

# WOUNDED

*Forgiveness needs more than a*



## **Wounded: Part 2**

Small Group Material

Participant Guide

## ***Our Highest Hope***

March 13th, 2016

**Bottom Line:** Forgiveness frees you from vengeance and vindication.

**Study Verses:** Romans 12:16-19, Psalm 17:2, Isaiah 53:1,5,10-11

### **Key Points**

- Being right isn't about vindication, but restoration.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation are two different things.
- Forgiveness doesn't eliminate the consequences or the cost.
- To forgive is an act of liberation and a way to freedom.
- Forgiveness abolishes the scales completely.
- Focus on forgiveness first.
- We must understand the implications forgiveness has on our own lives before we deal with the implications it has on our relationships.

## **ENCOUNTER**

*“To forgive another person from the heart is an act of liberation. We set that person free from the negative bonds that exist between us. We say, “I no longer hold your offense against you.” But there is more. We also free ourselves from the burden of being the “offended one.” As long as we do not forgive those who have wounded us, we carry them with us, or worse, pull them as a heavy load. The great temptation is to cling in anger to our enemies and then define ourselves as being offended and wounded by them. Forgiveness, therefore, liberates not only the other but also ourselves. It is the way to freedom for the children of God.” -Henri Nouwen*

- What is your initial reaction to the quote above? Do you view forgiveness as an act of liberation? Why or why not? What makes you answer in the way that you do?
- What causes you to hesitate to extend forgiveness?
- How have you allowed your wounds to define you? Where do you still see yourself as the offended one?

## **FORMATION**

*“O Lord, deliver me from this lust of always vindicating myself.” -St. Augustine*

- Read Romans 12:16-19. How does this passage speak to forgiveness and reconciliation being two different things? Why should our willingness to forgive be independent from the response of the offender?
- Read Psalm 17:2 and the quote from St. Augustine. How does God’s forgiveness free you from seeking vengeance and vindication? What is the allure to vindicate ourselves?
- Read Isaiah 53:1,5,10-11. According to this passage, what causes God anguish and what brings Him satisfaction? How does God shouldering the weight of our sin pave the way for forgiveness?

## **EXPRESSION**

- Where are you seeking vengeance and vindication?
- Why do you want to be right in this situation?
- What would it look like for you to focus on forgiveness first and worry about the details of the relationship later?