

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – June 13, 2021

Theme: Lessons from the Life of Jesus Topic: Jesus: His Teaching on Forgiveness

Main Text: Luke 6:27-36

Key verse: Luke:6: 27-28 – *“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.”* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: Forgiveness is a central doctrine of the Christian faith. And so, it is a major theme in the Bible. In the New Testament, the Greek word *Aphiēmi* is the word which Bible translators translate to mean ‘forgive’ in English. And it has a wide range of meanings, including to remit (a debt), to leave (something or someone) alone, to allow (an action), to leave, to send away, to desert or abandon, and even to divorce. This Greek word appears nearly 150 times, yet only in 38 instances is it translated to mean ‘forgive’ in English. Also, from its various meanings and uses in the New Testament, forgiveness is an action rather than a feeling. Jesus’ teachings on forgiveness took the matter to a level never imagined by the religions of the day – then and now (Luke 6:27-28).

1. **Read Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 38:17; 43:25, 48:9; Jeremiah 50:20; Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 13:5b**
(a) What notions about forgiveness do these passages highlight? (b) Which of the highlighted ideas of forgiveness do you consider most difficult to embrace or practice? (c) How can you apply Luke 6:35 to that difficult aspect of forgiveness?

In Christian teachings forgiveness plays an important role in spiritual life. Two types of forgiveness appear in the Bible. The first relates to our relationship with God; and the second is in our relationship with one another. Both are so important. Whereas, God spoke extensively about His forgiveness to man, Jesus Christ, on the other hand, focused most of His teachings in the Gospels on how we should forgive *each other*. This was first highlighted in the Lord’s prayer, that right next to our need for daily bread, Jesus listed our need for forgiveness from one another: *“Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”* (Matthew 6:11-12). Perhaps the clearest evidence of the importance of forgiveness in interpersonal relationship is in John 20:23, when Jesus told His disciples that, *“If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”*

2. **(a) What does the statement “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” communicate to you about Jesus’ attitude towards forgiveness of one another? (b) What do you think is the relationship between *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you ...*” and forgiveness? (c) If we are to love our enemies and do good to those who hate us, is there anyone we cannot love and do good to? Why or why not?**

Luke 6:36 speaks about God’s mercy on us. The entire Bible points to Jesus Christ and His divine mission to save us from our sins. In Acts 10:39-43, Apostle Peter summed it up like this: *“We are witnesses of everything He did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed Him by hanging Him on a cross, but God raised Him from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen -- by us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.”* (Acts 10:39-43 NIV). And in Luke 23:34, Jesus fulfills His own teaching about praying for those who spitefully use us, when He prayed for His mockers and persecutors, asking God to forgive them because *“They know not what they do.”*

3. **Read Psalm 32:1-2; Luke 23:34; 2 Corinthians 5:19; (a) Why do you think it was important for the people crucifying Jesus to receive God’s forgiveness? (b) What do the verses teach us about the forgiveness we have in Christ? (c) What current situation(s) in our personal and corporate lives can we apply these lessons?**

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, You lived and died to show us what forgiveness means. Help us to be ready to emulate You in our willingness to pay the price so that those who offend us may go free. Amen.*