



FORGIVENESS Matthew 6:12

CONNECT

1. Share a personal story about forgiveness—when either you chose to forgive someone who had hurt you or you received forgiveness from someone. Talk about the dynamics that were at play and how forgiveness impacted your life. Also, are there ways in which the current COVID-19 crisis is highlighting the need in your life to either give or receive forgiveness?

CELEBRATE

2. It is noteworthy that in the Lord's Prayer, on the heels of the request for the Father to meet one's daily material necessities (Matthew 6:11), is a request about forgiveness (6:12). What does this say about the important place of forgiveness in our lives? Does your life exemplify the importance of forgiveness?
3. Relating to Matthew 6:12, contrast "forensic (legal) forgiveness" with "fellowship forgiveness." See Romans 4:7–8 and Ephesians 1:7 regarding "forensic forgiveness" and Mark 11:25 and 1 John 1:9 for "fellowship forgiveness." What are the differences and why are these distinctions important? Which one is being spoken of in Matthew 6:12?
4. Carefully read Matthew 18:21–35. What does Jesus' parable have to say about the power of forgiveness? What lessons do you learn about forgiveness? Based on what you read and learned, process how an unwillingness to forgive others impacts your fellowship with God.
5. Process with those around you this statement: "Forgiveness and trust are two different things—one is a gift and the other is earned." What does this mean and why is this important?

CONTRIBUTE

6. Be honest about the degree to which you might feel distant from God right now, especially in this season of uncertainty. Are there matters you need to confess to God—unbelief, lies, grudges, fears, bitterness towards another—that, being unconfessed, get in the way of your peace with God? What does it look like for you to seek His forgiveness?
7. Consider the following question: Is there someone today that you need to forgive? What keeps you from doing so and what approach can you take to deal with this? Also, is there someone you could invite to hold you accountable regarding this matter? Be particularly mindful of the unique stresses our current season holds.