

SESSION 5

FORGIVENESS AND COMMUNITY

Exploring why forgiveness is the foundation communities cannot survive without

Reading

- Chapter 8: Forgiveness as an Integral Part of Flourishing Community

Watch the Video



Opening Question

Think about a community you are part of. What happens when someone makes a mistake or causes harm?

Key Idea

Forgiveness is essential for any community to function and flourish. Human beings are created for relationships, reflecting the relational nature of God himself. Yet wherever people are involved, there will be hurt, misunderstanding, and failure. Without forgiveness, communities tend to become shaped by power, control, or distance. With forgiveness, there is space for honesty, repair, and growth.

Forgiveness does not remove pain, but it makes continued relationships possible. A healthy community is not built on perfection, but on grace - on the willingness to admit wrong, to forgive, and to begin again.

Reflection & Discussion

- What happens in a community when forgiveness is absent?
- Why can it be difficult to admit when we are wrong?
- What would a community shaped by grace and forgiveness look like?
- Where might you need to extend or receive grace in your relationships?

Going Deeper (optional)

As you think about forgiveness in community (Chapter 8), ask yourself: What kind of community am I helping to create through my responses—one shaped by grace, or one shaped by fear or control?

Looking ahead to everyday practice (Chapter 9), ask yourself: Where in my daily life do small moments of hurt or misunderstanding tend to build up? Notice patterns you might usually overlook.

Prayer

Lord, we confess that community is harder than we hoped. We wound one another. We misunderstand. We fail. We sometimes hide behind idealism to avoid the harder work of grace. Forgive us for the communities we have fractured. Give us the humility to confess, the courage to repair, and the grace to begin again. Help us to reflect the love you have always had within yourself - a love that gives, that centres the other, and that refuses to let division have the final word. Amen.