



FORGIVENESS

The Freedom We Don't Deserve

A NINE-SESSION BIBLE STUDY

Inspired by a sermon from Ron Lauber

Forgiveness is freedom, but it is not cheap.

How To Use This Study

Participants listen before group. The song opens the emotional doorway; Scripture carries the authority. In group, play only the first verse and chorus as a reminder - not as the first exposure. End every session with one concrete practice before the next gathering.

BEFORE GROUP

Leader scans the session QR, sends the homework text, and participants listen/read before arriving.

IN GROUP

Play a short song cue, ask what stayed with them, then move into Scripture.

DISCUSS

Use the questions to move from reaction toward honest application.

PRACTICE

Close with one clear step. Formation grows through repeated obedience, not good intentions alone.



LISTENING DESTINATION

Scan the QR or use the clickable URL. Every session names the exact assigned song.

themyvyn.com/listen-forgivness/

WELCOME TO THE WORK

Forgiveness is freedom—but it is not cheap.

FORGIVENESS is spelled like brokenness because forgiveness usually enters our lives through something broken. This study does not ask you to deny the wound, excuse evil, rush reconciliation, or perform a feeling you do not have. It asks you to bring the real debt into the presence of Jesus and learn what it means to release personal vengeance into His hands.

THE CENTRAL MOVEMENT Mercy flows to us, then through us. Forgiveness is giving others what God has given us, acting by faith when feelings resist, and accepting God’s invitation to leave the prison of resentment.

What this study will—and will not—do

- Ground forgiveness in the gospel, the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus’ parables, and the cross.
- Take wounds seriously while separating forgiveness from automatic reconciliation or restored trust.
- Offer repeatable practices for prayer, boundaries, truth, and freedom.
- Make room for grief, anger, safety planning, pastoral care, and professional support.
- Refuse to use forgiveness as a weapon against the wounded or as cover for ongoing harm.

The three-part prayer

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM. I FORGIVE THEM. FORGIVE ME FOR HOLDING THIS.

This prayer, shared in Roxanne Lauber’s testimony, becomes the practical spine of the study. You may pray it slowly, imperfectly, repeatedly, or begin with: “God, make me willing to become willing.”

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Forgiveness is not the same as access.

FORGIVENESS IS Releasing personal vengeance and the demand to control repayment; entrusting judgment to God; choosing not to let resentment govern your inner life.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT Calling evil good, denying memory, avoiding grief, cancelling consequences, withdrawing a truthful report, abandoning boundaries, or pretending trust has been rebuilt.

Four words that must not be confused

TERM	WORKING DEFINITION
FORGIVENESS	What one heart can choose before God: releasing vengeance and the debt's control.
RECONCILIATION	A restored relationship requiring truth, repentance, safety, and participation from both people.
TRUST	Confidence rebuilt through consistent truth and changed behaviour over time—not demanded as proof of forgiveness.
ACCESS	The practical proximity or influence someone is allowed. Access may remain limited or permanently closed.

SAFETY COMES FIRST If there is ongoing abuse, coercion, threats, stalking, child endangerment, or danger of self-harm, seek immediate qualified help. Forgiveness never requires remaining available for further harm. Leaders should know their church safeguarding and mandated-reporting procedures.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Listen first. Then bring the songs into the room.

Each participant should listen to the assigned tracks and read the Scripture before group. Group time should deepen an encounter already begun—not become the first exposure. During the meeting, play only the first verse and chorus of each track unless time allows more.

**LISTEN TO FORGIVENESS**

Scan to open the hidden listening page. During the prerelease period, it leads to the private Google Drive album folder.

<https://themeyvyn.com/listen-forgiveness/>

A reliable 75-minute rhythm

10 MIN	Welcome, check-in, and opening prayer
10 MIN	Play first verse + chorus from both tracks
15 MIN	Read the primary passage and explore the biblical lens
25 MIN	Discussion—choose the questions that fit your group
10 MIN	Complete the freedom practice
5 MIN	Prayer and next-step commitment

Adaptations

- **COUPLES:** Answer privately first. Do not use the study to force disclosure, confession, contact, or reconciliation.
- **RECOVERY:** Connect resentment inventories with grace, amends, sponsorship, and wise relapse-prevention support.
- **INDIVIDUAL:** Journal every question, but share your freedom plan with one mature and safe person.
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Participants may pass. Confidentiality is expected except where safety or reporting duties apply.

