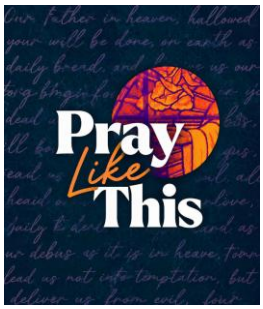
Pastor Jake Magee
November 15, 2026



Debts & Dangers
Matthew 6:12&13

9 “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread,
12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

The Prayers that Should Stop Us

The Mercy that Should Melt Us

The Love that Will Correct Us

The Table that Should Turn Us

Small Group Study Guide | Matthew 6:12-13

Getting Started – Look up some of the largest financial debts ever forgiven. Share your findings with the group.

The Big Idea – Jesus teaches us to ask our Father for forgiveness and protection from sin. As his children, we are secure in Christ, yet we still need to confess our sins and depend on his preserving grace. Remembering his mercy softens our hearts toward others, while his loving correction helps us take seriously the sins we are tempted to excuse.

Digging Deeper (*Read Matthew 6:9–15 and recite the Lord's Prayer together.*)

1. Look at verse 12. What sounds surprising or difficult about "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors," especially given what verses 14 and 15 go on to say?

2. Christians pray, "Our Father…forgive us our debts." In some ultimate way, Christians must already be forgiven even to say "Our Father." Explain that, along with *the other way* Christians should keep asking for forgiveness. What does this second kind of forgiveness do for a Christian?

3. Look at verse 13. **Before** the sermon on Sunday, how did you understand God leading us into temptation? Compare that understanding with what James 1:13–15 says.

4. God's mercy can restrain the sin on the inside from coming out. In the message, it was suggested that "leading into temptation" could mean lifting that restraint. "Leading" is "letting" you experience more of the pain of sin than you have to.

    - How does Pharaoh illustrate this (in the most extreme way) in the book of Exodus?
    - How do the examples of **ice** and **darkness** given in the message help explain what was happening to Pharaoh?
    - Reflect on the statement below from the Westminster Confession of Faith (5.5)* and talk about what we are asking for when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation."

    > "The most wise, righteous, and gracious God does oftentimes leave, for a season, his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their ongoing sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and, to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends."

5. Read Hebrews 12:5–11. What does God's discipline reveal about our relationship with him, and what does he intend it to produce? Without assuming every hardship is correction for a particular sin, think of situations where God can use painful consequences to humble a person and deepen their dependence on him.

6. The last two petitions may have something more in common than being next to each other. God “leading us into temptation” may be specifically tied to our “not forgiving our debtors.” How might this be true of Pharaoh? How was something like this true of the Corinthian church (see 1 Corinthians 11:17–22, 27–34)?

7. God’s heart is for us to move beyond releasing someone’s debt to actively seeking their good. Share with your group how God has been working in your heart through your prayers for others.

Close in Prayer

Thank your Father for the forgiveness and security you have in Christ. Ask him to expose the sins you excuse, soften your heart toward others, and keep you from temptation. Allow a quiet moment for personal confession. Then invite each person to share an area where they need God’s help, and have someone else in the group pray for them.

***The Westminster Confession of Faith is a summary of Christian beliefs written by Protestant church leaders in the 1600s.**