

Cultivate Discussion Guide

The Cure for Loneliness: Healing Past Hurt August 10 and 11, 2019

If you missed this weekend's message, view it at cultivate.sc/discussion

Tips for leaders:

- Prepare for your group. Your goal is to choose the questions that will lead your group into REAL conversation about the topics most meaningful to you. It's okay if you don't answer them all!
 - To help everyone follow along, ask them to print the Discussion Guide or pull it up on their phone.
 - If questions remain unanswered, encourage women to work through them as they cultivate God's word on their own throughout the week.
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Reflect: Past hurt can be a tender topic and may stir up a variety of thoughts, emotions and memories. Navigate your conversations with care, letting each member of your group participate in a way that makes them feel safe and supported. **What about this weekend's message most spoke to you? How were you encouraged, challenged or convicted?**

Read Genesis 50:20 NLT: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good."

#1: Share a time in your life when you've been able to say, "God intended it all for good."

REAL Conversation: Because we're a sinful and flawed people, it's very likely that you have experienced some type of past hurt - either emotionally, spiritually, relationally or even physically. Your circumstances are personal and unique. Your hurt is not diminished because someone else has been hurt more or less. As you share, be REAL in the way that works for you.

As a group, listen first, remembering that God has gone before you. Don't offer solutions or advice unless you're asked. We are deeply loved by a God who is writing purpose and plans over our lives in His perfect timing.

#2: If you can trace back the hurt you've experienced, do you find you were hurt by hurt people? How does that cycle of hurt affect your perspective?

#3: How has your hurt impacted your life - emotionally, spiritually, physically?

- What about your relationship with God?
- Your relationship with others?

Forgiveness...

- Does not make what happened okay (Isaiah 5:20)
- Can be one-way (Luke 23:34)
- Is costly, but is not optional (Matthew 18:23-25 and 6:14-15)
- Is a process (Matthew 18:21-22)
- Moves us from victimhood to victory (Genesis 50:22)

Dig Deeper Challenge: Take some time this week to read, reflect and personally respond to the verses referenced in each of the points above.

#4: If you could write the perfect ending, what would the ideal circumstances for forgiveness be in your situation?

- If forgiveness is achievable (not optional), what is your part?
- If it's not possible right now, what are some next steps you can take to stop a continued cycle of hurt?

Read Ephesians 4:31-32 TPT:

“Lay aside bitter words, temper tantrums, revenge, profanity, and insults. But instead be kind and affectionate toward one another. Has God graciously forgiven you? Then graciously forgive one another in the depths of Christ’s love.”

#5: What do you need to lay aside today to pursue healing?

**#6: What would a healthy version of kindness look like in your situation or circumstances?
This might be personally, spiritually or relationally.**

Note: Forgiveness does not always mean restoration of relationships. Sometimes the kindest thing we can do is create healthy boundaries so that God can continue to work in our lives and/or the lives of others.

Cultivate Prayer: “So now we come freely and boldly to where love is enthroned, to receive mercy’s kiss and discover the grace we urgently need to strengthen us in our time of weakness.” Hebrews 4:16 TPT

As you enter prayer time, reflect on your attitude about forgiveness. Be REAL (free and bold) with God, asking for what you need - either quietly in your heart or together out loud as a group. Think about the following:

- Does the thought of forgiveness make you feel weak? Ask God for mercy and strength.
- Are you easily offended and quick to anger? Christ offers you mercy and grace every day, so what does it look like for you to live in response?
- Are you wounded and hurt? Receive mercy’s kiss and rest in grace knowing God loves you and is working on your behalf.

Pray together, asking God to cultivate a heart of kindness, affection and grace in you - toward yourself, toward others and within your present circumstances.