

# Community Group Discussion Questions

“Unresolved” Luke 23:24 February 17/18

## Getting Started

For the next 7 weeks we will listen, learn and lean into the final words of Jesus upon the cross, seeking to understand why He chose these 7 statements, what they meant in context, and how they lead us to respond today. The first statement of Jesus centers on the word “forgiveness” teaching us to bring a resolution to what may be unresolved that needs to be reconciled.

What was the hardest thing you ever had to forgive someone for?  
Or, what is something you recently had to forgive someone for?

## Going Deeper

To see this principle of forgiveness laid out for us in a parable form, read **Matthew 18:21-35**. You will use this parable to help you understand and discuss forgiveness today.

- I. **Forgiveness begins Vertically: “Father”**
  - a. Perspective in Prayer: (You love me/You see me/You get me)
  - b. Priority of Prayer: (Releasing Control/Receiving Counsel/Reciprocate Compassion)

From Matthew 18:23-27 we see that a man owed a debt far larger than he could ever repay. If we can recognize that our sins against a holy, all-powerful, and all-perfect God are so large they can never be paid, how does that change our perspective when another mere human sins against us?

II. **Forgiveness is to be offered Repeatedly:** “Forgive Them”

- a. Value the Term: “to release, remit, and remove”
- b. Verb Tense: Imperfect verb tense (continuing)
- c. Verifying “Them”: (“them” is “us” and “us” is “them”)
  - i. Judas who betrayed Him
  - ii. Peter who denied Him
  - iii. Pilate who condemned Him
  - iv. Soldiers who mocked Him
  - v. Crowd who rebuked him
  - vi. Religious leaders who blasphemed Him
  - vii. Criminals who railed on Him

*Key Verse:* Isaiah 53:12

Many of us struggle with forgiving others who have hurt us because we assume that forgiving them means we aren't hurting from their sin anymore. We ask 'How can I forgive them when it still hurts?' A wise man once said that we need to understand the progression of forgiveness. First, we forgive because Jesus tells us to. Then we keep on forgiving every single time we are reminded of the hurt. Finally, a day will come in the future when it is forgiven, and the sting of the hurt is no more. Forgive, forgiving, forgiven. What do you think about this idea?

III. **Forgiveness must be viewed practically:** “for they know not what they do”

- a. Ignorance is not Innocence: (Choices have consequences)
- b. Forgiveness is not Foolishness:
  - i. Forgetting
  - ii. Repaying
  - iii. Owning
  - iv. Guaranteeing

Many times the hurts that are inflicted on us are not intentional or premeditated. They often come from people who just don't have self-awareness or people lacking in emotional intelligence. Their words and actions hurt us, but they are from ignorance, not intent. Share some ways you have hurt others through your ignorance. How can this make us more sensitive to others and make us more willing to forgive others?

IV. **Forgiveness is always costly:** “and they cast lots to divide His garments.”

a. The Risk: To get back what was taken leads to Fear, Oppression, Resentment, Guilt, Inconsolable, Vengeance, and Exhaustion.

b. The Reward: The reward at the cross for the soldiers was the clothes of Jesus, instead of being clothed by Jesus.

For those who don't know Jesus and continue to hurt others through their ignorance or selfish actions, they pay the cost of never having relationship with Jesus, either here or in eternity.

In Matthew 18:32-35, we see the consequence of our choice of unforgiveness and lack of mercy. It actually reveals that we don't truly know the God who has forgiven us. Those who have understand the enormity of their sin and the forgiveness they have been given, have no choice but to graciously and generously offer forgiveness to others.

This parable speaks very strongly to the heart God wants us to have to forgive. How does your thinking about forgiveness need to change? What is Jesus saying to you?

### **Prayer Requests**

Pray for our church families to start praying for and inviting those they care about to join us for this series, and for Easter weekend.