

# SAVIOR SERVANT FRIEND



*Session 1*  
FORGIVER



*Session 2*  
HEALER



*Session 3*  
LISTENER



*Session 4*  
ENCOURAGER



*Session 5*  
PROTECTOR



*Session 6*  
COMFORTER



A 6-SESSION **BIBLE STUDY**  
FOR LENT

LEADER'S GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

*I have called you friends, for all  
that I have heard from my Father  
I have made known to you.  
John 15:15*

Jesus is our Savior, Servant and Friend. He rescues us from sin. He humbles himself to help us in our need, and he is our constant companion through life. Lent is a time when all of these attributes of Jesus come together in beautiful fashion in his suffering, death and resurrection. Let these and other remarkable facets of our Lord take center stage in this Bible study, as we explore the depth of their meanings for us as his followers and friends.

## Leader's Guide For Session 1

**BEFORE CLASS:** Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed, and become acquainted with them.

**READ:** Have a member of the group read the Introduction on page 4 aloud.

**READ:** Have someone read the Opening Prayer, or read the prayer in unison.

**DISCUSS:** Discuss how Jesus helps us to be a more forgiving friend.

### SESSION 1



## FORGIVER

*And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"*

**LUKE 7:48-49**

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

O Lord Jesus, the true test of any friendship is a willingness to forgive the other. And you not only forgive our many sins, but you love us unconditionally in spite of them all. Your role as forgiver is shown most clearly on the cross, when you declared, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34), even though our sins had put you there. Let our prayer today be that we be just as forgiving to others as you have been to us. May we be that forgiving friend. Amen.

#### **DISCUSSION**

How does Jesus help you to be a more forgiving friend?

### INTRODUCTION

We are blessed with Savior who forgives us every day. In this world of sin, we are still prone to disobeying our Lord and his Law again and again. But again and again, when we confess our sins to him, Jesus says to us in love, "I forgive you." He gives us a clean slate to start anew in following our Friend, Jesus, on the path he has marked out for us. And as his forgiven people, we are free to love and adore him in worship, in prayer and in the study of his Word. We are also free to forgive one another, not just once but daily too, and we grow together as his disciples to become more like Christ in word and deed.

### RETURN TO GOD

1. **Read Joel 2:12-17.** The word *repent* literally means to turn back. So when we repent of our sins, we are turning back to God. But why is it hard for us to repent and return to God sometimes?
2. What attributes of God make it easier to return to him for forgiveness?
3. What else does God often leave behind for us through his forgiveness?
4. What positive impacts have you seen in your own life through God's forgiveness toward you or others?
5. What are we called to do in response to God's forgiveness?
6. When are you most eager to receive forgiveness?
7. When is it hard for you to accept forgiveness?
8. God truly does forgive and forget. Why is it so often hard to forget the sins we have done or the sins done against us?
9. Why is it good to know that there is no end to the forgiveness of God?

### LIVING FORGIVEN

1. **Read Romans 6:1-14.** Just because we can be forgiven over and over, that does not give us the license to keep on sinning. What should we do instead?
2. What should our new life in Christ be like?
3. Why does sin no longer have dominion over us?

READ: Read aloud, or have someone read aloud, the Introduction.

### Return to God

1. **Read Joel 2:12-17.** Answers will vary but may include that we are embarrassed by our sins, we fear judgment from God or we want to continue to follow our own way.
2. He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.
3. He often leaves blessings behind for us.
4. Answers will vary but may include feelings of freedom and relief and a renewed devotion to God in Jesus.
5. We should assemble, worship, celebrate and fast in thanksgiving to God for his forgiveness, and we should forgive one another.
6. Answers will vary but may include times when we are feeling especially guilty and remorseful for what we have done.
7. Answers will vary but may include times when we feel like we are unable to forgive ourselves or when we don't feel we need to be forgiven for a particular action.

8. It is often hard for us to forget our own sins because we are so ashamed. It is hard to forget when the offense against us is especially hurtful or we have a tendency to want to hold a grudge against someone .

9. It is good to know that our sins will never separate us from God and we will always have peace with God because of Jesus' death of the cross.

### Living Forgiven

1. **Read Romans 6:1-14.** We should walk in newness of life with Christ, fully connected to him.

2. We should live our lives dedicated to the will of God in Christ Jesus.
3. Sin has no dominion over us because it was drowned in our baptized and defeated by Christ on the cross.

#### Don't Throw Stones

1. **Read John 8:2-11.** Our pride makes it easier for us to see the faults in others more readily because we don't like to admit faults in ourselves.
2. He makes them realize that they are just as guilty of wrongdoing under the Law as this woman caught in adultery.
3. Jesus tells the accused that he does not condemn her but to go and sin no more.
4. "Stones" we throw at others are insults, scowling faces, mean-spirited gossip and rude behaviors.
5. We should give them unconditional love, support and forgiveness.

READ: Read the Psalm responsively.

#### **DON'T THROW STONES**

1. **Read John 8:2-11.** Why are we often so quick to judge the sins of others and not own up to our own sins?
2. What does Jesus make the accusers realize?
3. What message does Jesus have for the accused?
4. What are the "stones" we often want to throw?
5. What should we give to sinners instead?

#### **RESPONSIVE READING—PSALM 51:1-6**

**L** *Have mercy on me, O God,*  
**C** **according to your steadfast love;**

**L** *according to your abundant mercy*  
**C** **blot out my transgressions.**

**L** *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,*  
**C** **and cleanse me from my sin!**

**L** *For I know my transgressions,*  
**C** **and my sin is ever before me.**

**L** *Against you, you only, have I sinned*  
**C** **and done what is evil in your sight,**

**L** *so that you may be justified in your words*  
**C** **and blameless in your judgment.**

**L** *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,*  
**C** **and in sin did my mother conceive me.**

**L** *Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,*  
**C** **and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

**HYMN**

**Jesus Sinners Doth Receive**

Jesus sinners doth receive;  
Oh, may all this saying ponder  
Who in sin's delusions live  
And from God and heaven wander.  
Here is hope for all who grieve:  
Jesus sinners doth receive.

We deserve but grief and shame,  
Yet his words, rich grace revealing,  
Pardon, peace and life proclaim;  
Here their ills have perfect healing  
Who with humble hearts believe:  
Jesus sinners doth receive.

Oh, how blest is it to know,  
Were as scarlet my transgression,  
It shall be as white as snow  
By your blood and bitter passion,  
For these words I do believe:  
Jesus sinners doth receive.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

We remember this Lent that we do not deserve your forgiveness, so we should never take it for granted. Let us live in constant gratitude for your goodness to us in ridding us of our sins forever. Renew us day after day through your absolution. Let us cultivate a forgiving environment in our homes and have a forgiving approach toward all. Amen.

**FOLLOW IN FORGIVENESS**

See how often you can forgive others this week.

*“Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to [Peter], “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.” Matthew 18:21-22*

**SING:** Sing (or speak) the hymn in unison.

**PRAY:** Pray aloud, or have someone read aloud, the Closing Prayer.

**FOLLOW IN FORGIVENESS:** Encourage participants to forgive others often this week, as Christ has forgiven them over and over.



# SAVIOR SERVANT FRIEND

The Leader's Guide for this Bible study for Lent guides us to the cross of Christ. In-depth Scripture readings draw participants to the forgiveness, hope, love, peace, trust and perseverance found at Calvary. Study and discussion questions, prayers and reflections help to give a better understanding of the richness of Christ's sacrifice. This large-format Leader's Guide includes all answers, helpful notes and session directions.

