



Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Conversation Starters

1. Describe a person you have encountered or you know well who lives like Colossians 3:12-14.
2. Which common misunderstanding about forgiveness do you relate to most? Why?
 - a. Forgiving is not letting someone off the hook.
 - b. Forgiving is not waiting for someone to admit what they did, apologize or confess.
 - c. Forgiving is not the same as forgetting.
3. Forgiving is a process that starts with the awareness of a need to forgive. Read over the following sentences and pick one that helps you become aware.

YOU MAY NEED TO FORGIVE IF THESE APPLY TO YOU

- If you can't say the person's name who hurt you
- If their name comes up in a group and everyone immediately looks at you to see how you will react
- If you hear something good happened to them and you aren't happy for them
- If you cannot think of the person without thinking about what they did
- If whenever something goes wrong in your life, you blame the person that hurt you

4. Forgiving is passing on to others what you have received. Karla said, "Forgiving is like snorkeling, we breathe in forgiveness from God and breathe it out again onto our friends, family, neighbors and even our enemies." There is a flow to forgiveness from God to us to others.
 - a. How do you stay in the flow?
 - b. What do you do with the forgiveness you have been given?
 - c. How can this group help each other learn what it looks like to breathe in and breathe out forgiveness?
5. Forgiving is setting someone free and finding out it is you. Have you experienced this? Are you currently taking the rat poison of refusing to forgive and waiting for the rat to die?
6. Stop being so surprised. Why do you think we get stuck in our shock, surprise and outrage when people do things that hurt us? How would you begin noticing when you get stuck in surprise, outrage or shock. Have you ever set your shock aside? What happened?
7. How realistic is it for you to start praying, Lord help me see them the way you see them? Why would you pray that prayer?