THE JOURNEY

Nine sessions from debt to freedom

01 Mercy We Cannot Earn

1 I Don't Know What I'm Doing | 2 Ten Thousand Bags of Gold

02 Forgiveness Isn't Fair

3 Not Seven Times | 4 It Isn't Fair

03 Grace Must Flow Through Us

5 Hemorrhoids in Their Ears | 6 Flows Through Us

04 Faith for the Second Offense

7 Increase Our Faith | 8 Second Offense

05 The Prison of Bitterness

9 Sandpaper Soul | 10 Given to the Tormentors

06 Meeting Jesus in the Wound

11 Climb Up Here With Me | 12 Father Forgive Them

07 The Three-Part Prayer

13 I Forgive Them | 14 Forgive Me for Holding This

08 Walking into Freedom

15 Let It Go | 16 The Truth Will Set You Free

09 FORGIVENESS: A Personal Freedom Plan

17 FORGIVENESS Sermon by Ron Lauber

Every session includes pre-listening, leader preparation, a biblical lens, discussion, a freedom practice, prayer, safety guidance, and a QR code that opens a ready-to-send homework text.

LEADER PREPARATION

Lead as a shepherd, not a prosecutor.

Forgiveness groups can drift toward forced vulnerability, simplistic answers, or public verdicts about private situations. Your job is to keep Jesus, Scripture, truth, and safety in the centre.

BEFORE EACH SESSION Listen to both tracks, read every passage in context, complete the practice yourself, and identify the questions most appropriate for your group.

IN THE ROOM Model brevity and honesty. Let silence breathe. Never require details, names, eye contact, touch, public prayer, or an immediate forgiveness declaration.

WHEN PAIN SURFACES Thank the person for trusting the room. Do not investigate in public. Offer private follow-up, pastoral support, professional referral, and safety action when required.

WHEN THEOLOGY BECOMES A WEAPON Return to the cross. Forgiveness does not erase truth or consequences. It releases personal vengeance and refuses bitterness the throne.

AFTER THE SESSION Send the homework text, check on anyone who became overwhelmed, document required safeguarding actions, and pray without gossiping.

A leader's opening covenant

"You may share, pass, pause, or step out. We will not compare wounds, demand reconciliation, or confuse forgiveness with restored access. What is shared stays private unless someone is unsafe or reporting duties apply. We will tell the truth, protect the vulnerable, and place final judgment in God's hands."

SESSION 01 / BEFORE GROUP

Mercy We Cannot Earn

1 I Don't Know What I'm Doing | 2 Ten Thousand Bags of Gold

KEY TRUTH Forgiveness begins with surrender: admitting we cannot manage the wound alone and remembering the debt God cancelled for us.

CORE SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:21-35; Ephesians 2:1-10; Ephesians 4:32

Participant preparation

1. Listen to Tracks 1 and 2. Read Matthew 18:21-35 slowly twice. Circle every debt, plea, act of mercy, and consequence.
2. Write one sentence finishing each prompt: “The part I cannot control is ...” and “The mercy I have received is ...” Bring only what you are willing to share.
3. Pray: “Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force.”

Leader preparation

- Complete the participant preparation before leading.
- Read every core passage in its surrounding context; note what the text says and what it does not say.
- Plan to play only the first verse and chorus of each song during group.
- Choose four to six discussion questions. Do not race through all eight.
- Review the Leader Watch on page three and identify any needed safety or referral resources.

Opening question

Without naming another person, what word describes where forgiveness feels today: possible, costly, confusing, unwanted, hopeful, numb, or something else?

PERMISSION TO PASS No participant is required to disclose a story, name an offender, or make a public declaration. Honest silence can be participation.

