

## HOPE CYCLE 2: FORGIVENESS

### How to have a student-led club:

A student opens and closes in prayer

A student explains the purpose of First Priority

Students read verses and questions for the week

**Memory Verse:** “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

### Week One: HELP

Joseph was a faithful man who was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. He was unjustly thrown into prison, but because he interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams, he was promoted to a powerful position in Pharaoh's court. In his position, Joseph helped Egypt store food to survive a famine, but he also had the authority to punish anyone who had treated him unfairly.

1) Read Genesis 45: 4-8 and 45:14-15 to learn how Joseph reacted when his brothers (who did not recognize him) came to him for food. How would you have reacted?

2) Think about a time when someone mistreated you. Did you hold a grudge, seek revenge, or forgive? Explain.

3) Is it difficult for you to forgive others? Explain. What does God say about forgiveness in Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:13?

4) How do you typically respond if you are treated unfairly? Give an example.

5) In Romans 12:17-19 who is responsible for justice? How can this give you peace when you have been hurt?

6) Read Romans 8:28. How can this verse about God's sovereignty **HELP** you in unfair or difficult situations?

### HELP Week Verses:

Genesis 45:4-8 (ERV) “So Joseph said to his brothers again, “Come here to me. I beg you, come here.” When the brothers went to him, he said to them, “I am your brother Joseph. I am the one you sold as a slave to Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Now don't be worried. Don't be angry with yourselves for what you did. It was God's plan for me to come here. I am here to save people's lives. <sup>6</sup> This terrible famine has continued for two years now, and there will be five more years without planting or harvest. <sup>7</sup> So God sent me here ahead of you so that I can save your people in this country. <sup>8</sup> It was not your fault that I was sent here. It was God's plan. God made me like a father to Pharaoh. I am the governor over all his house and over all Egypt.”

Genesis 45:14-15 (NIV) “Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.”

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV) “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Colossians 3:13 (ERV) “Don't be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you.”

Romans 12:17-19 (NIV) “When someone does something bad to you, do not pay him back with something bad. Try to do what all men know is right and good. <sup>18</sup> As much as you can, live in peace with all men. <sup>19</sup> Christian brothers, never pay back someone for the bad he has done to you. Let the anger of God take care of the other person. The Holy Writings say, “I will pay back to them what they should get, says the Lord.”

Romans 8:28 (NIV) “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

**Challenge:** Pray for two friends who need to know Jesus.

## **Week Two: OVERCOME**

Last week, we talked about Joseph and how he had to forgive others who treated him unjustly.

- 1) Can you think of a time when someone forgave you for mistreating them? Give an example.
- 2) How did you feel - relief, grateful, guilty? Explain.
- 3) Romans 3:22-24 tells us that no one is exempt from sin. What does this mean to you?
- 4) According to 1 John 1:8-9, how can we seek God's forgiveness for our sins?
- 3) What issues do you feel guilty about and need God's forgiveness?
- 4) Read Psalm 32:1-2; Isaiah 43:25; Isaiah 44:22. How do these verses give you assurance of God's promise of forgiveness and the help you need to **OVERCOME** guilt?
- 5) How can we encourage others to accept and believe in God's complete forgiveness, which gives us peace and relief from guilt?

## **OVERCOME Week Verses**

Romans 3:22-24 (AMP) "This righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all those [Jew or Gentile] who believe [and trust in Him and acknowledge Him as God's Son]. There is no distinction, <sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and *continually* fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are being justified [declared free of the guilt of sin, made acceptable to God, and granted eternal life] as a gift by His [precious, undeserved] grace, through the redemption [the payment for our sin] which is [provided] in Christ Jesus,"

1 John 1:8-9 (AMP) "If we say we have no sin [refusing to admit that we are sinners], we delude ourselves and the truth is not in us. [His word does not live in our hearts.] <sup>9</sup> If we [freely] admit that we have sinned *and* confess our sins, He is faithful and just [true to His own nature and promises], and will forgive our sins and cleanse us *continually* from all unrighteousness [our wrongdoing, everything not in conformity with His will and purpose]."

Psalm 32:1-2 (NIV) "Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit."

Isaiah 43:25 (ERV) "I, I am the one who wipes away all your sins. I do this to please myself. I will not remember your sins."

Isaiah 44:22 (GNT) "I have swept your sins away like a cloud. Come back to me; I am the one who saves you."

**Challenge:** At the end of the meeting, gather in a circle and pray for each other.

## **Week Three: PREPARE**

- 1) Luke 23:32-34 tells us about Jesus ultimate act of forgiveness on the cross. How do you feel about this?
- 2) How does Romans 4:7-8 encourage you as you **PREPARE** your faith story?
- 3) Be sure that at least one student is PREPARED to share his/her faith story for Engage Week, and a student is willing to read the Gospel Message and Invitation [see below].

## **PREPARE Week Verses**

Luke 23:32-34a (ERV) "There were also two criminals led out with Jesus to be killed. <sup>33</sup> They were led to a place called "The Skull." There the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross. They also nailed the criminals to crosses beside Jesus—one on the right and the other on the left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."

Romans 4:7-8 (NIV) ""Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.<sup>8</sup> Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them."

**Challenge:** Invite two friends to next week's Engage Week meeting.

### **Week Four: ENGAGE**

Use your faith story to **ENGAGE** your campus for Christ. Share the Gospel Message and Invitation [see below]. You can download the Student Response cards from the First Priority website.

**Challenge:** Invite two friends to your youth group or church this week.

**Gospel Message** (please read this out loud to your group):

Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Bible tells us that there is no one who is innocent.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' death as the payment for our sins.

Romans 10:13 "for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Romans 5:1 tells us, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The Bible says that if we believe in Jesus, we will have peace with God. We can be reconnected to him.

**Invitation:** (Please ask students to bow their heads and close their eyes, then read this out loud)

If this message is speaking to you today, and you want to trust in Jesus as your savior then pray this simple prayer to yourself: Dear Lord, I admit that I have sinned and this has separated me from you. But, I believe that through you I can be forgiven. Today, I pray that you will come into my life and help me to trust in you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Fall 2018