

Study Series: Detours

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Lesson Title: “Their Pardon and Pleasure” (pp. 57-69)

Session 5

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The main point of this lesson is: Forgiveness plays a key role in negotiating God’s detours.

Focus on this goal:To help adults forgive those who may have played a part in setting them on their detours

Key Bible Passage: Genesis 41:50-52; 42:14-17; 45:1-15

To the Leader: Remember to retain and display from Session 1 the map and poster you began.

Before the Session

Bring a recycled, upcycled, or restored item from your home. (Step 7)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Briefly recall a time you took a traffic detour due to someone else’s traffic problem. (For example, perhaps there was a wreck or construction.) Mention how it affected your timeliness to your destination as well as your attitude and focus (perhaps for the rest of the day?).

Say: The most frustrating part is this: It wasn’t even my fault!

Stress that the accident or road repair was responsible for your detour. If the event occurred on the roadways within the area of your map, point out its location.

Then say: We’ve all been there; a detour caused by someone else. Today we need to consider the role forgiveness plays in negotiating that detour.

Step 2. The Pardon of Detours, Part 1

Invite all learners to review Day One content (pp. 57-59) privately, instructing them to underline any word or phrase that gives a new insight or definition to the word *forgiveness*.

Invite volunteers to read a few of the phrases they underlined and comment on them as desired.

Write forgiveness on the key word poster you’ve been using for this study.

Point to the map and observe: Forgiveness requires that we look back. We can’t ignore what we’ve come through or the detours we’ve taken; we must see them clearly and allow the Spirit to show us where unforgiveness is keeping us in a detour.

Ask: Against whom would Joseph have had a cause to be unforgiving?

Step 3. The Pardon of Detours, Part 2

Under “forgiveness” write, unilateral.

Using comments from Day Two (p. 59-61), discuss the elements of unilateral forgiveness.

Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 6:14-15.

Point to the fact that our relationship with God is dependent upon our willingness to forgive others.

Invite a volunteer to read Acts 7:54-60.

Say: Stephen was “full of the Holy Spirit,” (v. 55) and with his final words chose to forgive the people who were actively stoning him.

As a group, consider the impact that forgiveness has on the forgiver.

Read the paragraph (p. 61) that begins, “I want to tell you one very important thing about forgiveness.”

Step 4. The Pleasure of Detours, Part 1

Add transactional under “forgiveness” on the key word poster.

Using comments from Day Three (pp. 61-63), discuss the elements of transactional forgiveness.

Summarize the tests that Joseph applied to his brothers in Genesis 42 and 44.

Point out that we must be patient and Spirit-led as we observe others in testing to see that their desire for reconciliation is genuine; simply saying, “I’m sorry” does not indicate spiritual maturity nor does it equal true repentance.

Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 45:1-15.

Read the last three paragraphs from Day Three (p. 62-63), pointing out that we, as forgivers, must show love and mercy as we work toward forgiving others.

Step 5. The Pleasure of Detours, Part 2

Direct attention to the first two paragraphs of Day Four (p. 63-64). Ask learners to react to the content of those paragraphs.

Say: Forgiveness is not something we do quickly or lightly; sometimes we feel we forgive over and over*.*

Share a time in your life in which forgiving has been (or still is) an arduous process. If applicable, share how time and the ability to see God’s hand in that situation has given you grace and mercy.

State: Transactional forgiveness requires that the offending party be truly repentant and requires that the forgiving party be truly willing to forgive. It’s not easy.

Help learners understand that God’s Word is integral for finding the courage to fully forgive.

Invite volunteers to share some passages that give strength and mercy in forgiveness.

Step 6. The Pleasure of Detours, Part 3

Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 41:50-52.

Using the comments from Day Five (p. 65-67), point out how Joseph’s sons’ names reveal the forgiveness and healing that had taken place in his heart.

Say: Not only does God help us forget the pain of the past, He also makes us fruitful even in the midst of our detours.

Encourage a few volunteers to share their own Manasseh- or Ephraim-like reminders (activity 2, p. 67) and how God’s providence allows them to view their detours differently through these blessings.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read the last two paragraphs of Day Five (p. 67).

Display the recycled, upcycled, or restored item you brought from home. Identify what it is or was as necessary.

Say: This could have been thrown away, or it could have been made beautiful(or functional)*.* Because it was recycled/refurbished, today it is beautiful(or functional or both)*.*

Point out that God uses our detours, our scars, our hard times, and our heartbreak in order to be His masterpiece; read Ephesians 2:10.

Close in prayer.

