

The **ONE** **ANOTHER** way

TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK FOUR

This guide can be used on your own or with a small group to reflect on the weekend message and apply it to your life.

- To aid in the discussion time, you may wish to text out one or two of the questions below, encouraging your group to begin thinking about their answers.
- Knowing the people in your group, facilitate the conversation in a way that best represents the relationships present: marriage, family, friendship or work.

ICEBREAKER

What's a relationship tip or piece of advice you've heard over the years that has proven to be surprisingly helpful?

LEADER'S NOTE

Every relationship experiences hurt, disappointment, and conflict. The difference between healthy relationships and unhealthy ones is not the absence of conflict, but how people respond to it. This week's discussion is about God's call to forgive as we have been forgiven through Christ.

Main Text: Ephesians 4:30–32

1 Choose to Release Bitterness

Key Scripture: Ephesians 4:30–31

Discuss:

- Paul lists attitudes like bitterness, anger, and malice before talking about forgiveness. Why do you think he begins there?
- Which is more challenging for you: recognizing bitterness in your own heart or actually letting it go? Why?
- What practical habits help keep small offenses from becoming lasting resentment?

Leader's Note:

Paul reminds us that we must first deal honestly with the attitudes that take root in our hearts. Encourage the group to focus on surrendering bitterness to God rather than pretending it doesn't exist.

2 Choose to Respond with Grace

Key Scripture: Ephesians 4:32a

Discuss:

- Paul connects kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. How do kindness and compassion make forgiveness possible?
- Why is it hard for us to extend the same grace that's been extended to us? How does compassion help bring clarity to the situation?
- How can you balance extending grace while still addressing wrongs in healthy and truthful ways?

Leader's Note:

Grace is not pretending that sin doesn't matter. It is choosing to respond with Christlike character instead of retaliation. Remind the group that forgiveness and wisdom go hand in hand, especially in complicated relationships.

3 Choose to Forgive as Christ Forgave You

Key Scripture: Ephesians 4:32b; Colossians 3:13

Discuss:

- How does a right view of ourselves and the gospel lead us to extend forgiveness towards those who have hurt us?
- Why is it important to remember that forgiveness is often a decision before it becomes a feeling?
- Is there a relationship where God may be inviting you to take a step toward forgiveness, reconciliation, or simply releasing an offense to Him? What's that next step?

Leader's Note:

The foundation of Christian forgiveness is not that people deserve it, but that Christ has freely forgiven us. Forgiveness doesn't always remove consequences or instantly restore trust, but it does free us from carrying the burden of bitterness.

Closing Prayer

Thank God for the forgiveness He has freely given through Jesus Christ. Ask Him to reveal any bitterness or unresolved hurt that needs to be surrendered to Him. Pray for hearts that are marked by kindness, compassion, and grace, and ask God to strengthen each person to extend forgiveness in their relationships. Finally, pray together for the needs and requests shared within the group.