



# Sunday Teaching Guide

Prayer Week 6

February 19, 2023

## Bible Texts

- Matthew 6:7-13
- John 1:5-9
- Luke 23:33-34

## Important Terms

- Cross: The cross was seen as an image of torture. In his crucifixion, Jesus transforms the image into a symbol of love, forgiveness, and faith.

## Sermon Notes

- In teaching his disciples how to pray, Jesus tells his disciples to ask God to forgive their sins as they forgive other people's sins. We have to be careful not to think of forgiveness as excusing behavior or eliminating consequences. Forgiveness is letting go of resentment, anger, and bitterness. It is removing our desire for retribution. Forgiveness is ultimately hoping for the restoration of others.
- We see the picture of that kind of forgiveness clearly portrayed on the cross. Jesus hung on the cross, looking at the people who followed him, who betrayed him and those who crucified him. We can imagine Jesus miraculously taking himself off the cross, calling forth an army, and defeating those who had placed him on that cross. But if he had done that, Jesus would have chosen anger, violence, and revenge. Instead, he forgives them all.
- Forgiveness is a gift that gives us the rare opportunity to see the world through the eyes of Jesus and to experience God's grace from his perspective. Through forgiveness, we see the incredible grace of God, the hope he has in our restoration, and the hope that others will be restored.

## Reflection Questions

- When was the last time you asked someone for forgiveness?
- When was the last time you forgave another person?
- How do you typical conversations of asking for forgiveness go? How long does it take you to ask for forgiveness? Whom do you find yourself asking for forgiveness from the most?
- What do you find most hard about asking for forgiveness?
- Do you find yourself immediately granting forgiveness to another person or does granting forgiveness take time?
- Do you find yourself holding a grudge after forgiving another person? If so, why do you think you do that?
- How often do you ask God for forgiveness?
- How do you feel after asking God or someone else for forgiveness?
- What do you need to ask God or someone else for forgiveness for? What do you need to forgive someone else for?

## Prayer for the Week

- God, thank you for teaching us about forgiveness through your life, death, and resurrection. Help me to show forgiveness and grace the way that you showed me forgiveness and grace. Amen.

## Additional Readings

- Ephesians 4:32
- Romans 12:17
- Matthew 5:7