

# EMPOWER



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### SESSION 1

Ground Zero

### SESSION 2

Dealing with Disaster

### SESSION 3

Brace for Impact

### SESSION 4

Healthy Foundations

### SESSION 5

Emotional Alarm Bells

### SESSION 6

Snakes and Ladders

### SESSION 7

Thought Court

### SESSION 8

Cross Examined

### SESSION 9

Meaning Making

### SESSION 10

Purpose from Pain

### SESSION 11

Reconciliation to the  
Rescue

### SESSION 12

Certainty Amid  
Uncertainty

# Reconciliation to the Rescue

## ACTIVITY SHEET



Reconciling suffering and faith requires an emotional and spiritual maturity that often only comes from a season of crushing. When you have personally traversed the lonely valleys of pain and come through with your eyes still fixed heavenward, then you know from the depths of your heart that God is faithful – He will indeed never leave you, nor forsake you.



### SESSION OBJECTIVES

**This session is designed to help you understand:**

- (a)** what forgiveness is, and what forgiveness is not
- (b)** how to be set free from hurt, pain and bitterness
- (c)** the way to reconcile your past and get on with your future

# Spiritual Maturity

Ironic as it may sound, spiritual maturity requires a childlike faith to trust that God is who he says He is; completely sovereign, all knowing, all loving, in everything, everywhere, at all times. If it's true that God is close to the broken hearted and has your best interests in His heart, then He is also worthy of your complete trust.



Identify to what degree do you believe the following: ✓

	A LITTLE	SOMEWHAT	VERY MUCH	TOTALLY
God doesn't just love me unconditionally; He really likes me				
God will heal my broken heart, restore my sight and set me free				
God will make all things new, turning 'my trial' into 'His triumph'				

**IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD FREE FROM HURT, PAIN AND BITTERNESS, THE DREAMS AND VISIONS YOU HAD FOR YOUR LIFE NEED TO SOMEHOW BE RECONCILED WITH THE TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES YOU'VE WALKED THROUGH. IN OTHER WORDS, LEARN TO BE AT PEACE WITH YOUR PAIN, COME TO TERMS WITH UNMET EXPECTATIONS AND START TO DREAM AGAIN.**



# The Forgiveness Factor

Spiritual maturity requires you to move beyond just knowing about God, to becoming more Christ like; to love others as you have been loved, to help restore others as you hope to be restored, and all importantly, to forgive others, as you have been forgiven.

## 01 CHOICE



Forgiveness is a choice to accept what has happened, but at the same time, a decision not to negatively dwell on it – a daily conscious choice to no longer nurse your wounds, curse the cause and rehearse what transpired. In essence, forgiveness is letting go of the hurt, pain and bitterness you would otherwise harbour towards something or someone (e.g., government, person, God, church, or self).

**Q:** What hurts have you been holding on to that today you chose to let go of? (towards whom)

**FORGIVENESS,  
LIKE TREATMENT,  
TAKES PLACE  
IN AN INSTANT,  
BUT HEALING  
TYPICALLY TAKES  
PLACE OVER TIME.**



# 02

## SACRIFICE



Forgiveness involves sacrificing our right to harbour bitterness and ill-will towards others. It's the abandonment of malevolent thoughts and desires that seek revenge, retaliation and reprisal.

**Q:** What bitterness, ill-will or lust for revenge do you need to sacrifice today? (towards whom)

**Q:** What alternative thoughts and feelings of 'good will' could you hold on to today? (towards whom)

**UNFORGIVENESS  
IS SAID TO BE  
LIKE DRINKING  
POISON, BUT  
HOPING THE  
OTHER PERSON  
DIES.**

# 03

## TRUST



Forgiveness requires you to trust God for justice, recognising 'vengeance' and 'wrath' are exclusively His domains. However, be sure to recognise that God's outworking of justice may be different to what you seek and desire. Trust is not handing over the executioner's axe to God, rather, it's handing back the Court's Gavel to the Honourable High Court Judge for His pronouncement (final verdict) on your circumstance. When God extends mercy instead of malice, rather than questioning His judgment, trust that He knows what He's doing. God sees our circumstance from a different vantage point; he sees the big picture. Therefore, focus on your role (to forgive) and let God take care of His.

**Q:** What are you trusting God for?

**BELOVED, DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELVES, BUT RATHER GIVE PLACE TO WRATH; FOR IT IS WRITTEN, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," SAYS THE LORD.**

**ROMANS 12:19 (NKJV)**



# 04

## GIFT



There are no strings attached to forgiveness; no preconditions or terms that first need to be met. No one needs to first come and say they're sorry, any more than you need to tell someone they are forgiven. In fact, a person doesn't even need to be alive and you can still forgive them. When you understand what forgiveness is, you realise it has less to do with the perpetrator and more to do with the gift giver.

**Q:** This day I extend the gift of forgiveness to \_\_\_\_\_  
My prayer for them is...

**A GREAT HALLMARK OF FORGIVENESS IS BEING ABLE TO RECALL WHAT TRANSPIRED AS PART OF YOUR TESTIMONY. YET AS YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED, YOU NOTICE YOU ARE FREE FROM THE HURT, PAIN AND BITTERNESS THAT USED TO ACCOMPANY THE MEMORY.**

**FORGIVENESS IS A GIFT THAT'S GIVEN EVEN WHEN UNDESERVED. IT'S NOT UNTIL YOU GIVE THE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS THAT YOU DISCOVER THE GIFT WAS REALLY INTENDED FOR YOU.**