

## Spiritual Maturity Part 5: Forgiveness People

### Discussion Guide – October 12 2025

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Eph. 4:31-32

“Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. CLICK

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. CLICK

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Matt. 18:21-35

### Quotes

“Forgiveness is not just altruistic. It is the best form of self-interest. It liberates the victim and the perpetrator.” Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“I think pastorally what’s going on [in Jesus’ parable] is this. The same facility inside ourselves which opens to give forgiveness to someone else—that open-heartedness—which says and means it: “I forgive you” - that’s the same door in our hearts that opens to receive God’s forgiveness. And if we insist on shutting that door against other people who need our forgiveness... then we are in effect slamming the door shut against God’s forgiveness and saying in effect, “No I don’t want to be a forgiveness person.” But as far as Jesus is concerned, the kingdom of God coming on earth as in heaven is all about forgiveness. If it wasn’t that then the whole of the scriptures is making a big mistake....forgiveness is woven into the message all the way through.” N.T. Wright

### Discussion Questions

1. Jesus links forgiving others with receiving God’s forgiveness — “the same door of the heart,” as N.T. Wright puts it. What do you think it means to cultivate forgiveness as a posture rather than as a one-time act? How might this shift the way we respond to those who hurt or offend us?
2. “Once you see the world through the lens of grace, forgiveness becomes a natural reflex.” How can we train our hearts and minds to see grace everywhere — even in hard or unjust situations? What practices or habits might help us develop that kind of vision?
3. Desmond Tutu’s story shows forgiveness that feels nearly impossible — yet profoundly transformative. Why do you think forgiveness, while so powerful, is also so difficult? What fears or misconceptions often keep us from forgiving?
4. Paul calls us to “get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger,” replacing them with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. How might forgiveness serve as a marker of spiritual maturity in our own lives and in the church community? Where might God be inviting you personally to “open the door” of grace right now?