

Key Verse: Ephesians 4:32 – “*Be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ.*”

SUMMARY

Forgiveness isn't pretending nothing happened—it's letting go of hurt so it doesn't control your life. Holding onto unforgiveness only poisons you on the inside, but when you choose to forgive, you find freedom and peace. God forgives us freely, and He calls us to do the same for others.

ICEBREAKER

Go around and have each person share the **silliest or funniest thing they've ever held a grudge about** (like “my sibling stole the last slice of pizza” or “my friend didn't text me back”). Laugh about it together, then transition: *If we can get worked up over little things, how much harder is it when the hurt is big?*

DISCUSSION STARTER

Think about a time someone hurt your feelings or let you down. Maybe it was a friend, sibling, or parent. How did it feel to carry that anger around? What happens when we don't let go of it? Today we're talking about how forgiveness isn't about excusing the hurt—it's about freeing yourself from it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think forgiveness is so hard?
2. What happens to us when we hold on to unforgiveness?
3. How does it help to know that God forgives us no matter what?
4. What's the difference between excusing someone's behavior and truly forgiving them?
5. What's one step you can take this week toward forgiveness?

ACTIVITY:

Give everyone a small piece of paper. Have them **write down the name (or just the initials)** of someone they're struggling to forgive. Then, fold the paper and either tear it up or throw it away as a symbol of releasing it to God.

WRAP-UP

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting what happened or saying it was okay. It means choosing to release the anger and pain and trusting God to handle the rest. Remember: ***Forgiveness is Freeing.***

