



Throughout our lives, circumstances and people can hurt or disadvantage us. We can feel that we are the victims in our difficult situations. But if we look at these struggles from the right vantage point, they can become powerful tools in God's hands to shape us into overcomers. In this series, we're going to gain insight into how we can move from being victims to overcomers as we look at how God's plan unfolds in the life of Joseph.

**Week Six:** Revenge or Reconciliation

**Text:** Genesis 42-45:15

We are all wired with a deep need for justice. When applied to situations where we have personally been wronged this means we have strong desire for revenge against those who have hurt us. When we have wronged others, on the other hand, we hope for forgiveness. How do you move away from revenge and toward reconciliation? It's not easy. Reconciliation requires two difficult things: repentance and forgiveness. Joseph's story shows us that repentance means changing your mind AND your life, taking responsibility, making restitution, and committing not to repeat the offense. We also see that forgiveness is possible when we focus on what God is doing through us rather than what others have done to us.

**Discussion Questions:** These three larger questions will drive our discussion:

1. What did the Holy Spirit say to you through Sunday's sermon and the associated passage?
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. How can others in the group help you and pray for you so you can do what God told you to do?

### **What did the Holy Spirit say to you through the sermon?**

- Which is more difficult, revenge or reconciliation? Why?
- Share a time when you experienced revenge (either dishing it out or receiving it), and a time when you experienced reconciliation.
- What were the two tests that Joseph gave his brothers, and how can you tell they were truly repentant for what they did to him? (See Genesis 43:32-44:34)
- Make a list of all the reasons Joseph had to take revenge on his brothers. What changed his heart from bitterness to forgiveness? (See Genesis 45:4-8)

### **What are you going to do about it?**

- What does true repentance involve?
- Pondering the promise of Romans 8:28, what is the most important vantage point to process the sins others have committed against us?
- Is there a relationship in your life where you think God wants you to repent or to forgive? Describe it.

### **How can others in this group help you or pray for you?**

- Joseph said, "God sent me ahead of you to...save your lives by a great deliverance." What is the greatest deliverance that God has performed to save us? (See Romans 5:8; John 3:16; Romans 4:25-5:1-3) Have you repented of your sin, accepted the gift of forgiveness, and become reconciled to God? Share your story with the group.
- Is this the time for you to become reconciled to God? Ask your group to pray with you.

### **Possible Application:**

- Join in HCBC's [24 hours of prayer](#) for Unity starting this Sunday night: November 29.