

Sermon Discussion Questions

Speaker: Dr. Stephen Burrell

Topic: Forgiveness

Scriptures - Matthew 6:12–15; Mark 11:25–26

Opening:

Open your time in prayer by thanking God for His grace toward us, asking for honest hearts as you discuss the topic of forgiveness, and inviting the Spirit to help your group understand both the seriousness of sin and the freedom found in extending grace to others.

Give Background & Context:

Every person carries wounds from others—betrayal, rejection, anger, and deep relational pain. Forgiveness is one of the hardest commands Jesus gives, yet it lies at the center of the Christian life. In teaching on prayer, Jesus links our experience of God’s forgiveness with our willingness to forgive others. Forgiveness does not erase justice or consequences, but it releases personal vengeance and entrusts justice to God.

- Read Matthew 6:12
 - Jesus teaches us to pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” What connection does Jesus make between receiving forgiveness and extending it?
 - Why is it important to recognize our own guilt before God before we can truly forgive others? (See Romans 3:23.)
 - In Luke 7:36–47, Jesus says the one who is forgiven much loves much. How does remembering God’s grace toward us shape the way we treat people who hurt us? What practices help you stay aware of the grace you have received from God?
- Read Matthew 6:14–15
 - What do these verses teach about the seriousness of forgiving others?
 - The sermon explained the difference between judicial forgiveness (our justification before God) and relational forgiveness (our daily fellowship with Him). How does that help us understand Jesus’ warning here?
 - Why do you think forgiveness is so difficult even for believers?
 - How does releasing personal vengeance and trusting God with justice change the way we handle conflict? (See Romans 12:19.)
 - How does trusting God’s faithfulness change the pressure we feel?
- Read Mark 11:25–26
 - The sermon defined forgiveness as releasing resentment and letting go of personal vengeance. How is that different from pretending the offense never happened?
 - Why is forgiveness often more about a decision than a feeling?
 - The sermon emphasized that forgiveness does not eliminate justice, consequences, or boundaries. Why is this distinction important?
 - What steps might someone take toward forgiveness even when the pain is still real?
- Sermon Reflection Questions
 - The sermon emphasized that forgiveness grows out of recognizing our own need for grace. How does the gospel reshape our view of people who hurt us?
 - Forgiveness means trusting God with justice instead of carrying vengeance yourself. Why is that difficult, and what might help someone surrender that burden to God?
 - Is there a relationship or situation where God may be calling you to move toward forgiveness? What would the first step look like?