

Going back in order to go forward

Read: Genesis 50:15 -21

- 1) Imagine yourself in Joseph's shoes sitting in prison without any hope of freedom. What thoughts, feelings, or doubts might you have about your family? About yourself? About God?
- 2) What assumptions are the brothers making about Joseph in verse 15?
- 3) Why do you think Joseph weeps vs. 17?
- 4) Joseph chooses to break the normal way he's family deals with hurt feelings and conflict by forgiving his brothers. How might you have responded if you were in Joseph's position? (Be sure to honestly put yourself in Joseph's shoes).
- 5) slowly, reread verses 19 -21. here we see Joseph's response to the enormous losses he experienced in his life. Carefully consider the different aspects of this response noted below. As you think about your own life story, which one speaks the most to you and why?
 - Don't be afraid
 - Am I in the place of God?
 - You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good.
- 6) Our lives are strongly influenced by our carers - mom and dad and life events. Which messages about life did you receive from:

Dad

Mum

Earthquake events in family history

- 7) Share with the group the messages you received. How do these messages compare with the messages listed below that reflect who you are in the new 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.

- 8) 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" that needs to change?