

## Small Group Discussion Guide — November 14, 2021

- Series: Coming Into Forgiveness
  - Sermon: Getting Unbound
  - Scripture: Ephesians 2: 1-16
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### FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

How did you approach the issue of forgiveness this week? What steps did you take to “catch up to Jesus” in His offer of forgiveness to yourself and to others in your life?

### CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week’s service, and why?
2. What do you think would be the worst thing about being in prison — loss of freedom or isolation from those you love? Why?

### ENGAGE

Read Ephesians 2: 1-16.

1. Verses 1 through 3, what words describe mankind’s condition before Jesus Christ? In verses 4 and 5, what characteristics of God resulted in our rescue from our former lives of sin? What preconditions were there for this rescue?
2. Twice in this passage, in verses 4 and 7 God is described as being rich in two respects. What are they, and why do you think the word “rich” is used by Paul in both cases?
3. Verse 13 describes all of us as having been “far away” from God. What was it that was able to bring us close?
4. According to verses 14-16, what word(s) would you choose to describe the work of Christ?

### APPLY

1. Jesus’ work on the cross changed everything. It was *brutal* and *necessary* and *sufficient* to pay for our sin. It takes humility to say, “Yes, it was my sin that did that to Him. I couldn’t pay for it, and He did. It was horrible and painful and isolating for Him. The debt had to be paid. His death was the only way.” David’s encouragement to us is that we acknowledge the brutality and pain of the cross for our redemption and our forgiveness. There’s no sin so big that the cross can’t address. What are your thoughts about these statements?
2. David said we get to choose what we will be bound to...our bitterness and anger, or Jesus in all his love, mercy, and forgiveness. What is the biggest obstacle to our unwillingness to forgive and to accept forgiveness?
3. David described forgiveness as “a process of unbinding.” Where are you in this process? What are some places where you’ve experienced the healing of forgiveness and you are bound to Him? What are some places where you’re still bound by the pain? What are some places where you are in process — not there yet but still working through it? Share with the group as you feel comfortable.

### PRAYER

Father in heaven, thank you for the abundance of your grace and mercy toward us. We are blessed by the riches of your mercy. Help us to lean in to your redemptive work on the cross. Empower us to allow the cross to do its great work. Give us power through the Holy Spirit to forgive others as you forgave us, without condition or demand. May we chose to become unbound from bitterness and anger, and bound to your great love demonstrated on the cross. Amen

## **GOING DEEPER**

1. If forgiveness is, as David described it, “Our most practical need in life,” what steps can we take each day to put ourselves in a better position to give and receive forgiveness?
2. What can we do as a church to make Hope a “forgiveness-spreading church”? What traits would we have to add to our culture and what traits would we need to leave behind if we truly wanted this to happen?

## **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE**

Psalm 73:21-22

Jeremiah 31:34

Matthew 6:12

Romans 12:17-19

Matthew 5: 43-44

## **QUOTES**

“Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea until they have something to forgive.”

*CS Lewis*

“Forgiveness isn’t something hard that we have the option to do or not do. Forgiveness is something hard won which we have the opportunity to participate in.”

*Lysa Terkheurst*