

SESSION 3

Going Back In Order To Go Forward

**Introduction**

How would you describe the family atmosphere you grew up in (try to use just a word or two)

**Video** (13 mins)

**Group discussion**

Our need to go back in order to go forward can be summed up into essential biblical truths:

* The blessings and sins of our families going back 2 to 3 generations profoundly impact who we are today.
* Discipleship requires putting off the sinful patterns of a family of origin and re-learning how to do life God’s way in God’s family.

What concerns or fears might you have and looking back at your family of origin to discern unhealthy patterns and themes? Explain

**Bible study: Genesis 50:15-21**

*Read Genesis 39:11-20*

1. Imagine yourself in Josephs shoes sitting in a prison cell without any hope of freedom. What thoughts, feelings, or doubts might you have about your family? About yourself? About God?

*Read Genesis 50:15-21*

1. What assumptions are the brothers making about Joseph in v.15?
2. Why do you think Joseph weeps v.17?
3. Joseph chooses to break the “normal” way his family deals with hurt feelings and conflict by forgiving his brothers. How might you have responded if you were in Joseph’s position? (Be sure to honestly put yourself in Joseph’s shoes)
4. Slowly, re-read versus 19-21. Here we see Joseph’s response to the enormous losses he experienced in his life. Carefully consider the different aspects of this response noted below. As you think about your own life story, which one speaks the most to you and why?
	1. “don’t be afraid”
	2. “am I in the place of God?”
	3. “you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good”

**Application**

1. Complete this question on your own then answer the others as a group.
Joseph had a rich sense of being part of his family of origin and how it had shaped his life – both good and bad. We must honestly face the truths about your family of origin as well. *Prayerfully complete the following boxes.*
	1. First list the life messages you received from your parents/carers
	2. List any earthquake events that sent aftershocks into your extended family
	3. Summarize what messages about life/yourself/others you internalized
2. Share with the group the message(s) you received. How do those messages compare with the messages below that reflect who you are in the new family of Jesus?

*It is good that you exist; You are lovable; You are a joy; You have nothing left to prove; You are allowed to make mistakes.*

3. What might be one specific message from your family of origin that God has revealed to you today that you want to change as part of your “hard work of discipleship”?

Close with prayer

**Throughout the Course:

Daily Office**

Adapt your own quiet time to follow this formula

* Silence and Stillness before God (2 minutes)
* Scripture reading
* Devotional (optional)
* Set prayer/hymn
* Prayer
* Conclude with Silence (2 minutes)