



Welcome

SERIES: KICK YOUR “BUTS”

Message: *But I Can't Forgive*

Dr. Lance Watson, Senior Pastor

PRAYER: Gracious God, we are profoundly grateful for the gift of forgiveness you have instilled within us. Thank you for the strength to release resentment and the wisdom to understand that letting go frees our spirit. We are blessed to be able to extend grace to others, just as we have received it. This ability allows us to move forward with a heart unburdened and open to peace. May we continue to embrace this divine capacity, fostering healing and reconciliation in our lives and in the world. In the matchless and mighty name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

ICEBREAKER: Share one unexpected positive outcome that has come from a time you chose to forgive someone or were forgiven by someone.

INTRODUCTION: In Genesis, Joseph's brothers fear his retribution after their father Jacob's death, prompting them to seek his forgiveness for their past mistreatment of him. Joseph's response provides a profound model for why and how we should forgive. He weeps, not out of malice, but sorrow that they still doubted his reconciliation. Joseph declares, “You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good,” revealing that God can redeem even the most harmful intentions for a greater purpose—in this case, preserving many lives. Similarly, we are to forgive relying on God for strength because verdicts and vengeance belong to God alone, and we can trust that God can work through difficult circumstances for good.

BIBLE STUDY: Read Genesis 50:15-21 (NIV): 15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?” 16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father left these instructions before he died: 17 ‘This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.’ Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.” When their message came to him, Joseph wept. 18 His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said. 19 But Joseph said to them, “Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21 So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. **What was your biggest takeaway from the message?** What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message? What points did you find most insightful?



2. **The Fear Factor:** Joseph's brothers, even after years of Joseph's kindness, still feared his revenge after their father Jacob's death. What does this tell us about the nature of deep-seated guilt and the long process of trust-building in forgiveness? How can a person truly demonstrate forgiveness in a way that helps the offender overcome their fear of retribution?
3. **God's Purpose Prevails:** Joseph states, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20). How does Joseph's perspective on God's sovereignty influence his ability to forgive? Can understanding a larger "divine purpose" for suffering truly alleviate the pain of personal wrong, or does it simply provide a framework for moving forward?
4. **Finding the Faith to Forgive:** Joseph's forgiveness isn't just a declaration; he weeps, comforts his brothers, and promises to provide for them. What specific elements of Joseph's actions in this passage illustrate a complete and genuine act of forgiveness? What might be missing if he had only offered a verbal pardon without these other gestures?

CHALLENGE: Search your heart. Is there someone you need to forgive? Is there something you need to release to God? Be free. Let go and let God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also "find, follow and like" our Facebook page at facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications.

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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We Care!

NOTICE: As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472

EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: care@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)

EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177

EMAIL: care@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000

EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

- Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org
- SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org
- Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org
- Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org
- Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org
- Encore (50-59): Lisa Johnson: lisa.johnson@myspbc.org.
- Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org
- Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

*GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.
Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.*



Small Group Leader Guide

Would you like to START or JOIN a Small Group at Saint Paul's?

Most existing groups are open to new group members, and new groups begin on a regular basis. If you have friends in a small group, ask about joining their group. If you are new to Saint Paul's and are looking for a place to connect, please feel free to contact us and we will do our best to help you find the right group.

Leader Tips:

The GPS document is a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you must use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through while others will be over in a few seconds!

1. Don't teach the lesson. The lesson was taught on the weekend. Just ask questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our small groups. So, have fun with the people in your group.

Agenda for a Small Group Gathering

Gathering Time

Take 5-10 minutes to welcome everyone, catch up and if planned, share some food!

Discussion Time

Here's a suggested format:

1. **Ice Breaker** – Lighthearted icebreaker question (5-10 min.)
2. **Discussion** - Discussion time, Bible study, application challenge (30-40 min.)
3. **Prayer** – Prayer requests and praying for one another (10-20 min.)
4. **Planning** – Remind the group of how we serve together (e.g. usher, sing, greet, pray, etc.)