

## Small Group Discussion Guide — September 5, 2021

- Series: Beholding Jesus
  - Sermon: Jesus and Forgiveness
  - Scripture: Matthew 6: 9-15, John 1:29
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### FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK

When and where did you notice yourself being fearful this week? How did your faith and trust in Jesus help to move you from fear into courage?

### CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. Tell a story from your childhood about extending or receiving forgiveness. How much did you understand? What stands out to you the most about that memory?

### ENGAGE

1. Read Matthew 6: 9-15.
  - Notice the essential themes of the manner in which Jesus instructs us to pray: Reverence (v 9-10), Trust (v 11), Forgiveness (v 12), and Submission (v 13). How does this compare to the way we normally pray?
  - After teaching us how to pray, Jesus specifically amplifies the importance of forgiveness. Why might He have chosen this part of the prayer to dig deeper?
2. Read Romans 6: 23.
  - What are some words that stand out to you in this verse?
  - In your own words, what does "the wages of sin is death" mean? How would you define "death" in this verse? Physical? Emotional? Spiritual? Contrast your understanding of death with the promise of eternal life.
3. Read John 1:29, John 3:17, and Luke 23:34.
  - What verbs are used to describe what Jesus is doing on earth in the first two verses? Consider these words in the context of the wages we have earned.
  - Imagine you are in the crowd as Jesus utters these words in the Luke passage. What is one word you feel upon hearing these words?
4. Read Romans 2:1-4.
  - Verses 1-3 suggest that we don't have to "sin big" to earn death, and that simply by withholding our forgiveness of those who have offended us, we condemn ourselves to God's judgment. How would you explain the connection between extending forgiveness to others and our receiving forgiveness from God?
  - What does Paul say is the point of God's kindness in verse 4? What is *repentance*? In what ways does God's kindness lead to repentance?

### APPLY

1. The scriptures clearly tell us that God's forgiveness is deep enough & wide enough for everyone, no matter how big the sin. In what ways do your words and deeds reflect your confidence in His forgiveness for you? For those around you? How might being fully committed to His forgiveness change the way you treat yourself and interact with others? What are the risks of buying in completely?
2. We said that having a deep peace from Christ is the lasting mark of forgiveness. As you examine your heart, where do you need to receive forgiveness? Where do you need to extend it? Pray to Jesus, confessing your need and invite Him to enter that space, bringing His reconciliation and healing.

## **PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven,  
Reveal who you are.  
Set the world right;  
Do what's best—  
    as above, so below.  
Keep us alive with three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You're in charge!  
You can do anything you want!  
You're ablaze in beauty!  
Amen

(Matthew 6:9-13 - The Message)

## **GOING DEEPER**

In a past sermon, David talked about “moving into God’s forgiveness” of those who have harmed us. In other words, God has gone before us in forgiveness, and in some ways, we are “catching up” to Him. In what ways is forgiving other people a way out of our own physical, emotional, and spiritual pain? What if we shifted our perspective from forgiveness being a hardship on us to being a way of releasing us from our own prisons?

## **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE**

Genesis 3: 21  
2 Corinthians 5: 17  
Colossians 1:15-20  
Hebrews 9:28

## **QUOTES**

“Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hatred. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness.”  
Corrie Ten Boom

“If we don’t behold the glory of God in the face of Christ, then something else will rule our lives. We will be slaves.”  
Tim Keller

“We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.”  
C.S. Lewis