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PART 2: PROBLEM

Any conversation about faith will eventually have to face one very important question: What's wrong with the world? And every faith tradition has some kind of explanation to offer. Even people who don't claim any sort of religious belief would usually agree that the world is not as good as we want it to be. And, if we're honest, we are not as good as we want to be. So, what do we do about the tension we feel when there's a gap between our behavior and our standards? And how does God respond when we fail to meet his standards?

CONNECT

1. Do you find it easier to find faults in yourself or in others? Why do you think that is?
2. What do you think makes people uncomfortable with the word "sin"?

DISCUSS THE PODCAST EPISODE

1. In the podcast, Andy says there's a problem with using the term "mistake" to describe all of our less-than-perfect decisions and behaviors. Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Do you resist being called a sinner? Why or why not?
3. In the podcast, Andy says Jesus's ultimate goal in talking about sin wasn't condemnation, but restoration. How does that match up with your understanding of Jesus?

LEARN

Watch the short video.

APPLY

After giving your group members an opportunity to share what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. What does Jesus's response to the criminal say about the forgiveness God offers us?
2. What, if anything, stands out to you about Jesus's interactions with the woman?
3. Have you ever wondered if you were somehow beyond God's ability to forgive? How do Jesus's interactions with these two individuals affect that view?



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BEFORE NEXT TIME

Jesus came to restore the brokenness that sin created in our relationship with God and our relationships with others. Jesus isn't put off by your sin. He's ready to offer forgiveness and restore God's relationship with you. But the path to restoration and redemption can't begin until we acknowledge our sin.

Be sure to listen to the "Trust" episode of *The Starting Point Podcast*.

PRAY

Take some time to pray as a group, thanking God for the restoration he offers. The next time you feel drawn to old habits and condemned because of your failings, remember that Jesus's forgiveness is available. Ask him to change your thoughts and emotions to reflect the security and redemption you have in his love.

