



## PART 3: FORGIVE

Even if you were taught how to forgive as a child, it's always a challenge. In fact, as we get older, the offense gets more complex. There are really two options for settling a debt:

- Option 1: Demand Payment
- Option 2: Forgive the Debt

The dilemma we all face is which one do we choose?

### CONNECT

When someone wrongs you, do you tend to forgive them quickly or does it take a while? What makes you lean one way instead of the other?

### LEARN

This week, April Farmer joins us to share her personal journey with forgiveness. Watch the full video sometime this week to hear the full message and as a reminder of your group's discussion.

### APPLY

After sharing what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. As you listened to April's story, did something from your own life (maybe a time you were forgiven, a time you forgave someone else, or someone you can't imagine forgiving) come to mind? Share that with your group.
2. April gave the following definition for forgiveness: "Forgiveness is deciding to release/cancel the debt one is owed and the process of bringing one's emotions and behaviors in alignment with that decision." Discuss the key parts of this definition. What stands out to you? What is the most difficult part?
3. In the message, April said, "If your freedom from anger and bitterness and resentment is wrapped up in somebody else's 'I'm sorry,' you've tied yourself up in chains. You have become a prisoner and made them your captor." Why do most people have a tendency to wait for the other person to apologize before forgiving them? What are the pitfalls of that approach?





4. **Read Romans 12:17–21.**

- a. What key parts jump out to you from this passage?
- b. Reread verse 18. What does it look like for you to live at peace with everyone?
- c. Why do we find it difficult to not take revenge?
- d. In verse 20, Paul explains how we overcome evil with good. How can you make this a regular part of your week?

**BEFORE NEXT TIME**

To forgive is to decide to release/cancel the debt one is owed and the process of bringing one's emotions and behaviors in alignment with that decision.

Listen to the song "Forgiveness" by Matthew West and look at the lyrics. What lines stand out to you?

**PRAY**

Before you pray, take some time to think of two names—first, the name of someone you need to forgive, and second, the name of someone you need to ask for forgiveness.

Have someone close in prayer, thanking God for his forgiveness and asking for the strength to follow up with the people you thought of. Ask God to help you bring your emotions and behaviors into alignment whenever forgiveness is needed.

