

The Gospel of Matthew: Church Discipline

Icebreaker: How did you practice BLESS this week?

Discussion: For group discussion to be fruitful and engaging for everyone in your group, make sure that your discussion groups are not larger than 4 people. If possible, break up into groups of 2 or 3.

Larger Group: (5 minutes)

- Welcome everyone
- Introduce the direction for the evening.
 - Read Ephesians 4:32 highlight the following
 - The starting place of this conversation is that we are forgiven - “God in Christ forgave you.”
 - Our goal is to “forgive one another”
 - So, let us “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted”
 - Which of the previous statements is harder for you to receive?
- Break into smaller groups

Smaller Groups (20-25 minutes) Give the following instructions and break into small groups (2-3 people). Choose 2-3 of the following questions to help guide your discussion.

Have someone read Ephesians 4:25-32. While forgiveness is the decision to totally, immediately and unilaterally cancel someone’s debt against us, there are emotions and thought patterns that still need to change as we seek to be a gospel-saturated community. Both forgiveness and unforgiveness will bear fruit in our lives; let’s consider how we can bear the fruit of forgiveness.

- Have someone read vs. 26-27.
 - Why is it important to deal with offenses in a timely manner?
 - What is the greatest obstacle for you in dealing with offenses in a timely manner?
 - How has delaying forgiveness made forgiving more difficult for you? Explain.
- Have someone read verse 29.
 - What are some ways that unforgiveness has impacted the way that you talk about people?
 - How does forgiveness change the way you talk about people? How does it change the way you talk to people?
- Have someone read verse 30-31.
 - How does our lack of forgiveness affect the Spirit of God who will never leave us or forsake us?
 - How does knowing your lack of forgiveness wounds the Holy Spirit impact you?
 - How does it motivate you to put away the negative effects of unforgiveness?
- Have someone read vs 32.
 - What are some ways that you can put on these attributes toward those who hurt you?
 - What hinders you from putting these things on?

Larger Group:

Return to larger group to give summary of your discussion in smaller groups (5-10 minutes)

Allow time to pray for the lost, end with B.L.E.S.S. (10-15 minutes)

Where are group members in the B.L.E.S.S. process? Model for them how to answer briefly, for example:

"I'm praying for _____".

"I have been having good conversations with _____

_____". "I'm having lunch with _____

_____ on

_____ (day of the week)."

Closing prayer - (2-5-minutes)