

UNEARTHED

Digging beneath the surface and bringing our whole selves before God.

Week 3 Group Discussion Guide (~90 minutes needed)

Begin your group by catching up with one another (10 minutes).

Ask each person to share about how they're doing at work, at home, and how their families are doing. Give each person space to share as much or as little as they want about each bucket.

Follow up from week 2: As you thought about the attributes your family transferred to you, were you able to "put to death" (v. 5) any bad ones or remind and "clothe" (v. 12) yourselves throughout the week with the godly attributes we read in Col. 3:5-14?

Read this brief description of the topic for Week 3 of the Unearthed sermon series to your group and discuss the following questions (15 minutes):

This week we are looking at our own lives and where God meets us when life seems unfair. Through the story of Joseph, we saw how his life was unfair even when he was doing what was right. Jesus said we will have troubles, but also gave us the encouragement to take heart. So that is what we are looking at this week: our hearts and our response to God in the unfair times.

- Have you ever felt like God was hidden or not present during suffering in your life? What was your response?
- Was there a time of suffering where you could undeniably sense God with you? What was your response then?
- What do you think the difference was?

Come back together as a large group to debrief and recap the sermon (30 minutes).

Have someone begin by reading **Romans 5:1-8**. From the story of Joseph and our own lives, we know life will not always treat us how we deserve. But we also see in Romans 5 that God did not treat of as we deserved. Through something as terrible as suffering, He can produce good in us. We may not control the suffering, but we do have control over our perspective of it and our response to it. Take some time to answer these questions together:

- Everything worked out for Joseph at the end of the story. Sometimes, that doesn't seem to be the case in our own lives. What does this passage from Romans tell us about suffering? What does suffering lead to?
- Verse 8 says that Christ died for you at just the right time (when we were "still powerless"). How does this give you hope? How does it change your response towards suffering or others who treat you poorly?

- Think back to an unfair time when it seemed like God was absent. Remembering that Jesus is Immanuel (God with us), see if you might be able to find Jesus in the midst of that situation. Where is he? What's his demeanor? What's his approach to you?
- Share with your group (as you feel led) a situation where you feel you are being treated unfairly. How can you change your perspective and find hope that God can turn this for good?

Take time individually to walk through the Forgiveness Practice on pages 31-34 from the Unearthed Journal (25 minutes).

You may also suggest that group members complete this practice on their own during the week if you do not have time to do it now.

- What did you learn from doing the practice?

Finish with intercessory prayer (10 minutes).

As you do each week, finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is one thing you can be grateful for this week?
- What is something we can be praying about for you?

Have someone close your time together by interceding for the requests that were shared.

EXTRA:

1. If you did not complete it during group time, do the Forgiveness practice on page 31-34 of the Unearthed devotional book to help rewire your view of self, suffering, others, and God.
2. Also, be sure to listen to this week's Unearthed bonus podcast episode which you can find on our website at thecreek.org/unearthed.