NOTES



LEADER HOMEWORK TEXT

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SESSION 01 / BEFORE GROUP: MERCY WE CANNOT EARN

SESSION 01 / BIBLICAL LENS

Mercy We Cannot Earn

“But God does” is not passivity

Track 1 begins by releasing the illusion of control. Biblical surrender does not erase wise action; it transfers final control, judgment, and outcome to God.

An impossible debt

Jesus describes a servant owing ten thousand talents—deliberately beyond repayment. His promise to repay everything is not a plan; it is desperation. The king answers with compassion and cancellation.

Forgiven hands can still become stone

The servant leaves mercy and immediately demands a far smaller debt. The warning is not that another person’s wound is trivial. It is that received grace must reshape the way we hold another person’s debt.

Lyric windows

“Bitterness is still a prison / Even when you paint the bars white.”

“I had been forgiven oceans / And demanded drops of gold.”

Discuss the text

4. Where do you hear honest surrender in Track 1 rather than spiritual defeat?
5. Why do you think Jesus made the first servant’s debt impossibly large?
6. What labels can make resentment sound respectable—justice, wisdom, protection, discernment, or something else?
7. What is the difference between acknowledging a real debt and appointing yourself its final collector?

NOTES



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SESSION 01 / BIBLICAL LENS: MERCY WE CANNOT EARN

SESSION 01 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

8. Which is harder for you: receiving mercy without earning it, or extending mercy without seeing repentance?
9. How can remembering your own forgiveness create humility without minimizing what happened to you?
10. What would “opening your fist” look like this week in thought, prayer, speech, or behaviour?
11. Where do you need to pray, “I don’t know what I’m doing, but God does”?

The open-hand ledger

Draw two columns. In the first, name what God has forgiven and restored in you—without graphic detail or self-condemnation. In the second, name what you keep trying to collect from someone else: apology, explanation, reputation, punishment, repayment, or regret. Open your hands and pray over the second column. Do not destroy it yet; simply give God custody.

PRAYER God, I cannot count what Your mercy has cancelled. Loosen my grip on the wheel, the wreckage, and the ledger. Teach me to live like someone who has walked out free. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Do not compare traumas or imply that a grievous injury is “small.” The parable compares every human debt with God’s immeasurable holiness; it does not erase earthly justice, reporting, restitution, or consequences.

Before the next session

Repeat the open-hand prayer once each day. Notice when the mental courtroom reopens, and record what triggered it without judging yourself.



LEADER: SEND THE HOMEWORK TEXT

Scan with your phone. A prefilled text opens with this session’s tracks, Scripture, practice, and listening link. Choose the recipients and send.

QR contains no phone number and sends nothing automatically.

NOTES

SESSION 02 / BEFORE GROUP

Forgiveness Isn't Fair

3 Not Seven Times | 4 It Isn't Fair

KEY TRUTH Forgiveness is not fair. It is grace: releasing personal vengeance because Jesus absorbed a debt we could never repay.

CORE SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:21-35; Romans 5:6-11; Psalm 103:8-12

Participant preparation

12. Listen to Tracks 3 and 4. Read Matthew 18:21-35 and Romans 5:6-11. Note every place mercy disrupts what seems fair.
13. Complete: "If forgiveness were based on what feels fair, I would ..." Then ask: "What did grace give me instead?"
14. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

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Opening question

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SESSION 02 / BEFORE GROUP: FORGIVENESS ISN'T FAIR

SESSION 02 / BIBLICAL LENS

Forgiveness Isn't Fair

Peter wants a ceiling

Seven sounded generous. Jesus answers with a number that dismantles scorekeeping. The point is not a 491st-offense loophole; mercy refuses to become an accountant.

Fairness and justice are not identical

“Fair” often means equal retaliation: you hurt me, so you should hurt. Biblical justice seeks truth, protection, repair, and right judgment. Revenge seeks personal control of another person’s pain.

The cross is gloriously unfair

Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Forgiveness is costly because someone absorbs the loss. Christians do not call evil good; we entrust final judgment to the One whose mercy and justice are both perfect.

Lyric windows

“I wanted the courtroom / He gave me a cross.”

“Thank God forgiveness / Doesn’t play the fair game.”

