



# Beyond the Sermon

## A Sermon Application Guide

Title: The Radical Call to Forgive

This guide offers a simple tool for those wanting to take the next step with Sunday's message. You can print this guide to study on your own or use it in a group and experience transformation together.

### Message Theme

Unforgiveness: Don't Give the Devil an Open Door

### Prayer Focus

*Father, I come to You with overflowing gratitude. Thank You for the forgiveness You graciously gave me, though I'm undeserving. You've erased my debt and washed me clean through Your boundless mercy and love. Help me live in the light of Your grace, continually extending the same forgiveness to others. May my life be a reflection of Your kindness and compassion. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### Key Truths

When Jesus died, He made available the chance to be born again and become brand new. Before we were born, we received forgiveness for anything we would ever do wrong. But that gift doesn't stop there. God calls us to not only *receive* forgiveness but also *extend* that same forgiveness to other people.

One sign of spiritual maturity is the ability to rise above offense. When we cling to unforgiveness, it robs us of peace and opens the door to the enemy. Jesus emphasized the power and importance of forgiving one another, making it one of His most famous teachings.

It's important to realize that forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. God forgave us for debts we could never repay, and He asks us to trust Him and forgive others similarly. Clinging to unforgiveness leaves us vulnerable to the enemy's influence. However, when we choose to forgive, we close that door and welcome the overwhelming peace of God into our hearts. We can miss our purpose when we focus on the wrong things. Ultimately, forgiveness reflects God's nature, promotes reconciliation, and serves as a powerful catalyst for personal and collective change, embodying the heart of the gospel.

### Practical Application

Forgiveness isn't a feeling; it's a decision that takes faith. Jesus teaches that forgiveness alone is insufficient; we must also take the next step and pray for those we've chosen to forgive.

Is there anyone in your life who you need to extend forgiveness to? Take 5 minutes to choose to forgive them deliberately, then spend another 5 minutes lifting them in prayer. Pray for their lives, families, and any negative situation they may be in.

## **Reference Verses**

- Luke 9:60, 11:2-4, 23:34
- Matthew 5:38-48, 18:21-35
- Jeremiah 31:33
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Ephesians 1:7, 4:26-27
- Psalms 119:165
- 1 Samuel 18:6-10
- Hebrews 12:15
- Ecclesiastes 7:9

## **Declarations**

- I refuse to let unforgiveness steal my peace; my heart belongs to God.
- Forgiveness is my choice; I walk in freedom and victory through it.
- I will not give the enemy a foothold—God's grace empowers me to forgive.

## **What's Next?**

Living in the Kingdom of God means living in the reality of His forgiveness—both receiving it and extending it. Forgiveness is not just a one-time act; it's a way of life that shapes how we relate to God, to others, and even to ourselves. This guide offers simple, practical steps to help you walk daily in the freedom and power of God's forgiveness.

### **1. Receive and Reflect on God's Forgiveness**

Begin each day in gratitude, reminding yourself of the forgiveness you've received through Jesus. Let His mercy be the lens through which you see your past, your struggles, and your identity. Take time regularly to reflect honestly on your thoughts, words, and actions. Where you fall short, don't delay—confess quickly and receive God's grace without shame. Embrace your identity as a new creation in Christ, aligning your daily choices with the righteousness He's given you.

### **2. Choose and Extend Forgiveness Intentionally**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas where you're holding onto offense or resentment. Face those moments honestly, and make the deliberate decision to forgive—not because the person deserves it, but because God forgave you. As Jesus taught, pray for those who have wronged you. It may not change them, but it will certainly change you and keep your heart soft and free.

### **3. Cultivate a Forgiving Lifestyle**

Guard your heart daily. Don't let anger linger—bring it to God in prayer and respond quickly with grace and forgiveness. Stay connected in Christian community, where grace and reconciliation are vital. When forgiveness

feels hard, don't isolate—seek out prayer and wise counsel from fellow believers who can walk with you and remind you of truth.

Forgiveness is a journey, and it's central to the life we're called to live in the Kingdom. As you daily receive God's grace and freely offer it to others, you'll find freedom, healing, and deeper intimacy with the One who forgave us all.

## Scripture References

### The Radical Call to Forgive

**Acts 1:1-3 NKJV REF** The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

**Matthew 5:38-39 NKJV** “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person.”

**Matthew 5:43-48 NKJV** “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

**Jeremiah 31:33 NKJV** I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

**2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

**Ephesians 1:7 NKJV** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...

**Luke 11:2-4 NIV** “Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.”

**Matthew 26:48-50 NKJV** Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"

**Psalms 119:165 KJV** Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

**Luke 23:34 KJV** Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

**John 20:23 NKJV** "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

**Acts 7:57-60 NKJV** Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**Matthew 5:43-45 NKJV** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven..."

**Matthew 18:21-22 NKJ V** Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

**Luke 17:5 NKJV** And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

**Matthew 18:23-24 NKJV** Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

**Matthew 18:25-35 NKJV** But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you [b]all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was

due to him. “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

**Ephesians 4:26-27 NKJV** “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.

**1 Samuel 18:7-10 NIV** As they danced, they sang: “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.” Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David. The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul.

**Ecclesiastes 7:9 NKJV** ...anger rests in the bosom of fools.