

3. Recovering from Hurt

Start off with feedback from Sunday's message. What did those that were there - or those that have caught up online - take away from it? What encouraged them, what informed them and what challenged them?

Read Ephesians 4.31-32

31 *Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

- Have you ever been prevented from forgiving someone because you thought forgiveness meant: It's Okay, I've Forgotten or We're Friends?
- When we're hurt we have to deal with two things – The Thing itself and Our Reaction to the Thing. Do you agree and, if so, how have you experienced this to be true in your past?
- Do you agree that we often hold on to anger and slander, bitterness and resentment, because those emotions can be enjoyable and help numb our pain? Again, what's your experience been here?
- Why is kindness and compassion key to helping us forgive others? Are you kind with yourself when you make mistakes?
- What for you has the biggest impact on your ability to forgive others – consciously getting rid of bitterness and malice, choosing to be kind and compassionate, or remembering that you've been forgiven by God?
- What's your biggest encouragement from this message and what's your biggest challenge?

Big Idea: 'Forgiveness makes us free. Getting rid of bitterness, and choosing to respond with kindness, makes it possible. We forgive as God forgave us.'

Pray for each other in smaller groups. Find out if there are issues causing pain that are 'live' right now. Pray for those issues. Pray for the ability to get rid of bitterness and be kind.

Pray for a fresh revelation of God's forgiveness of our sins in Christ. Pray for the Spirit of God to help us become flexible and tender-hearted, better able to handle the impacts of life and keep running our race.

Check out the 5 minute version www.loverunning.org/videos/running-high