

Family Theme | **Jesus Teaches Forgiveness**      Date | **March 10, 2024**

Study Text | **Matthew 18:15–35**

**Read the Word:** Matthew 18:15–35

**Disciple Your Family:** Discuss how we are to forgive one another as God has forgiven us.

Discuss the following Key Truths and how to apply them to life. Use the questions to spark discussion.



**Key Truth:** Jesus Gives Instructions to Follow When Believers Sin  
(Matthew 18:15–20)

**APPLY:** Follow Jesus' instructions when another believer sins.

- *Why is confrontation difficult?*
- *What can we do to ensure our hearts and attitudes are right before confronting another's sin?*
- *What should be the goal of confrontation? How can remembering this help us when we need to confront a fellow believer?*

**APPLY:** A person who sins should humbly accept the loving correction of a fellow believer and, if necessary, the church.

- *Why is church discipline not often practiced?*
- *How can we balance zeal for God's holiness and the purity of His church with compassion, mercy, and grace towards one another?*

**APPLY:** Choices have consequences. Rather than run from them, we will always do better to address them head on and honestly.

**APPLY:** The goal of confronting sin is restoration of the one who sinned.

- *How should we respond if someone confronts us about a sin we've committed? Why is it difficult to respond in this manner?*

**APPLY:** Jesus' presence is with local church believers as they seek to restore believers who have sinned.



**Key Truth:** Believers Forgive as Often as Necessary (Matthew 18:21–35)

**APPLY:** We are to forgive those who wrong us as often as necessary.

- *There is a philosophy in our culture of "never forget, never forgive." How does that compare to the teachings of Jesus?*
- *What is the danger in refusing to forgive?*
- *Some refuse to forgive because they believe that forgiveness means excusing the bad behavior. How would you explain the biblical definition of forgiveness? (Forgiveness does not mean we excuse bad behavior; it means we release or dismiss the offense or person. No one deserves forgiveness; therefore, it is an act of mercy and grace.)*

- *Forgiving someone does not necessarily mean that consequences are erased or boundaries are not adjusted in the wake of someone's choices. In what situations might boundaries be necessary? (Abuse of any kind; adultery; extreme mismanagement of finances; etc.)*

**APPLY:** The debt we owe God because of our sins is far more than we could ever repay.

**APPLY:** Those who have been forgiven by God are expected to forgive others.

- *Why should we forgive others unconditionally?*
- *How should God's forgiveness influence our forgiveness of others?*

**Build a Foundation:** Discussion questions for elementary students.

- Why do you think the man who had been forgiven of his debt did not forgive the debt that was owed to him?
- Why is forgiveness so important?
- Which is harder: to forgive or to ask for forgiveness?
- Does forgiveness mean the action was excused or without consequence?

Work together to memorize the Verse of the Month: **Matthew 6:21**



### **Discuss This Week's Building Block:**

Forgiveness is a choice. Because God forgave us, we are to forgive others.

### **Everyday Extras:**

Use this simple object lesson to remind your family of the value of forgiveness. (Do this in the sink or outside to make clean up simple.) Add ¼ cup warm water to a sealable sandwich bag. Next, add ½ cup vinegar to the bag. Add 3 teaspoons of baking soda to the center of a tissue. Fold the tissue around the baking soda. Work quickly and place the folded tissue into the bag, zip it closed, and place it on the bottom of the sink or on the ground. When the vinegar and baking soda mix completely, a small explosion will occur from the expanding gas it creates. You can shake the bag if the explosion is "hesitant." When we refuse to forgive, our anger and hurt can grow, and these emotions might explode on others. That is not wise or right living. The Bible teaches we are to forgive others. Pray and thank God for the gift of forgiveness and ask for His help forgiving others when it's needed.

### **Preschool Highlights:**

Today your child learned about another parable where a woman lost one of her ten coins. She searched for the lost coin until she found it, and she told her friends and neighbors. They knew the coins were special to her and they rejoiced with her. **We Are Special to God** and the angels in Heaven rejoice when we choose to follow Him.