

Small Group Content – May 5th
Kingdom Culture: The Parables of Jesus



Note for small group leaders: Your group should watch the video on the leader page (www.coastline.ca/groups) and then discuss the questions and/or ideas. These questions and statements are meant to be a starting point for conversation, and they can be used in the ways that you feel best reflect the needs of the group!

Spring Semester 2024: April 8 - June 14

Icebreaker: Did you play on a sports team as a kid or adult? Share a favorite memory from playing on a team.

23 *“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. **25** Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.*

26 *“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ **27** The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.*

28 *“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.*

29 *“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’*

30 *“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31** When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.*

32 *“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33** Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ **34** In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.*

Mathew 18:32-33

14 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. **15** See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Hebrews 12:14-15

1 How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! **2** It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe.

Psalms 133:1-2

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10** This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:7-11

36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" **37** Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:36-39

Starting Questions:

1. What are your **initial** thoughts on the small group content this week?
2. Reinhart shares this definition of forgiveness : Forgiveness is releasing someone from a debt. It's a choice, not a feeling, to let go from the person you are yoked or tied to. Discuss how **unforgiveness keeps us bound** to others who have wronged us.
3. In Hebrews, Paul instructs us to "**make every effort to live in peace with everyone**". What is the link between forgiveness and peace with people? Do you see a link between unforgiveness and bitterness? What does bitterness look like in someone's life and how could it "cause trouble and defile many?"

Deeper Questions:

1. What is **good and pleasant** about God's people living in unity? Have you considered unity through forgiveness as a vote in favour of goodness and pleasantness? On a practical level, what does it look like for God's people to live in unity? How is unity lived out? Discuss the link between forgiveness and unity.

2. **We can only love and forgive to the measure that we understand how much we have been forgiven.**
We all need a fresh revelation of our identity as loved by Jesus and forgiven by God. Does this ring true to you? How does the revelation of forgiveness compel you to forgive others?
3. Your identity in the Lord is greater than your sinful actions. How does the topic of identity change or inform the way you choose to forgive? And further, how can an understanding of your identity in Christ foster unity?
4. Why do you think that knowing Christ's forgiveness leads some to use it as a **license to sin**, instead of walking in holiness? How can we avoid that?
5. Does seeing someone as created by God and as **an image bearer of God** change the way you think about forgiveness? How does forgiving others show our love for God himself? Discuss this in light of Mathew 18:36-39 : **36** "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"**37** Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'