

How To Take A Hit

Week 5 – November 28, 2020

Scripture: Genesis 45:4-9 & 50:20, Romans 5:6-11, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: How did you celebrate Thanksgiving this year?

Read Genesis 45:4-9, Genesis 50:20, Romans 5:6-11 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

Although the end of Joseph's life was a victory, the early years were a loss – loss of relationships, loss of family, loss of home, loss of what could have been. When given the chance for vengeance on those responsible for those losses, Joseph could have hit back. Instead, he offered forgiveness. The last key to surviving the hits of life is the ability to sincerely forgive those who have hit us. Although not an easy thing to do, forgiveness is as much or more to our own benefit as it is to those to hurt us.

Share your thoughts about following questions:

1. In Genesis 45:4-9, thousands of years before the coming of Christ we're met with a scene of forgiveness, reconciliation, love and grace that casts a light toward the good news of the gospel. This is beautiful foreshadowing. In Genesis 50:20, Joseph could see that God was able to use every hit he had experienced to accomplish a purpose that affected *generations*.
 - a. Sometimes we forget that our obedience not only affects us but the people around us, even those we might not know. Think about a hit that's been difficult for you to forgive. Who is affected if you obey? If you disobey?
 - b. Forgiveness isn't something earned; it's something offered. What obstacles have kept you from offering forgiveness?
2. How does Romans 5:6-11 explain our state when Christ died for us? Forgiveness has much to do with our trust of God. Which of these is difficult to trust after taking a hit?
 - a. God can enact consequences as He sees fit?
 - b. God cares about the wound and the hurt you have?
 - c. God can make right what was wrong?
 - d. God's grace is powerful enough to heal, even if there isn't an apology?
3. God's work in Joseph's life isn't just an ancient story for us to marvel at. Right now, the Holy Spirit is looking for men and women through whom He can bring the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19) to the people in their relational spheres. Ask God to bring to mind someone in your life He desires to reach through a ministry of reconciliation. Take a minute or two to consider silently. Share aloud as a group.
4. The wisdom given us by the Holy Spirit should have a practical effect on those around us. Consider where you work, whom you live next to, the people in your family, the gifts you've been given. How have you been placed to be a blessing to others, bring honor to Jesus, and overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21)?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Confess what has made it difficult for you to forgive, or how you haven't trusted God with regard to a relationship or situation needing restoration. Thank God for Jesus's model of forgiveness, offering it before any of us deserved it. Ask Him to reveal who He desires us to offer forgiveness to or pursue reconciliation with, and for the courage to respond.