

Life Group Questions

When Love Is Not a Burden

March 7, 2010
1 John 4:7–5:5
Pastor David Jebaratnam

GETTING TO KNOW ME

- Did you take up the challenge Pastor David issued on Feb 7 and follow up with anyone who had hurt you or with whom you have had an unresolved conflict? Would you be willing to share how it went?
- Did you sign the “commitment card” in the worship service on Sunday, March 7?
- Can you recall a time that you hurt another person (intentionally/unintentionally)?
- Can you recall a time that someone hurt you (intentionally/unintentionally)?
- How do you release or deal with your emotional hurts?

INTO THE BIBLE

- If people in your past have hurt you deeply, should you forgive them even before they ask? Explain your thoughts.
- Read 1 John 4:7-11 and then discuss your reaction to the statement, *“Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. Do we love one another enough to forgive each other, with or without apologies for wrongs done to us? So often we want to extract the last ounce of remorse and repentance from our erring brother before we will even consider forgiving him. But God did not do this. When we were still sinners, still his enemies, He sent His Son to die for us so that He might forgive us. And John urges us to do likewise.”* (Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*, page 207)
- Have someone in your group briefly summarize the life of Joseph. (Read Genesis 37-50 before you come to Life Group). Read Genesis 45:1-15. (1) What emotions does Joseph express in this passage? In what ways can you identify with Joseph’s powerful mix of emotions? (2) What does Joseph see as the purposes of his servitude, imprisonment, and separation from his family? (3) How would you feel to know that all your past hurts and conflicts were ultimately not just allowed by God but designed by Him?
- Read Genesis 50:15-21. (1) How do you know that Joseph’s forgiveness is genuine? (2) As you consider forgiving and releasing others, what do you find most challenging about the example of Joseph?
- Read 1 Samuel 24 & 26. What are Saul’s reasons for hurting David? In what ways can you identify with Saul’s reasons? What are David’s reasons for refusing to hurt Saul in return? (cf. also, Genesis 1:26). As you consider forgiving and releasing others, what do you find most challenging about the example of David?
- Read Luke 23:33-34 and Acts 7:59-60. What are Jesus and Stephen’s reasons for praying this way? What do you find most challenging about the examples of Jesus and Stephen?
- *For the person who wants to follow Christ, resentment and bitterness are never an option.* Agree or disagree? Read Hebrews 12:14-15. What do these verses say about bitterness? What effect has bitterness had on you and on others in your life?

APPLICATION

- Would you forgive and release people who have hurt you even before they ask? What immediate steps would you take?
- Who in your past do you need to forgive? What steps would you take toward inner healing and, if possible, healing the relationship?

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