

The Lord's Prayer—Forgive Us Our Debts...

Study Questions

Matthew 6:12

Warm-up

1) Can you recall a time you were let off without penalty from something like a traffic stop or a credit-card fine? How did it happen?

Was there ever a time you were on the other side, forgiving someone else's penalty or fine?

A little deeper

2) [Matthew 6:12; Luke 18:9-14] We recognize our need for forgiveness when we ask for that forgiveness. Read Luke 18:9-14. **What are the differences between the prayers of the Pharisee and the tax collector? How do they seem to think about their relationships to God and to other people? How open are their hearts to change?**

3) [1 John 1:8-9; Colossians 1:13-14] God loves righteousness and justice, but He also has love and compassion for His people (Psalm 33:5, 89:14; Hosea 2:19, etc.). Even though God loves justice, He forgives us and brings us back to Himself. **Give evidence to support or refute this statement: God loves justice not just because it's His nature, but because justice is good for the people that He loves.**

(Some questions along these lines: What verses link justice to God? Can a completely just God forgive? Can a loving God refuse true repentance?)

4) [Matthew 6:14-15, 18:23-35] God cares about whether we forgive others or not.

Based on details in the parable in Chapter 18 of Matthew, when is the latest time we should forgive?

Do you think there are any situations in which it is ok not to forgive?

In whom should we be placing our faith when we forgive someone?

Bringing it home

5) **Do you fully accept God's forgiveness? If not, is there something you haven't fully confessed?** (Don't feel that you should confess anything in your group right now—you could instead discuss an appropriate time and place for such a confession.)

6) [Matthew 9:10-13] **How much do you struggle with the balance between justice and love in your life?**

Are there any examples you can share where you found it very hard to forgive someone?

Why is/was it hard to forgive that person? What are some other reasons it can be hard to forgive people?

Has forgiveness ever felt like a sacrifice to you?

Reflection & Prayer

7) **Pray again using the Lord's prayer as a template, focusing on how forgiveness brings glory to God and helps establish His kingdom among us.**