

How Could You?!

2026-04-27 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



Matthew 18

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

Peter thought he was being generous: should I forgive seven times? Jesus answered seventy-seven. Pastor Matt dug into the word itself. The Greek word for forgive means to let go or drop, the same word used when the fishermen dropped their nets. Forgiving someone is not deciding the debt was small. It is absorbing the debt, the way Jesus absorbed ours. Pastor Matt connected it to communion: even on the Day of Atonement, you were expected to make things right with your neighbor first. Holding something against someone does not fit in the same hands that take the bread and cup.

To get started

- What is something you have let go of that you were surprised you could?

Looking back at the message

Forgiveness talk can move fast toward guilt. Slow it down and stay on the text.

- 1 The word for forgiveness means to drop or let go, like a fisherman dropping a net. How is that different from how you usually picture forgiving someone?
- 2 Pastor Matt was clear that letting go of a debt does not mean spending time with the person again. Why does that distinction matter so much?
- 3 Pastor Matt said counseling and honest conversation are good, and still do not replace letting go. What do you make of that? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Matthew 18:21-35 aloud, all of it. The parable is the answer to Peter's question.

- 4 Read Matthew 18:21-22. What is Peter proposing, and why might he have thought it was generous?
- 5 In the parable that follows, one servant owes millions and another owes pocket change. What is Jesus doing with that gap?
- 6 Look closely at verse 26. The first servant asks for patience, more time to pay. What does the king actually give him instead?
- 7 Verse 35 ends the parable severely. What exactly is being warned against, and what is not?

Bringing it home

Nobody has to name a person. Keep it possible to answer in general terms.

- 8 Forgiveness means absorbing a cost, not pretending there was none. What does absorbing the cost look like in practice?
- 9 Some things are easy to let go and some feel impossible. What makes the difference?
- 10 We hold people to a standard Jesus never held us to, demanding payment on debts far smaller than the one he absorbed for us. Where do you notice that in yourself?
- 11 Is there something you have been carrying so long that carrying it has become normal?

OPTIONAL

The group together

Pastor Matt tied this to communion. That is a good, concrete place to land.

- 12 Pastor Matt said making things right with your neighbor belongs before communion. What would change if we took that seriously?
- 13 How can a group help someone let go without rushing them past what actually happened?
- 14 What would it look like for this group to be quick to forgive each other over small things?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What could you set down this week, even if setting it down changes nothing about the other person?

You might pray about

- For those carrying something heavy enough that letting go feels unfair
- For an honest look at the debt we ourselves were released from
- For the person we have quietly written off
- For freedom that comes from dropping something rather than winning it

