

Made for More: Small Group Guide

Week 4: Hold Hands, Not Grudges

January 25, 2026

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share a time when someone forgave you for something significant. How did that act of forgiveness impact you?

Key Sermon Takeaways

Review these main points before discussion:

1. Commitment to Christ includes automatic enrollment in a "Frequent Forgiver Program"
2. Forgiveness is a commitment not to hold a person's sin against them AND to release resentment toward them
3. We are motivated to forgive by remembering the magnitude of what God has forgiven us
4. The process involves: facing the hurt, praying through it, confronting when possible, committing to forgive, and reaching for reconciliation

Key Verse: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." - Colossians 3:13

Discussion Questions

1. **The pastor defined forgiveness as "a commitment not to hold a person's sin against them and to release resentment toward them." How does this definition differ from how you've previously understood forgiveness?**
2. **What are some things forgiveness is NOT? (Review: removing responsibility, removing consequences, tolerating bad behavior, automatic trust restoration, making someone grovel)**
 - o Which of these misconceptions have you struggled with?
3. **The sermon mentioned that 23-30% of Christians admit there is someone they cannot forgive. Why do you think forgiveness is so difficult for believers?**
4. **Discuss the parable from Matthew 18 about the servant who owed 10,000 bags of gold (representing an impossible debt). How does understanding the magnitude of our forgiveness from God change our perspective on forgiving others?**

5. **The pastor said, "My frustrations with another person do not negate God's mission." What is God's mission, and how should this truth impact how we handle grudges?**
6. **Read Matthew 6:14-15 (from the Lord's Prayer teaching). How do you reconcile God's conditional forgiveness with His grace? Does this make you uncomfortable? Why or why not?**
7. **The sermon outlined steps for the forgiveness process:**
 - Face the wrong and feel the hurt
 - Pray through the process and for the person
 - Face the person when possible
 - Commit to forgive
 - Rehearse the positive and reach for their hand again**Which step is hardest for you? Where do you tend to get stuck?**
8. **The pastor mentioned praying for someone's demise versus praying for God's deeper work in their life. Have you experienced this progression in your own prayer life? Share about that journey.**
9. **Sometimes reconciliation isn't possible or safe. The pastor talked about standing in a "posture of forgiveness" even when full reconciliation can't happen. What does this look like practically?**
 - How do we balance forgiveness with healthy boundaries?
 - When might it be unwise to fully restore a relationship?

Practical Applications: This Week's Challenge (Choose one or more):

Option 1: The Forgiveness Inventory

- Set aside 30 minutes of quiet time this week
- Ask God to reveal anyone you're holding a grudge against
- Write down their name(s) and what you're holding against them
- Pray through each situation using the steps from the sermon
- Decide on one concrete action you'll take toward forgiveness

Option 2: The Gratitude Reset

- Each day this week, spend 5 minutes reflecting on the "10,000 bags of gold" God has forgiven you
- Journal about specific sins, patterns, or debts God has canceled in your life
- Let this gratitude fuel your willingness to forgive others

Option 3: The Reconciliation Step

- If there's someone you need to forgive and it's safe/appropriate to do so, reach out to them this week
- Use the principles from Week 2 (honesty) and Week 3 (forgiveness) to have a conversation
- Prepare your heart through prayer first
- Focus on your part, not their response

Option 4: The Posture Practice

- For a situation where full reconciliation isn't possible, practice standing in a "posture of forgiveness"
 - Write out a prayer releasing the person from the debt they owe you
 - Commit to pray for them regularly, asking God to work in their life
 - Notice how this posture affects your own heart and freedom
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Accountability & Prayer (15 minutes)

Pair up or stay in the group:

- 1. Share one specific area where you need to practice forgiveness**
 - Is it a current situation or something from the past?
 - What's the next step you need to take?
 - 2. What's one way the group can support you in this?**
 - Prayer? Accountability check-in? Encouragement?
 - 3. Pray for one another:**
 - For the courage to face hurts honestly
 - For hearts softened by gratitude for God's forgiveness
 - For wisdom in the process of forgiveness and reconciliation
 - For freedom from the weight of grudges
 - For relationships to be strengthened and restored
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Memory Verse for the Week

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." - Colossians 3:13

Closing Thought

"Grudges get heavier the longer you hold them. Let it go—not because life is too short, but because God is so gracious with us."