



Movies at The Cove

Part 1 – I Can Only Imagine

Discussion Guide

I Can Only Imagine is based on a true story about how God transformed a father and son's relationship. It shows how God can help us forgive others and restore us, no matter what we have been through.

Jump Start

Leader: This section is designed to get discussions started, examine God's truth and apply it to our week.

1. Are you someone who is quick to forgive or slow to trust again?
2. **Read [Philippians 3:12-14](#)**. What is Paul focusing on in this passage? Do you dwell on pain or do you trust God for what's possible after the pain? How can you focus on finishing the race when you are going through or have been through pain?
3. **Read [Matthew 6:14-15](#) and [Luke 23:34](#)**. Why should we forgive others? How did Jesus forgive those who have wronged Him? How do you begin to forgive? How do you let go of the memories that continue to cause you pain?
4. **Read [Ephesians 4:32](#)**. After Bart's dad was diagnosed with cancer, he realized it was easier to forgive him. Is forgiveness a choice? Who do you need to begin praying for and choosing to forgive? Bart was able to see God work to change his dad from a monster to one of the Godliest men he knew. What is something God can change about you?

Side Note: Forgiveness isn't always the first step. If you or someone in your group is in a situation like Bart was the first step would be to receive help. Safe Alliance is a resource in our community that is equipped with helping anyone dealing with abuse. They provide compassion, care and resources through their 24/7 hotline at 980-771-HOPE(4673).

5. Final Thought: **Read [Luke 23:33-34](#)** What does authentic forgiveness look like to you? Why is it best for us (as the victim/hurt one) to forgive?

Deeper

Leader: This section is designed for further use in your Life Group or for personal study. These can also be used as discussion points and ways to stay connected with your group throughout the week.

Forgiveness is a hot topic. We know what the Bible says, but we struggle with it. Those who have experienced trauma at the hands of others, understandably, struggle with this word. We do not want to imply what happens to us in any way is okay. We don't want to excuse our perpetrator's behavior. We often feel the ones that have hurt us are not deserving of forgiveness.

But what does the Bible say? And can God help us overcome those feelings?

6. **Read [Matthew 18:21-35](#)** “For me, forgiveness is about healing, processing, and accepting the reality of what happened. It's about getting to a point where it no longer consumes your thoughts or ability to thrive. It has nothing to do with the abuser, and everything to do with your personal health. Forgiveness is a process, not a single moment in time.” (Ashley Easter, The Courage Conference) Have you ever “forgiven” someone, just to have bitterness spring up again? Is there a difference in forgiving and forgetting?
7. **Read [Colossians 3:12-15](#)** Remember our ability to forgive is not only from our own power. According to Paul, what must we “put on” in order to forgive? When it is time to forgive, do you look at your own heart and character first or do you focus on the transgression at hand? When you line up your life with this passage, what may be preventing you from fully forgiving?
8. Bart is able to see God work to change his dad from a monster to one of the Godliest men he knew. Have you ever felt undervalued as Bart did by his dad? Or you are good at something and no one else sees it? Bart finally went away from his dad to do what God had called him to do. **Read [Colossians 3:23-25](#)**. During their time apart God transformed Bart's dad. God can transform us all. What is something God can transform in you?