Discuss the text

15. Why are limits and scorecards so attractive when we have been hurt?
16. What do Tracks 3 and 4 say forgiveness is not?
17. When have you confused revenge with justice?
18. How does the cross preserve the seriousness of sin while offering mercy?

NOTES



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SESSION 02 / BIBLICAL LENS: FORGIVENESS ISN'T FAIR

SESSION 02 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

19. What is the difference between releasing vengeance and removing consequences?
20. Does forgiving “not because I want to” feel dishonest—or faithful? Why?
21. What fair outcome are you demanding before you will allow yourself to be free?
22. How could you seek safety or justice while still surrendering hatred?

Justice, revenge, and grace

Make three short lists about one wound. JUSTICE: what truth, protection, repair, or consequence may still be appropriate? REVENGE: what suffering do I secretly want them to experience? GRACE: what personal claim can I place into God’s hands today? Ask a mature leader for help if the categories blur.

PRAYER Jesus, I wanted repayment; You showed me the cost. Keep me truthful about evil, wise about consequences, and free from the need to retaliate. Thank You that mercy knew my name. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Forgiveness and civil or church accountability can coexist. Never pressure someone to withdraw a report, stop a safety plan, or restore access to an unsafe person.

Before the next session

When the phrase “It isn’t fair” rises this week, answer it with: “No, grace is not fair—and God can be trusted with justice.”



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NOTES

SESSION 03 / BEFORE GROUP

Grace Must Flow Through Us

5 Hemorrhoids in Their Ears | 6 Flows Through Us

KEY TRUTH Grace is not merely something Christians receive. It becomes visible when mercy moves through us toward people who did not earn it.

CORE SCRIPTURE Matthew 5:43-48; Matthew 6:9-15; Ephesians 4:31-32

Participant preparation

23. Listen to Tracks 5 and 6. Read Matthew 5:43-48 and pray the Lord's Prayer slowly, pausing after "as we forgive."
24. Notice the difference between the words you use about an offender in public and the private outcome you wish for them.
25. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

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Opening question

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SESSION 03 / BEFORE GROUP: GRACE MUST FLOW THROUGH US

SESSION 03 / BIBLICAL LENS

Grace Must Flow Through Us

Humour exposes the hidden prayer

Track 5 is funny because retaliation often hides inside respectable religious language. Jesus does not ask us to perform niceness; He asks us to desire and pray for an enemy's true good.

"As we forgive" is formation

The Lord's Prayer ties daily dependence, received mercy, and extended mercy together. We do not purchase God's forgiveness by forgiving. We reveal that grace has entered us when it begins to flow outward.

A river, not a reservoir

Ephesians 4 roots our forgiveness in God's action in Christ. The source is not the offender's worthiness or our emotional abundance. The source is what God has already poured in.

Lyric windows

"I can dress revenge in church clothes / And pretend my soul is calm."

"Forgiveness doesn't end with me / It flows through us."

Discuss the text

26. What makes Track 5's humour effective rather than merely silly?
27. How can someone "weaponize a psalm" or disguise revenge as concern?
28. What does it mean to bless an enemy without approving their behaviour?
29. Why does Jesus connect prayer for enemies with becoming like the Father?

NOTES



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SESSION 03 / BIBLICAL LENS: GRACE MUST FLOW THROUGH US

SESSION 03 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

30. Where has grace pooled in your life instead of flowing through it?
31. Can you honestly pray for an offender's repentance, healing, and freedom? What resistance appears?
32. How might blessing someone change you even if it never changes them?
33. What would a sincere, appropriately bounded prayer of blessing sound like?

From the clenched prayer to the blessing prayer

Write the retaliatory prayer you are tempted to pray—privately and without polishing it. Then write a blessing prayer: “God, bring them into truth. Stop the harm. Lead them to repentance. Heal what is broken in them. Protect those around them. Let Your will be done.” You are not asking God to endorse evil; you are refusing to become it.

PRAYER Father, forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Let the mercy that rescued us move through anger, fear, and every locked room. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Allow laughter, then guide the group beneath it. Sarcasm can reveal pain, but it can also keep pain safely distant. Invite honesty without demanding disclosure.

