

# WOUNDED

*Forgiveness needs more than a*



## **Wounded: Part 3**

Small Group Material

Leader Guide

## ***The Greatest Fear***

March 20th, 2016

**Bottom Line:** Forgiveness requires a death.

**Study Verses:** Isaiah 53:7-9, John 20:13-17, John 12:12-19, Ephesians 2:1-10

**Define The Win:** *Participants would recognize the places where a death needs to occur for forgiveness to take root in their lives. They would be able to articulate what pictures of the past that they are clinging to in hopes of returning to that place.*

### **Key Points**

- Forgiveness is hard because death is hard.
- His way is the way of resurrection.
- We have been created to live a life that has been resurrected.
- We have been called to live in relationships that are fueled by resurrection.
- For forgiveness to be felt something has to die.
- In the economy of God death is not the end, but a way for resurrection.
- In order to see God's way, our way has to die.
- Our forgiveness was bought by His blood.

## ENCOUNTER

- Why is forgiveness hard?
- What role does death and grieving play in forgiveness?
- What is the danger in expecting your relationships to go back to the way things were once forgiveness has been extended?

**LEADER INSIGHT:** *We have a built-in longing to make things right. This is why we gravitate towards forgiveness. In our minds, we believe forgiveness can pave the way to how things were before the offense occurred. Yet, no matter how hard we try, things are never going back to the way it once was. Forgiveness requires a death. For forgiveness to be felt something has to die. In order to see God's way, our way has to die. God's way is the way of resurrection. God takes the bad things that have occurred in our lives and redeems them for His good purposes. In God's economy, death is not the end, but a way of resurrection. We have been created to live a life that has been resurrected. We have been called to live in relationships that are fueled by resurrection.*

## FORMATION

- Read John 12:12-19 and Isaiah 53:7-9. What were the crowds expecting when Jesus made His way to Jerusalem? How did Jesus shatter their expectations?
- Read John 20:13-17. Why do you believe Jesus responded to Mary Magdalene in the way that He did? What did He want her to understand when He said, "Don't hold on to me."?
- Read Ephesians 2:1-10. How did God make a way for us to be restored and forgiven?

**LEADER INSIGHT:** *Jesus had a unique way of turning our world upside down. He never did things according to the book. He had little regard for our expectations of how things should be. The crowds who flocked to Jesus were hopeful this was "the one." This man from Bethlehem was going to overthrow the oppressive Roman government and lead them towards freedom. Jesus had different plans. Yes, they involved freeing those who were imprisoned, but He died to overthrow the power sin had on our lives. The crowd desired insurrection. Jesus was focused*

on a resurrection. This explains Jesus's seemingly odd comment to Mary. There was no possible way to go back to the way things once were. The old system had been replaced by something new. Why revert back to a system of self performance that could never meet the requirements for the life we desired. The essence of what God has done through Jesus is what allows us to both be forgiven and therefore free to forgive. His death brought us life.

## **EXPRESSION**

*"In order for forgiveness to happen, something has to die. If you make a choice to forgive, you have to face the pain. You simply have to hurt."* -**Brene Brown**

- In what broken relationship are you clinging to the hope that it will return to the way it was before the offense occurred?
- What causes you to hesitate in letting go of the hope that things will return to the way they once were?
- What has to die so you can experience a resurrection in this relationship?
- What would it look like for you to grieve these things that are lost?

**LEADER INSIGHT:** Chances are good answering these questions will bring up fresh wounds. Be prepared to gently care for your group members who are wrestling with what must die in order for forgiveness to truly take place. Take time to differentiate between the restoration of a relationship and the redemption of a wound that caused pain. Letting go of events, relationships, hopes and dreams that they grasped onto so tightly is no easy task. Unforgiveness has the power to shape our perspective, influence our words and actions and define our identity. This process means our pride, bitterness, anger and entitlement must die as well.