



emotionally
HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY
Discussion Guide
Week 3 - February 22-28, 2009

SESSION TITLE: Going Back in Order to Go Forward

BOOK READING: Chapter 5

KEY SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Genesis 50:15-21

IMPORTANT!: Make sure everyone in your group has a discussion guide this week for the exercise on the back.

CONNECTING (10 minutes)

1. How are you doing at slowing down the pace and being more contemplative? Any discoveries?
2. Were you aware of expectations or temptations to not be your authentic true self this week? Explain

DVD (5 minutes)

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The choice to embrace our past grants us certain opportunities and gifts. It also hands us a certain amount of “emotional baggage” in our journey through life. For some this load is minimal; for others, it is a heavy burden to carry. True spirituality frees us to live joyfully in the present. Living joyfully, however, requires going back in order to go forward. This process takes us to the very heart of spirituality and discipleship in the family of God -- breaking free from the destructive sinful patterns of our past to live the life of love that God intends.

[PLAY THE DVD VIDEO MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LES (SESSION 3)]

DISCOVERING (35 minutes)

[READ Genesis 50:12-21]

3. **FAMILY SHAPING EXERCISE** (5-7 minutes): Have each person turn their sheet over and complete the exercise on the back. When everyone is finished, have anyone who is willing, individuals share some of the messages they received from their family.
4. Joseph comes face to face with his past family hurts when he reconnects with his brothers. Imagine yourself in his shoes. What thoughts, feelings or doubts might you have had toward them, yourself, or God?
5. Joseph’s response to his brothers breaks their “normal” family pattern with dealing with issues. Reread his response phrase by phrase in vv 19-20. What can we learn from each phrase that is helpful for us dealing with our family’s impact on us? (Am I in the place of God/You intended to harm me/God intended it for good...)

APPLYING (15 minutes)

6. Look back at the **FAMILY SHAPING EXERCISE**. What is one specific message from your family that God may be underlining as one He wants to lead you through the “hard work” of correcting that message?

HOMEWORK

7. Make time to sit quietly before the Father this week and let Him speak to you about what **His message** is to you.

[CLOSE IN PRAYER FOR ONE ANOTHER]

FAMILY SHAPING EXERCISE (5-7 Minutes)

Fill in the boxes below.

- List the life messages you received from your parents or caretakers (e.g. Don't be weak. Education is everything. You must achieve to be loved. Don't be sad; things could be worse. Make a lot of money. Don't trust people; they will hurt you.)
- List any "earthquake" events that sent "aftershocks" into your extended family (e.g. abuse, premature or sudden deaths/losses, divorces, shameful secrets revealed, etc.)
- Look at the three separate boxes and summarize what messages about life, yourself, or others impacted you. Then fill in the center box of "Cumulative messages I received" and note any generational patterns of behavior or sin.

<p>Father (Caretaker) Messages about life received:</p>	<p>Mother (Caretaker) Messages about life received:</p>	<p>"Earthquake" events in family history:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••••
<p>Cumulative messages I received:</p> <p>Any generational patterns of behavior or sin:</p>		