Before the next session

Pray one brief blessing each day for someone you resent. If direct naming feels overwhelming, begin with: “God, I place them under Your truth and care.”



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NOTES

SESSION 04 / BEFORE GROUP

Faith for the Second Offense

7 Increase Our Faith | 8 Second Offense

KEY TRUTH Forgiving by faith becomes especially difficult when someone wounds a person we love. Protective love must not quietly become a second prison.

CORE SCRIPTURE Luke 17:3-6; Romans 12:17-21; Psalm 62:5-8

Participant preparation

34. Listen to Tracks 7 and 8. Read Luke 17:3-6. Pay attention to what prompted the apostles to ask for greater faith.
35. Name one “second offense”—pain you carry because someone harmed a person you love. Ask what part belongs to them, what part belongs to you, and what belongs to God.
36. Pray: “Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force.”

Leader preparation

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Opening question

Without naming another person, what word describes where forgiveness feels today: possible, costly, confusing, unwanted, hopeful, numb, or something else?

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SESSION 04 / BEFORE GROUP: FAITH FOR THE SECOND OFFENSE

SESSION 04 / BIBLICAL LENS

Faith for the Second Offense

The disciples ask for faith, not better feelings

Jesus' command feels beyond natural capacity. Their response is honest: "Increase our faith." Forgiveness can begin as obedient trust before emotion catches up.

Protective anger can be holy—and still become dangerous

Anger may alert us to harm and move us to protect. But when protection becomes obsession, fantasy, or control of punishment, the second offense chains another heart.

Boundaries are compatible with mercy

Romans 12 forbids personal vengeance; it does not forbid distance, documentation, intervention, or lawful authority. Forgiveness releases revenge. Wisdom decides access.

Lyric windows

"I need grace with holy muscle / For this long and bitter mile."

"It does not mean the wolf comes back / To feed among the sheep."

Discuss the text

37. Why might forgiving harm done to someone you love be harder than forgiving your own wound?
38. What good purpose did your anger initially serve?
39. At what point can protective anger become a courtroom or a cage?
40. How does "increase our faith" differ from "make this stop hurting"?

NOTES



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SESSION 04 / BIBLICAL LENS: FAITH FOR THE SECOND OFFENSE

SESSION 04 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

41. What boundary may still be loving, wise, and necessary?
42. Whose responsibility is repentance? Whose responsibility is justice? Whose responsibility is your surrender?
43. How can you support the person who was harmed without making their wound your identity?
44. What would giving God the “second injury” look like today?

The circles of responsibility

Draw three circles. MY RESPONSIBILITY: prayer, truth, boundaries, support, my own healing. THEIR RESPONSIBILITY: repentance, confession, restitution, changed behaviour. GOD’S RESPONSIBILITY: conviction, judgment, ultimate justice, redemption, outcomes. Move every misplaced burden into its proper circle.

PRAYER Lord, increase our faith. Keep our love courageous and our boundaries wise. We give You the wound that did not hit us but still entered us. Carry what we were never meant to hold. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Do not use Roxanne’s perseverance—or anyone’s choice to stay—as a universal command. If abuse, coercion, threats, stalking, or child endangerment is present, prioritise immediate safety and qualified help.

Before the next session

Review your three circles when anger spikes. Take one action from your circle and surrender one outcome from God’s circle.



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NOTES

SESSION 05 / BEFORE GROUP

The Prison of Bitterness

9 Sandpaper Soul | 10 Given to the Tormentors

KEY TRUTH Unforgiveness promises protection and justice but repeatedly hands our inner life back to the wound.

CORE SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:34-35; Hebrews 12:14-15; Ephesians 4:26-27

Participant preparation

45. Listen to Tracks 9 and 10. Read Hebrews 12:14-15. Identify what the “bitter root” produces in the surrounding soil.
46. For one week, notice how often you rehearse the case: in imaginary arguments, explanations, social media checks, retellings, or attempts to recruit a jury.
47. Pray: “Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force.”

Leader preparation

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Opening question

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SESSION 05 / BEFORE GROUP: THE PRISON OF BITTERNESS

The Prison of Bitterness

Rehearsal keeps the wound present

Memory is not sin, and intrusive memories are not chosen. But intentional rehearsal—returning to the case to feed anger—can turn pain into a governing story.

