

## FORGIVENESS

### Small Group Questions

In preparation for this week's study, read Psalm 51 and ponder these lyrics or listen online

"Lord, Have Mercy" by M.W. Smith

Jesus, I've forgotten the words that You have spoken  
Promises that burned within my heart have now grown dim  
With a doubting heart I follow the paths of earthly wisdom  
Forgive me for my unbelief; Renew the fire again  
*Chorus—Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy on me. Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy on me.*  
I have built an altar where I worship things of men  
I have taken journeys that have drawn me far from You Now I am returning to Your mercies  
ever flowing Pardon my transgressions; Help me love You again!  
*Chorus*  
I have longed to know You and Your tender mercies  
Like a river of forgiveness ever flowing without end  
I bow my heart before You in the goodness of Your presence Your grace forever shining  
Like a beacon in the night  
*Chorus*

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how forgiving are you in your life (1 = "one strike and you're out in my book," and 10 = "forgiving is as easy as breathing for me")?
2. Is it really Biblical to "forgive and forget"? What is the reasoning behind saying it is or isn't? Why do so many Christians believe it is? What dangers are possible when we forgive and forget?

#### DIG INTO THE WORD

3. Read Ecclesiastes 7:20, Jeremiah 7:20, and Romans 6:23. What is the default condition of the human heart? In your everyday life, do you recognize this truth about your fallen human condition? Or do you tend to think that you're a pretty good person?
4. Review the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11–32. How does this parable describe the father's love for his younger son? What did the father do when his son humbly returned home to be his servant?
5. How does the elder son respond to the father's love for him? Both sons are lost. Both sons want the father's things, but they don't want a relationship with the father. With which son do you most closely identify?
6. Read Psalm 103:8–13. How does the Lord deal with undeserving sinners? God completely forgives sins, yet we still deal with the consequences of our sin. Why is it so difficult to be free from the burden of guilt and shame of sin?
7. Read Colossians 3:12–13, Ephesians 4:32, and Matthew 18:21–35. We are reminded in these passages that because God has first forgiven us, now we are to forgive one another.

It's easy for us to minimize our own sin and then magnify the sin we notice in others. How can we more readily extend grace and forgiveness to one another?

**PRAY FROM THE HEART**

Read Matthew 5:23–26. What is this passage of Scripture saying to us about taking the initiative to offer forgiveness and reconciliation with a neighbor?

**A PROMISE TO REMEMBER**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12)

Week 1	March 10
Week 2	March 17
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>March 24</b>
Week 4	March 31
Week 5	April 7