

## The Way of Prayer: Part 4—Forgive Us Text: Matthew 6:9-13

### Warming Up

#### Questions:

1. *What is your favorite thing to give to someone else?*
2. *What is your favorite thing to receive from someone else?*

### Digging In

As we think about forgiveness in the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, let us focus on what the earliest Christians believed about God's forgiveness of us.

Read **Ephesians 1:7-10**.

#### Questions:

1. *What good news do you hear in this passage?*
2. *What does this passage tell us about the heart of God as He extends forgiveness to us?*

Read **2 Timothy 1:9-10**.

#### Questions:

1. *What good news do you hear in this passage?*
2. *Why do you think the first Christians go out of their way to say that grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time?*

Notice in the next two passages the order of forgiveness. The earliest Christians clearly believe that God's forgiveness is first, and their response to it second.

Read **Ephesians 4:32** and **Colossians 3:13**.

#### Questions:

1. *Why do you think the first Christians found it important to say that our forgiveness of others comes after God's forgiveness of us?*
2. *What would our forgiveness of others look like if it were patterned after Jesus?*

Now, back to the prayer: Read **Matthew 6:9-13**.

It is important to locate the part of the prayer dealing with forgiveness within the totality of the prayer speaking of Kingdom and evil.

#### Questions:

1. *How is our forgiveness of others a message of the Kingdom coming?*
2. *What would happen if the church didn't model forgiveness for the world?*
3. *How is our forgiveness part of being delivered from evil?*
4. *If God's forgiveness of us comes first, why do you think Jesus ties our forgiveness of others with God's forgiveness of us?*

### Sending Out

Many biblical scholars have noted that Jesus is tying our forgiveness of others with God's forgiveness of us because our ability to forgive others is intimately tied to being able to receive forgiveness from God. Jesus teaches us to pray in such a way that both receiving and offering forgiveness lead to deliverance for us, freedom.

#### Questions:

1. *Do you find it harder to offer forgiveness to others, or receive forgiveness from God? Why?*
2. *In what ways is receiving forgiveness from God freeing?*
3. *In what ways is offering forgiveness to others freeing?*
4. *What would happen if the primary thing the church was known for was receiving and offering forgiveness?*

### Closing

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, "What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?"

Close with prayer.