

# “Forgiven”

May 30, 2010

Philemon 1:8-25, 1 Timothy 1:12-17 (ESV)

## LG STUDY

### QUICK REVIEW:

Was there a particular point or passage of Scripture that challenged, confused, or caught your attention during this Sunday’s message?

### MY STORY

1. How would you rate yourself when it comes to being a forgiving person? On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being unforgiving and 10 being someone who effortlessly forgives) how would you rate yourself?

What factors in your life have contributed to this tendency?

2. C. S. Lewis once said, “Everyone says that forgiveness is a wonderful idea until he has something to forgive.” Forgiveness is not always easy to ask for or to give. Generally speaking, which of the two do you find it more difficult to do—to ask for forgiveness or to forgive others? Explain.

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. This past Sunday we learned why we must forgive. To put it simply, we must forgive because we are forgiven by God’s grace. Having said that, forgiving those who have wounded us is not as easy as flipping a light switch—it’s tough! Forgiveness is a process that takes time. Author and pastor Henri Nouwen described the process at work:

I have often said, “I forgive you,” but even as I said the words, my heart remained angry and resentful. I still wanted to hear the story that tells me I was right after all; I still wanted to hear apologies and excuses; I still wanted the satisfaction of receiving some praise in return—if only the praise for being so forgiving! But God’s forgiveness is unconditional; it comes from a heart that doesn’t demand anything for itself, a heart that is completely empty of self-seeking. It is this divine forgiveness that I have to practice in my daily life. It calls me to keep stepping over all my arguments that say forgiveness is unwise, unhealthy, and impractical. It challenges me to step over my needs for gratitude and compliments. Finally it demands that I step over that wounded part of my heart that feels hurt and wronged, that wants to stay in control and put a few conditions between me and the one whom I am asked to forgive.

What hits you most about Nouwen’s description of forgiveness?

2. In verse 18, Paul makes a poignant plea for Philemon to not only forgive his runaway slave but also to restore him at Paul’s expense. Why does Paul step in to settle any debts for Onesimus? How does that parallel the way God restores sinners into a loving relationship with God?

3. In 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Paul takes a journey back into his own forgiveness. What does he say about his life? How did this personal awareness impact his tenderheartedness and posture toward forgiveness?

4. Now take a journey back into your own forgiveness. Rewrite 1 Timothy 1:12-17, personalizing it. Be specific about your sin and the grace shown you. [Optional activity] If you are willing, share what you wrote with the group.

### BRINING IT HOME

1. Take a moment to share how each person did in applying what you discussed at your last LG meeting.

2. What do you sense God is calling you to do? Please pick one from below and share:
  - You need to forgive someone in your life.
  - You need to seek forgiveness from someone you have wronged.
  - You need to accept God’s forgiveness and move on.
  - If others, please specify.

Spend time praying for one another, seeking God’s grace on each other’s behalf.

3. Please continue to share with your group what God has been teaching you through your Life Journal/Devotional.

\*\* LifeGroup Study questions are available for pick up at the Information Center located in the lobby. They are also available online at [www.ynccla.org](http://www.ynccla.org).

\*\* CDs of today’s message as well as previous weeks’ sermons are available in the YNCC office. Sermons are also viewable online at [www.ynccla.org/sermons](http://www.ynccla.org/sermons).

