



CHAPTER SUMMARY

WEEKLY WIN

Participants understand that only Jesus offers himself as the solution to our need for forgiveness, that he is the exclusive means of reconciliation with God.

BOTTOM LINES

- Experiencing personal forgiveness for personal sin is often the starting point for personal faith.
- In all of history, only Jesus offered himself as the answer to the question of what to do when we can't forgive ourselves.
- You don't have to forgive yourself; yourself has already been forgiven.

BEFORE THE MEETING

PRAY

Keep praying for your group members individually. Pray that they will see Jesus for who he truly is—their Savior.

LEADER DEBRIEF

Address the following:

- Evaluate the previous meeting with your co-leaders.
- Decide who will facilitate each part of the discussion for the next week.
- Clarify which leader will follow up with any group members who need individual attention.
- Ask yourselves, "Are group members experiencing a *conversational* environment where they can explore faith and experience community?"

CONTACT GROUP MEMBERS

Contact your group members individually by email, phone, text, or a by sending a note. Remind those who are sharing stories this week to come prepared.

You can use the email template provided for Session Five at startingpoint.com/leaders.

DISCUSS SECTION ONE: FINDING FORGIVENESS

SECTION WIN

Participants understand that personal Christian faith begins with recognizing our need for forgiveness of personal sin.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: What do you wish you could do over?

This discussion allows participants to share personal examples of regret or wanting to do parts of their lives over. Talking about bad decisions or seasons of life we are not proud of is difficult. Be prepared to go first.

Question 2: Do you resonate with the idea that you need to forgive yourself? Why or why not?

For some participants, the biggest barrier to faith isn't intellectual. It's an inability to accept God's forgiveness because they cannot forgive themselves. This discussion gives you the opportunity to address this— especially if this was part of your own journey to faith.

DISCUSS SECTION TWO: MESSIAH

SECTION WIN

Participants understand that Jesus's core mission was to be “the sacrifice for our sin.”

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: Why is the title “Lamb of God” significant?

The title “Lamb of God” requires context from ancient Jewish tradition. You may need to review the historical context from the reading and podcast content.

Question 2: What have you been told about how Jesus is connected to forgiveness?

This question helps reveal if participants have connected why Jesus was a necessary sacrifice for sin. Whether or not they decide to believe it, we want them to be clear about who Jesus claimed to be and why his death was necessary.

Question 3: What does Jesus's willingness to carry away the sin of the world say about him?

This question gives participants the opportunity to compare their previous view of Jesus with the one who loves them enough to pay the penalty for their sin.

DISCUSS SECTION THREE: ONLY ONE PERSON

SECTION WIN

Participants understand that Jesus's sacrificial death is the gift God offers us as the permanent solution for our sin. There is nothing we need to do other than receive this gift.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

Question 1: How do you feel about the idea that your sin has already been “canceled”?

God forgiving your sins is appealing, but it may be hard for some participants to embrace this because it may seem too easy. If participants do not believe it, you can still ask, “What difference do you think it would make in your life if you believed that all of your sins were forgiven?”

Question 2: What could make it difficult to receive God’s gift of forgiveness?

This question is an opportunity for participants to articulate their roadblocks to faith. It can also be an opportunity for them to share their feelings about living with the reality that they are forgiven.

Question 3: How do you think forgiveness from God can help you find healing from your past?

This question brings the conversation to a more personal level as participants discuss how knowing they are forgiven and loved by God can make a practical difference in how they deal with feelings of guilt and shame.

**If you watch the Week Five video, you can refer to the picture of “mental memorials” presented at the end. This explains how memories that once brought feelings of guilt and shame can be transformed into reminders of the love, forgiveness, and grace of God.*

WRAP-UP

REVIEW THE BOTTOM LINES

- Experiencing personal forgiveness for personal sin is often the starting point for personal faith.
- In all of history, only Jesus offered himself as the answer to the question of what to do when we can’t forgive ourselves.
- You don’t have to forgive yourself; yourself has already been forgiven.

PREP FOR NEXT WEEK

- Read Chapter Six in the Conversation Guide and complete the questions.
- Listen to Episode Six of the Starting Point podcast which can be found on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or startingpoint.com/podcast.

STORIES

If you still have group members that have not shared their stories, ask for volunteers to share in your next group meeting.

PRAYER

It may be the right time to ask your group members if they have specific prayer requests to share. As you close in prayer, remember that you are modeling prayer for your group.