

LISTENING TO THE LORD FOR FREEDOM

- Disappointments and Wounds -

This exercise is designed to be used as an extension of the Listening to the Lord core experience in a Lifegroup or Discipleship setting.

1. Select one of the scriptures to read together as a group.
2. The leader opens in prayer and then slowly reads aloud each prayer prompt, allowing time between questions for group members to journal their conversation with God.
3. Discuss altogether or in small groups.

DISAPPOINTMENT

In times of disappointment and loss, our spiritual enemy seeks to distance us from God. We may begin to believe the enemy's lies about God's character and agree with his accusations that God's neglect or misjudgment is the reason for our pain. These lies and accusations can turn life's disappointments into disappointment in God, causing us to withdraw from him. **When we surrender these disappointments to God, we can draw near to him and receive his comfort and his peace in the places of our sorrow and frustration.**

Scripture (choose one)

- Psalm 73:24-26
- Philippians 4:7
- John 16:33

Prayer Prompts:

- Father, will you show me the areas in my life where I may feel disappointed? (family, work, circumstances, loss, etc.)
- God, have I held any of these disappointments against you in my heart?
- God, what is true about you and your heart toward me in these disappointments?
- *If appropriate:* God, I release my anger and frustration with you, and I'm sorry for holding these things against you. Will you forgive me?
- God, is there anything you would like to give me or show me to help me walk through life's disappointments?

Helping kids pray through disappointment

- Tell Jesus what is making you sad or frustrated.
- Ask Jesus how he feels about it.
- Ask Jesus what he has been doing about it.
- Ask Jesus if there is anything else he wants you to know about it.



WOUNDING

Being hurt by others can impact how we feel about ourselves, how we view the world, and what we believe about God. We may respond to the hurt by choosing ungodly ways to either avoid being hurt again or to numb or cope with the pain. Jesus responded to offense with mercy and forgiveness, and he empowers us to do the same. Forgiveness is not dismissing what happened or giving a free pass to the offender to continue to cause harm. Forgiveness is a necessary step in releasing us from the pain of a wound. **When we forgive, we acknowledge the pain and consequences, and we trust God to deal with the offender.**

Scripture (choose one)

- Matthew 18:21-22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-15

Prayer Prompts:

- Jesus, do I have any wounds from others that need your attention? Will you bring one to mind that needs to be forgiven?
- Will you help me list the wrongs that were done to me and the expectations that were neglected?
- Jesus, I hand this list of hurts over to you. What will you do with this list?
- Jesus, thank you for your gift of forgiveness. Today, I choose to unburden my heart and forgive this person for the things on this list.
- Jesus, what will you give me in exchange for this list?
- God, do you want to show me your perspective on this person?
- God, have I responded to the pain from this wound in any sinful or harmful ways?
- God, I confess this sin and choose to turn away from it. Will you forgive me?
- What do you want me to turn toward instead?

Helping kids pray when others have hurt them

- What happened? How did it make you feel?
- Do you want to give that hurt to Jesus so he can help your heart feel better?
- Jesus, I choose to give this hurt to you. And I forgive this person for these things.
- Jesus, will you give me something to make my heart feel better?