

# FORWARD ▶▶

## Leader Conversation Guide – Forward: Part III

### Main Idea

This week Pastor Curt continued our message series **Forward** and unpacked what it looks like to break bad patterns in our life. Have you ever thought about how your life is just a culmination of patterns? Many of us could wake up, get to the coffee pot, and make a cup of coffee with our eyes closed. Because we've routinely done it so many times, it's become a pattern! Not all patterns are bad, but some patterns can lead to destruction. We want to identify the *destructive patterns* that have become our default responses. In Luke 17:1 (HCSB), Jesus says "Offenses will certainly come.." What does **your** pattern look like when they do? PC presented us with 3 patterns **not** to have, and 4 patterns **to** have in response to offenses.

**"Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you, for as it springs up it causes deep trouble, hurting many in their spiritual lives."**

Hebrews 12:15 TLB

### Make it Practical: 3 Patterns not to have.

- **The "blow up"**. Read Romans 12:19. The "blow up" is a defense mechanism that we use to cover up other emotional hurt. There is a better way to live than blowing up every time you're offended.
- **The "guess what"**. Read Proverbs 16:28, Matt 18:15. Sounds a lot like 'gossip' doesn't it? How many times has someone approached you in conversation and their first words were, "guess what?" Don't take part in the guessing, find out the truth!
- **The "so what"**. Read Jeremiah 6:4 (MSG), Hebrews 12:15. Don't stuff it down! We are not supposed to ignore it. Taking the offense and pushing it aside may temporarily "feel better", but it only hurts us more in the long run.

### 4 Patterns to have.

- **Realize it affects my relationship with God.** Read Luke 6:37-38 (GNB). If you want to use a teaspoon of grace for someone, be careful, God has a teaspoon as well.

- **Acknowledge my hurts.** Read Psalm 39:2-3 (NCV), James 5:16. When we just push a hurt down, we eventually end up bringing it back up and continue chewing on it. Acknowledge your hurts in a healthy way. As seen in James 5, we find healing by acknowledging and confessing our sins and praying with each other.
- **Pray.** Read Matt 5:43-44, Ephesians 4:26-27. How do you keep anger from controlling you? Love your enemies. Pray for those that persecute you. It's hard to keep an offended heart when you're praying for that person.
- **Deal with the root.** Read Acts 8:23, Acts 3:19. What is the main root for most of our offenses? Rejection. Somewhere, by someone, on someday, you felt rejected. When we fail to address the rejection in our lives, we get trapped in 'blowing up', 'guessing what', or living life in the 'so what'. Expose the roots, and ask yourself 'Is it worth holding on to that offense?' Give that rejection to the Lord, and move **forward** in Him.

**"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."**

Acts 3:19 NIV

### Talk About It

- How do you typically respond when you get angry or offended? What is your default pattern?
- Talk about a time when you handled an offense God's way by praying for that person. How did it change the way you acted and felt toward the person who offended you?

### Prayer

Father, thank You for giving Your Son to die on the cross so that we could be forgiven. We recognize that because You forgave us, we need to extend that forgiveness and grace to those who have offended us. Help us to truly forgive and release those who have hurt us. Heal our hearts of any bitterness or pain we still carry from what we've experienced. Thank You for making it possible for us to be free from the chains of those offenses. In Jesus' name, amen.

### Leader Tip

Invite Group members to join us during 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting. "21 Days" will take place January 15 – February 4, 2023.

You can view our prayer and fasting guides at [victorychurch.org/resources/21-days/](http://victorychurch.org/resources/21-days/)