm
- Manipulation

Possible results

- Low self esteem,
- fear of rejection and
- Excessive desire to please
- Opting out of relationships

A pattern of behaviour

A predictable response on the part of people, particularly parents, which has a negative effect

- Not fulfilling promises
- Not being there when needed
- Not listening when you are hurting
- Forcing you to do things that you do not want to do

Possible results

- Lack of trust
- Loneliness
- Indecision

A traumatic event

- Death of a loved one,
- desertion,
- betrayal,
- sexual abuse,
- physical abuse
- severe illness

Possible results

- Anger
- Bitterness
- Rejection of others/high defences
- Depression
- Guilt
- Shame

Question: Do any of these strike a bell with the group members? Can they share it?

One way forward is to exercise forgiveness towards those involved

What forgiveness is

Definition: Real forgiveness means looking steadily at the person and their sin, the sin that is left over without any excuse, after all allowances have been made, and seeing it in all its horror, dirt, meanness and malice, and nevertheless being willing to embrace the person - to restore a relationship with them and not to seek to punish them. (C.S. Lewis)

Question Does this agree with your idea of forgiveness. Is there anything you would add or take away?

Question When is Forgiveness difficult?

Who do you find it easiest to forgive and who (if you can share it) do you find it most difficult

Here are some reasons why we should forgive. **Question** Which is the most important to you and why?

As a response to our own forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

As response to his command

Matthew 18:21

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

22: Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

To avoid bitterness

Hebrews 12:15

See to it that no-one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

As a response to his example

Luke 23:34: Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Read Luke 15: 11 - 32

How to forgive

In the story of the prodigal son when did the father forgive? When did the Father embrace?

Why could the father forgive? Why could the brother not forgive?

Someone wrote: 'The willingness to forgive is unconditional – the embrace is conditional'

Question: Is this distinction between the inner forgiveness and the expression externally of that forgiveness in the 'embrace' a useful one for you? Can you give any examples from your own experience?

Work

On a piece of paper privately write down situations in which you need to

1. Forgive God – often needed in relation to the traumatic events which are outside of any ones control
2. Forgive the guilty
 - Those who are gone
 - Those you are in relationship with
3. Forgive yourself
4. To be forgiven..

Then in **five minutes** of quiet – express inwardly as if you were talking out aloud forgiveness to God - to those who are gone, - to those you are in relationship with - and then to yourself.

Then ask God for forgiveness for not having forgiven them before.

In the quiet at the end someone read 1John 1: 8,9 *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

WORK Alpha

What is the group going to do about Alpha

All come

A few come

A few come and help lead a group

A few come with friends

No-one come

Pray and decide!

Would the group like to distribute Alpha leaflets as a group, around the doors, in the Autumn

Please let Gordon know the answer to these questions!

Bible verse used tonight

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Hebrews 12:15

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Luke 23:34: Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Luke 15:11 11 – 32

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons.

12: The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

13: "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

14: After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

15: So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

16: He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no-one gave him anything.

17: "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

18: I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

19: I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'

20: So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21: "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22: "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

23: Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.

24: For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

25: "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.

26: So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

27: 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

28: "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.

29: But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

30: But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

31: "My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.

32: But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' "