

**Freedom in Forgiveness**

**Proforma for anyone new**

**Introduce yourself**

**Reminder of the purposes of PFAM**

**Icebreaker –** video clip from Billy Graham’s Funeral on marriage and forgiveness: 54.54 minutes in

**Worship Matthew West Song: Forgiveness**

**Matthew 18: 21-35** – Lectio Divina: “Listening with your heart” Read slowly, see if a word or phrase stands out or touches your heart: stay with that and turn it into a prayer. Option to share after.

### The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

**21**Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

**22**Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23750a)]

**23**“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24**As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23752b)] was brought to him. **25**Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

**26**“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ **27**The servant’s master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

**28**“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A21-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23756c)] He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

**29**“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

**30**“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31**When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

**32**“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33**Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ **34**In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

**35**“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

**STEPS ON HOW TO FORGIVE OTHERS**

SMALL GROUP: DISCUSSION 1: Write down each other’s answers

***Read Ephesians 4:25-32***

Q: What has helped you forgive those who have hurt you?

Q: Who in your life is there a struggle to forgive: others, yourself, God and why?

Q: Are there things about the way you responded to people/situations that you want to ask forgiveness for?

Q: Who have you already forgiven: how and what helped?

**RELATE:** We must resolve to actually forgive because of Christ forgiving us. When we do this we allow the love of Christ to shine brightly through our acts of forgiveness and our unwillingness to seek retribution.

You can withhold forgiveness because you don’t think the person deserves it, it’s not your place. Forgiveness serves as the only ointment that can heal most of our relationships. If we want to resolve, we have to forgive.

SMALL GROUP: PRAYER

* Pray for each other acknowledging Christ power to help us to forgive and for the Holy Spirit to reveal things you might not be aware of that need resolving.
* Pray for future spouses to resolve issues of unforgiveness in their lives too.
* Praise God for forgiveness already given and received

SMALL GROUP: DISCUSSION 2: Write down each other’s answers

**We talked about those we need to forgive; we talked about the value of forgiving, now let’s talk about the next step; reconciliation.**

**Four Kinds of Reconciliation**

1. To bring you closer to the person you’ve hurt/been hurt by
2. To forgive you, because you committed the sin
3. To forgive them, because they committed the sin
4. To rebuild the relationship

**RESTORE:** Are the next steps to take to work towards rebuilding the relationship, whatever that may look like?

Q: When you have forgiven someone, what has been the result?

SMALL GROUP: PRAYER 2

Pray a group about the next steps we need to take.

**9. The Past:**[1 John 1:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1%3A9+&version=NIV) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

* What about prior relationships (difficult exs)
* What about past sin/struggles?
* What about past abuse and the need for counseling?
* What about unresolved relationships or relationships that need reconciliation?
* What about unresolved hurts/issues?
* What if I’m dating someone who’s been arrested or even spent time in jail?
* What if their family’s past affects our present?

Clip from Billy Graham’s funeral 1 hr 20 mins in – beautiful description of Billy and Ruth’s marriage

**Close:** What are you going to walk away with?

* Books: share, swap
* Any other events: Kris Singles conference Saturday 15th September Lighthouse Church £10.
* Café meet ups in Bolton: Third Saturday every month.
* Next Meeting Date:
* Help next meeting: devotion, music, choosing theme, facilitation?
* Thanks for coming! Do invite others.