



## WEEK SIX: THE EVALUATION PRINCIPLE

### CONNECT

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This week we begin a new series called Hope Changes Everything! In this eight-week series, we'll look at the principles Jesus gave us in the beatitudes that help us see the hope and freedom we find in God alone. This week, we look at the **Evaluation Principle**, the place of forgiveness and grace in our lives!

- What do you like or dislike about shopping (clothes, cars, etc.)?
- Have you ever put something together (like a puzzle) only to get toward the end and discover you had a part missing? What emotions did you feel?

### DISCOVER

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#### Read Matthew 5:7

*God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy*

#### Read Matthew 5:9

*God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God*

#### Read Genesis 50:15-21

<sup>15</sup>But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said.

<sup>16</sup>So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us <sup>17</sup>to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So, we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

<sup>19</sup>But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? <sup>20</sup>You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. <sup>21</sup>No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So, he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

- How can we practically show mercy to someone? How do we receive mercy? Is our application of the word different when we apply it to ourselves?

- What is the same, and what is different about those who seek mercy and peace?
- Is Matthew 5:9 saying that we have to "work" to become "children of God"? Why or why not?
- What does Jesus mean by "Work for peace"? How do we apply that do those who hurt us, or to those we have hurt?
- Why do you think Joseph "broke down and wept" when he received the message from his brothers?

## **GROW**

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**Big Idea: Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others when possible, except when to do so would harm them or others (Steps 8 and 9)**

### **Matthew 5:23-24**

<sup>23</sup>"So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

### **Read Luke 6:31**

*Do to others as you would like them to do to you.*

### **Read Matthew 6:12 - From the Lord's Prayer**

*"...and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us."*

### **Read Psalm 43:5**

*Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again - my Savior and my God!*

- Is it more difficult for you to forgive or for you to receive forgiveness? Why do you think that is?
- Have you ever felt left out of something you wanted to be part of? How did you feel? How long did the feelings stay with you? Have you intentionally left someone out of something out of spite? What was the result?
- If someone has something against us, why must we leave our own sacrifice and go be reconciled with that person? What if they're just an unreasonable person?
- Why are there times that it is important not go to someone to seek forgiveness or to make amends? What do we need to do then?
- Is praising God an instant fix for sadness? Why or why not? Why must we put our hope in Him?

## **NEXT STEPS**

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- Take some time this week and learn more about making amends: Watch the **Amends Video** at [www.palmvalley.org/amends](http://www.palmvalley.org/amends)
- If you struggle with any Hurts, Habits, or Hang-Ups, come try out Celebrate Recovery on Monday nights at 6:30, at the Goodyear Campus, 431 N Litchfield Rd, Goodyear, 85338.  
[www.palmvalley.org/celebraterecovery](http://www.palmvalley.org/celebraterecovery)