



The Lord's Prayer – Part 3: Forgive Our Debts, As We Forgive Our Debtors

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WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **Again And Again** (*Red Rocks Worship*)
- **Endless Praise** (*Charity Gayle*)
- **Who Else** (*Gateway Worship*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Matthew 6:12-15
- Matthew 18:21-35
- Romans 1:18
- Colossians 2:14
- Ephesians 1:7
- 1 John 1:9

OPENING PRAYER

Begin by praying The Lord's Prayer together, pausing to reflect on the phrase "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Ice Breaker (5-10 min)

Share a time when someone forgave you for something, or when you experienced the relief of being forgiven. How did that feel?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Every human being has a fundamental need to be forgiven by God

- Without Christ, we may try to leave the past in the past or view our actions as morally neutral
- God's wrath is revealed against godlessness and wickedness (Romans 1:18)
- True forgiveness comes only through Christ, who canceled our legal indebtedness at the cross

2. Jesus invites us to be like Him and forgive others

- Jesus forgave even those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34)
- We are called to forgive repeatedly and abundantly (70 times 7)
- The parable of the unforgiving servant illustrates the magnitude of God's forgiveness versus our debts to one another

3. God requires His children to forgive

- Our forgiveness of others is directly connected to experiencing God's forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15)
- Forgiveness is not optional for believers; it's a command rooted in how Christ forgave us

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (35-40 min)

Section 1: Our Need for Forgiveness (15 minutes)

1. Before coming to Christ, how did you view sin and forgiveness? What changed after accepting Christ?
2. Read Colossians 2:14. What does it mean that Jesus "canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness"? How does this truth impact your daily life?
3. Why do you think many people struggle to accept that they need forgiveness from God?

Section 2: Jesus's Example of Forgiveness (20 minutes)

4. Read Luke 23:34. What strikes you most about Jesus forgiving those who were actively crucifying Him?
5. In Matthew 18:21-35, Peter asks if forgiving seven times is enough. Why do you think Jesus responds with "seventy times seven"? What is He really teaching?

6. Discuss the parable of the unforgiving servant:
 - What is the difference between the debt owed to the king versus the debt owed by the fellow servant?
 - How does this parable help us understand our own forgiveness journey?
 - Why was the king so angry with the unforgiving servant?
7. Have you ever been in a situation where you received great mercy but struggled to show mercy to someone else? What made it difficult?

Section 3: The Requirement to Forgive (20 minutes)

8. Read Matthew 6:14-15 again. These are challenging verses. How do you interpret the connection between forgiving others and being forgiven by God?
9. What is the difference between:
 - Forgiving someone and trusting them again?
 - Forgiving someone and allowing continued abuse or harm?
 - Forgiving someone and reconciling with them?
10. 10. Read Ephesians 4:32. What does it mean to forgive "just as in Christ God forgave you"? What standard does this set?
11. Is there someone you are currently struggling to forgive? What is holding you back?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Personal Reflection

- Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal anyone you need to forgive
- Journal about the debt you owed God versus the debt's others owe you
- Meditate on Colossians 2:14 and thank God for canceling your debt

Option 2: Take Action

- Reach out to someone you need to forgive (if appropriate and safe)
- Write a letter of forgiveness (you may or may not send it)
- Have a conversation with someone you've been holding a grudge against

Option 3: Confession and Accountability

- Confess unforgiveness to a trusted Christian friend
- Ask them to pray with you and hold you accountable
- Set a specific plan for moving toward forgiveness

Closing Activity (10 Mins)

The Three Chairs Exercise (referenced in the sermon introduction):

Reflect silently on three areas:

1. Where you need to receive God's forgiveness
2. Where you need to extend forgiveness to others
3. Where you need to forgive yourself

Share one insight from this reflection with the group (only what you're comfortable sharing).

Closing Prayer

Pray together:

- Thank God for His complete forgiveness through Christ
- Ask for strength and grace to forgive those who have hurt you
- Pray for specific situations group members shared
- Ask God to make you more like Jesus in showing mercy