

# Summary

Pastor Mike shares a sermon on forgiveness based on Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:21-35. He outlines three key truths about forgiveness: it always cancels a debt, it costs the innocent, and the forgiven must forgive others. Through personal stories and biblical teaching, he emphasizes that forgiveness is not optional for Christians but essential for spiritual freedom and health, even when it's difficult.

## Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss the challenging topic of forgiveness, we ask that You would open our hearts to receive Your truth. Help us to see forgiveness through Your eyes, not our own. Give us the courage to examine areas where we may be harboring unforgiveness, and the strength to release those burdens to You. Guide our conversation today and help us to be honest with ourselves and with each other. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Ice Breaker

Share about a time when you had an unexpected positive interaction with a stranger that brightened your day or taught you something valuable.

## Key Verses

1. Matthew 18:21-22
2. Matthew 18:32-33
3. Ephesians 4:32
4. Colossians 3:13

## Questions

1. Pastor Mike shared three truths about forgiveness: it cancels a debt, it costs the innocent, and the forgiven must forgive. Which of these truths resonates most with you and why?
2. In the parable, the servant was forgiven an enormous debt but refused to forgive a small one. Where in your life might you be doing something similar?
3. What makes forgiveness so difficult? What are some of the barriers you personally face when trying to forgive someone?
4. Pastor Mike said, 'Unforgiveness is like an infection that spreads through the life of the unforgiver.' Have you experienced this? What were the effects?
5. How do you respond to the idea that forgiveness is necessary even when the person who hurt you doesn't ask for it or show remorse?

6. Pastor Mike distinguished between forgiveness and trust. How can we forgive someone while still maintaining healthy boundaries?
7. What's the difference between saying 'I forgive you' and truly forgiving from the heart? How can we tell if we've genuinely forgiven someone?
8. What practical steps can you take this week to move toward forgiving someone who has hurt you?

## Life Application

This week, identify one person you need to forgive. Take time each day to pray specifically about this situation, following Pastor Mike's three-step process: 1) Acknowledge you can't change history, 2) Send away the emotions by giving them to God, and 3) Ask God to perform spiritual surgery in your heart to remove bitterness. Journal about any changes you notice in your feelings toward this person or situation as the week progresses.

## Key Takeaways

1. Forgiveness always cancels a debt - just as God has canceled our debt of sin through Christ.
2. Forgiveness costs the innocent - Jesus, who was innocent, paid for our sins, and there will be a cost when we forgive others.
3. The forgiven must forgive - as recipients of God's forgiveness, we have no option but to extend forgiveness to others.
4. Unforgiveness leads to bitterness, which is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.
5. Forgiveness is an act of God in response to our surrender - we can't truly forgive in our own strength.

## Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the incredible gift of forgiveness You've given us. We acknowledge that we have been forgiven an immeasurable debt through Your sacrifice on the cross. Help us to extend that same grace to others who have hurt us. Where we are holding onto bitterness, perform that spiritual surgery in our hearts to remove it completely. Give us the strength to forgive not just with our words but from our hearts. We want to experience the freedom that comes from true forgiveness. Thank You that You never ask us to do something without giving us the power to accomplish it. In Your name we pray, amen.