

# THE GOSPEL AND UNFORGIVENESS

SERMON STUDY - 5.18.2025

## Leader Corner

The Gospel and Unforgiveness

Matthew 18:21-25

Forgiveness is great when someone else is at fault. Ever wonder why it's so hard for some to ask for forgiveness? Better yet, ever have a time where you knew you were wrong, but just still couldn't come around to owning up to it? Or rather, when we are hurt by someone else, or feel like they owe us something, we are very stingy with grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

So what do we do with our humanity and sin filled approaches? The good news about forgiveness is that Jesus has the corner market on this. He exemplified real forgiveness and then encourages us to do the same.

**Main Idea:** The Gospel and Unforgiveness

**Main Teaching:** Matthew 18:21-25

## Connect with Prayer & Praise

### Opening Prayer

*"Father God, thank You for the mercy You show us every day. As we open Your Word, soften our hearts and help us understand the weight of Your forgiveness. Teach us to reflect Your grace to others, especially when it's hard. Come, Holy Spirit, and move in our hearts as we study. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

### Worship Song

*"Forgiveness" by Matthew West (Optional: Play the song and invite reflection. Lyrics can also be read aloud if listening isn't possible.)*

### Discussion Prompt

What line or lyric from the song resonated with you most, and why?

## with Principle

1. How did you receive the Sunday sermon? What scriptures, phrases, or thoughts expanded your understanding of the Gospel or of Jesus?
2. Read Matthew 18:21–25 aloud together. Ask one person to read or divide among group members.
3. What do you think Peter was expecting when he asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone?
  - Why do you think Jesus responded with such a large number (seventy-seven times)?
4. In the parable, what does the king's forgiveness represent?
  - How is this like what God has done for us through the Gospel?
5. Why do you think the servant who was forgiven refused to forgive his fellow servant?
  - What does this reveal about how deeply he understood (or didn't understand) his own forgiveness?
6. What does this parable teach us about the relationship between receiving grace and giving grace?
  - How might withholding forgiveness block us from fully experiencing the Gospel?
7. Is there someone in your life you are struggling to forgive? (This can be rhetorical or shared if the group is open.)

## with Practice

### "The Forgiveness List"

**Supplies:** Paper and pen for each person

**Instructions:**

-Take 5-10 minutes of silence. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anyone you may need to forgive or from whom you need to seek forgiveness.

-Write down their names privately.

-Pray over the list. Ask God for the grace to release bitterness and extend mercy as you have received it.

-(Optional, for the bold or willing) Share with the group one thing God stirred in your heart.

-Tear up or fold the list, symbolizing your willingness to surrender that unforgiveness to God.

## for Further Study

The Gospel is not just about receiving forgiveness—it's about becoming a vessel of that forgiveness to others. Forgiveness is not easy, but when we live in light of the cross, we remember how deeply we've been forgiven, and it changes how we treat others.

## Closing Prayer

*"Jesus, You paid a debt we could never repay. Help us to live in the freedom of Your grace by offering that same grace to others. Teach us to forgive as You forgave us—fully, freely, and forever. In Your name, Amen."*