

JESUS AT THE CENTER OF THE KINGDOM

GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help you experience deeper intimacy with Jesus and build meaningful, lasting relationships with others. Get together with friends or find a group by visiting brookwoodchurch.org/groups.

Let's grow stronger together!

July 20, 2025

Message Title: *Forgiveness*

Main Passage: Matthew 6:12-15

Included in this Guide

1. Introduction to the Series
2. Connect
3. Pray
4. Explore and Discuss
5. The One Thing
6. Scripture Memory

Introduction to the Series

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to Him, and He began to teach them.

Matthew 5:1-2 (NIV).

What follows this verse in Matthew chapters 5-7 has become what is probably the most well-known teaching of Jesus, often referred to as *The Sermon on the Mount*. We studied Matthew 5 last summer. We'll continue with Matthew 6 this summer, and plan to finish the series with Matthew 7 next summer.

Connect

Feel free to respond to any or all of these questions to help get the conversation rolling:

- What has God been drawing your attention to lately?
- What's one of the best things a friend has ever done for you?
- If your life was broadcast in a cinema, what would the audience be screaming at the screen right now?

Pray

Lord, the noise of this world is deafening. I often find it difficult to hear Your voice. I pray You'd break through the chaos and help me experience stillness as I seek to be fully present with You. Teach me. Lead me. Change me. May I experience more of You today than I did yesterday.

Add to these words your own praises and prayers to God.

Explore and Discuss

Don't rush through this. It's OK if you don't get to all the questions. Sometimes it'll make sense to go on to the next question. Other times, you might slow down and process a bit longer. Allow God to guide the pace of your discussion.

Matthew 6:12-15 (NLT)

¹² *"...forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.*

¹³ *And don't let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.*

¹⁴ *"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

1. This passage is part of what's commonly known as *The Lord's Prayer*. What's the relationship between you experiencing God's forgiveness and your forgiveness of others?
2. Describe a time when experiencing God's forgiveness enabled you to forgive someone. What impact did that have on the person you forgave?
3. Think of a time someone forgave you. How did that affect your relationship with God?
4. When have you experienced a rescue from God in your temptation to sin?
5. What do the following passages teach you about forgiveness?
 - a. Romans 3:23-26
 - b. Ephesians 1:7
 - c. Colossians 1:13-14
 - d. 1 John 1:7

6. Sin can be considered as 1. Things we've thought, said or done that we shouldn't have (acts of *commission*) and 2. Things we didn't think, say or do that we should have (acts of *omission*). What are examples of each in your own life?
7. In his book *The Art of Forgiveness*, Lewis Smedes describes three stages of forgiveness: Rediscovering the humanity of the person who hurt you, surrendering the right to get even, and revising your feelings. How can these concepts be helpful when you need to forgive someone?
8. What challenges do you face when forgiving others?
9. When we forgive people, it helps them see and experience the heart that God has for them. Our forgiveness is an expression of His love. How does this encourage or challenge the way you relate with others?

If you want God to forgive you it will be manifested by your willingness to forgive others. It's a statement of integrity.

Dr. Harry Reeder III, *Matthew in Biblical Perspective*

The One Thing

What's one thing you'll take away from this week's lesson? Pause quietly for a few minutes and ask God what He wants you to know. Allow time for Him to put thoughts in your mind and stir your heart. Share briefly what you sense God is saying to you, then pray for each other.

Scripture Memory

Memorizing Scripture will help you carry God's life-shaping words with you at all times and in all places. These words anchor our lives in truth, deepen our intimacy with God, and guide us on the path that leads to life. May we be like the Psalmist who ...*hid the words of God in his heart* (from Psalm 119:11).

Here's a passage to memorize based on this week's teaching. Consider writing this on a note card and carrying it with you this week.

He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins.

Ephesians 1:7 (NLT)