

## “Forgive us...as we forgive”

Matthew 6:12

### 1. Forgiveness is THE core virtue of the Kingdom of God.

- God’s Kingdom involves people – we will hurt people and people will hurt us.
- When we sin against people, we also sin against God.
- So, without forgiveness from God, there is broken fellowship with God.
- Also, without forgiveness of others, there is only bitterness between people.
- So, without forgiveness, God’s Kingdom is stopped in its tracks.

### 2. Forgiveness from God is first.

- Definition – “Remission of and release from the penalty of a debt.”
  - Psalm 103:12 – “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”
  - Isaiah 38:17 – “You have cast all my sins behind Your back...”
  - Isaiah 43:25 – “I am He who blots out your transgressions...”
  - Jeremiah 31:34 – “Their sin I will remember no more...”
  - Micah 7:19 – “You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”
- We can ask God to forgive us – and He will every time.

### 3. But God’s forgiveness is somehow connected to our forgiveness of others.

- This does NOT mean that our forgiveness of others merits God’s forgiveness.
- What it DOES mean is that a lack of humility to forgive those who have hurt us indicates a lack of humility needed to authentically seek God’s forgiveness.
- Forgiveness of our debtors does NOT mean:
  - *That the offense didn’t hurt.*
  - *That the offense wasn’t wrong.*
  - *That the offense didn’t matter.*
  - *That we are now reconciled to our offender.*
- It DOES mean that we release our enemy from their debt to us – because our God has released us from our debt to Him.

Quote: *“Where the readiness to forgive is lacking, the petition for God’s forgiveness becomes a lie. Thus, in the Kingdom, the way to God goes through a man’s neighbor.”* [Joachim Jeremias]