

ONE

Week of 9/21/25



Icebreaker



- If you could only eat at one restaurant for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- Would you rather carry 10 grocery bags in one trip or make three trips to the car? (why?)



Discussion Questions



- The sermon said, "You can't carry grace and grudges at the same time." What does that look like in your life right now?
- Can you think of a time you were so focused on someone else's "mess" that you almost missed a blessing God had for you?
- Why do you think Jesus circled back to forgiveness right after teaching the Lord's Prayer?
- When you pray "forgive us as we forgive others," how does that challenge you personally?
- Forgiveness was central in the Old Testament (Day of Atonement) and in Jesus' teaching. Why do you think it's so easy for us to downplay it today?
- The sermon said forgiveness is "radical" in a world that says "get even." Where do you see that cultural clash most clearly around you?
- What is one way forgiveness has transformed your own story in the past?
- The message clarified what forgiveness is not (forgetting, excusing, dismissing justice, removing boundaries, or automatically reconciling). Which one of those stood out to you most, and why?
- Bitterness was compared to a mulberry tree with roots that spread deep and wide. What "roots" of bitterness do you think are hardest to uproot?
- Jesus said even faith the size of a mustard seed can uproot bitterness. What does it look like to bring small faith to a big hurt?



Thought for the Group



In Matthew 6:14–15, Jesus makes a powerful and challenging statement: if we forgive others, God forgives us; if we don't, we miss His forgiveness, but, this isn't a threat, it's an invitation. Jesus is showing us that forgiveness is the key to living free.

When our hands are full of someone else's betrayal, lies, or hurt, we miss the grace, peace, and freedom God is trying to place in our hands. You cannot carry grace and grudges at the same time.

In the Old Testament, the Day of Atonement showed how God forgave sin through sacrifice and the scapegoat. Jesus takes this further. Forgiveness is no longer an annual ritual—it's a daily lifestyle for His followers. This teaching was radical then, and it's still radical today. The world says "get even," but Jesus says "forgive."

Forgiveness is how people know we belong to Him. It's the accent of the Kingdom.

Forgiveness is releasing the debt into God's hands, trusting Him with justice, and choosing not to let bitterness take root.

Forgiveness isn't natural, it's supernatural. We don't forgive because we're strong, we forgive because God has forgiven us.

The heart of the gospel is this: we owed a debt we could never pay, and Jesus paid it in full. When we grasp His forgiveness, it flows through us to others.



Next Steps



- Write down the name of a person or situation where you're still carrying hurt. Pray specifically: "Lord, I release this debt into Your hands. I choose forgiveness today." Tear up or throw away the paper as a physical act of letting go.
- Each day this week, remind yourself: "I owed a debt I couldn't pay. Jesus paid it for me." Let that truth sink in before you start your day. As you anchor in the gospel, ask God to make you a conduit of His mercy toward others.