



GOD WANTS THE SEAT NEXT TO YOU
KEY SCRIPTURE | Genesis 18:20–33

SUNDAY, JULY 28, 2019

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Humans can be pretty vindictive. We want the guy who cut us off at 90 mph on the freeway to get a ticket. We want the politician to lose the election. We want the lady who got our promotion to fail in her new position. We want the murderer to get a life sentence. And we tend to think God is the same way—wanting just punishment and payment for every misstep. But this story about Abraham and God suggests God isn't like that.

Over and over, Abraham challenges God's resolution to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. And over and over, God concedes, agreeing that if He can find righteous people in the city, He will not destroy it.

It seems odd, doesn't it? But maybe God isn't out to punish every misstep like we are. It seems God's heart is proximity, not penalty. 2 Peter 3:9 says, "God is patient, because He wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost." He pursues relationship with us, giving us every opportunity to turn toward Him. And we should treat other people with that same love and compassion, wanting to see them restored to relationship with God. That's what matters most.

QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of a time you hoped someone would get what they had coming? What happened? How did you feel about it afterward? Share with the group.
2. Think back to Sunday's message. What do you remember? Review your notes if you have them. Talk with your group about anything you found memorable or confusing.
3. Read Genesis 18:20–33. If you were already familiar with this story, does Sunday's message change how you read it? How?
4. How do you define forgiveness? Do you think that's how God views it?
5. Is fear that God is angry with you affecting you in any way today? What will you do about it?
6. God's heart is proximity, not penalty. Are you living out this vision of God in your interactions with others? What does it look like? If you're not, what could it look like?
7. What's your biggest takeaway from Sunday's message and today's discussion?

CHALLENGE

Every day this week, read 1 John 1:9. Confess anything that needs to be confessed, receive God's forgiveness, and move forward.

