



## Session 3: Going Back in Order to Go Forward

How did the family you grew up in do conflict and how did that impact you?

### Discussion:

Two Essential Biblical Truths:

1. *The blessings and sins of our families going back two or three generations profoundly impact who we are today.*
2. *Discipleship requires putting off the sinful patterns of our family of origin and relearning how to do life in God's family.*

What concerns or fears might you have in looking back at your family of origin to discern unhealthy patterns and themes?

### Bible Study:

1. Imagine yourself in Joseph's shoes sitting in a prison cell without any hope of freedom. What thoughts, feelings or doubts might you have about your family? About yourself? About God?

Read Genesis 50:15-21.

2. What assumptions are the brothers making about Joseph?
3. Why do you think Joseph weeps?
4. Joseph chooses to break the normal way his family deals with hurt feelings and conflict by forgiving his brothers. How might you have responded if you were in Joseph's position?
5. Carefully consider the aspects of Joseph's response to the enormous losses he experienced: "*Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good.*" As you think about your own life story and view of God, which one of these statements speak the most to you, and why?

### Application:

1. List the life messages you received from each of your parents or caretakers.
2. List any "earthquake" events that sent "aftershocks" into your extended family.
3. Review these and summarize what messages about life/yourself/others you internalized.
4. How do those messages compare with the messages below that reflect who you are in the family of Jesus?
  - *It is good that you exist.*
  - *You are lovable.*
  - *You are good enough.*
  - *You are a joy.*
  - *You have nothing left to prove.*
  - *Your needs are a delight.*
  - *You are allowed to make mistakes.*
5. What might be one specific message from your family of origin that God has revealed to you today that you want to change as part of your "hard work of discipleship"?