


Sermon Series: The Lord's Prayer | **Title:** The Hardest Line in the Prayer



Passages: Matthew 6:12; Matthew 18:21-35, Colossians 2:13-14

Sermon Big Idea	Helpful Resources
Forgiven people, forgive people.	 The Bible Project Guide: The Lord's Prayer

Read the Text
In your group, read the passage out loud, with each person reading a verse.

Head: Grasping the Text
<i>Goal: To grasp the theological concepts and historical context of the text.</i>

1. In Matthew 6:12, Jesus uses the word "debt" rather than "mistake" or "shortcoming." Based on what you learned about the first-century meaning of debt, why does that word choice matter? What does it tell us about the seriousness of sin before God?
2. Read Colossians 2:13-14. According to this passage, what specifically did God do with the debt we owed? What does it mean that he "nailed it to the cross," and why was it necessary for Jesus to be sinless in order to absorb that cost on our behalf?
3. In the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Matthew 18:21-35), the first servant's debt was roughly 600,000 times greater than the second servant's debt. What is Jesus communicating through that extreme disproportion, and how does Matthew 6:14-15 help interpret how Jesus teaches us to pray in terms of his expectations upon those who have been forgiven?

Heart: Grasping the Internal Transformation
Goal: Examine how the text reshapes our identity, affections, and motivations to bring about honest self-examination.

4. The sermon described an "internal lawyer" that defends our actions, minimizes our sin, and keeps us from honest confession before God. When you reflect on the past week, where has that internal lawyer been most active in your own life? What has it been protecting you from admitting?
5. The sermon identified an important distinction — forgiveness is something one person does, while reconciliation requires two. Is there a relationship in your life where you have been avoiding forgiveness because you confused it with reconciliation? What would it look like to release that debt before God, even if the relationship cannot be fully restored?
6. The sermon described forgiveness as a form of voluntary suffering — costly, chosen, and sometimes repeated in layers. Is there someone you thought you had forgiven, but find the wound reopening? What does it reveal about what God may still be doing in that place of your heart?

Hands: Grasping Your Next Step

Goal: To move from hearing the Word to living it out as a disciple with specific, practical, and achievable steps for the coming week.

7. The sermon challenged us to pray the Lord's Prayer not on autopilot but honestly and specifically — confessing sin by name rather than vaguely. This week, set aside time to pray through Matthew 6:12 slowly. Write down one specific thing to confess to God and one person you need to release from a debt they owe you. Bring both before God in prayer.
8. Read John 15:5 — "*Apart from me you can do nothing.*" The sermon reminded us that forgiveness is fruit, not something we manufacture through willpower. What is one practical step you can take this week to stay connected to Christ — through Scripture, prayer, or community — so that forgiveness can grow in you rather than being forced by you?
9. The sermon noted from the Global Flourishing Project that 1 in 4 people rarely or never forgive those who hurt them, and researchers called it a public health crisis. Who in your life — a friend, family member, or coworker — is visibly carrying or you may suspect as carrying unforgiveness? How might you gently and graciously point them toward the freedom that comes from the gospel this week? Or simply pray for them that the Lord will work in their own heart?