The tormentors are a warning, not a diagnosis

Ron uses Jesus' image to describe the misery of bitterness: no peace, no joy, no freedom. We should not use it to shame people with trauma symptoms or declare every mental-health struggle spiritual punishment.

Bitterness spreads

Hebrews describes a root that grows and troubles many. Resentment affects speech, sleep, worship, relationships, and the way we interpret new situations. God wants more for us than survival inside that cell.

Lyric windows

"Bitterness is faithful / To keep the wound awake."

"The jailer wore my own face / And whispered, 'Never leave.'"

Discuss the text

48. What does bitterness promise you? What does it actually deliver?
49. How is an intrusive memory different from choosing to rehearse a grievance?
50. Which habits keep your internal courtroom in session?
51. What has resentment cost your body, attention, relationships, worship, or joy?

NOTES



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SESSION 05 / BIBLICAL LENS: THE PRISON OF BITTERNESS

SESSION 05 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

52. Why can rage feel safer than grief?
 53. What truth does the wound repeatedly preach about you, them, or God?
 54. What might it mean for the wound to stop being the loudest voice in your story?
 55. Where do you need both spiritual care and trauma-informed professional support?

Close the courtroom for twenty-four hours

Choose one rehearsal habit to interrupt for one day: retelling, checking, imaginary arguments, accusation disguised as concern, or replaying evidence. When it begins, say: “The case belongs to God. I choose truth, safety, and the next faithful thing.” Then redirect your body—walk, breathe, pray, call a safe person, or complete a concrete task.

PRAYER Jesus, the grudge became a jailer and the wound became a throne. Meet us without shame. Uproot bitterness, restore truth, and teach our bodies and souls how to leave the cell. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Never tell someone with PTSD, depression, anxiety, or intrusive memories that they simply “have not forgiven enough.” Encourage pastoral care and licensed clinical support where appropriate.

Before the next session

Practise the courtroom interruption once daily. Record what triggered the rehearsal, what you chose next, and whether the intensity changed.



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NOTES

SESSION 06 / BEFORE GROUP

Meeting Jesus in the Wound

11 Climb Up Here With Me | 12 Father Forgive Them

KEY TRUTH Jesus does not shout forgiveness instructions from a safe distance. The wounded Savior meets us inside suffering and carries what we cannot.

CORE SCRIPTURE Luke 23:32-34; Isaiah 53:3-6; Psalm 34:18; 1 Peter 2:21-25

Participant preparation

56. Listen to Tracks 11 and 12. Read Luke 23:32-34 and Psalm 34:18. Sit quietly for five minutes with the image of Christ present in your pain.
57. Write: "Jesus, the pain I have not known how to name is ..." Stop whenever you need. You are not required to share the answer.
58. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

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Opening question

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SESSION 06 / BEFORE GROUP: MEETING JESUS IN THE WOUND

SESSION 06 / BIBLICAL LENS

Meeting Jesus in the Wound

The prayer comes from the cross

“Father, forgive them” is not sentimental. Jesus prays while injustice is active and the wounds are open. Forgiveness never means the wound was imaginary.

Presence before process

Roxanne’s testimony is powerful because Jesus first meets her: “I know the pain you are in.” Before forgiveness becomes an assignment, it is companionship with the Man of Sorrows.

A long obedience, not lightning

Her story took years, repeated choices, wise support, and God’s sustaining grace. One person’s path is testimony, not a template. Jesus may lead another person toward distance, reporting, treatment, or permanent boundaries.

Lyric windows

“Grace is not a cheap thing / It does not wave pain away.”

“Father, forgive them / Start where I am hurt.”

Discuss the text

59. What changes when Jesus is seen as present in the wound rather than merely demanding a result?
60. Why is “Father, forgive them” costly rather than cheap?
61. Which part of Roxanne’s testimony gives you hope? Which part requires care not to universalise?
62. What does it mean that forgiveness may be “morning after morning”?

NOTES



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SESSION 06 / BIBLICAL LENS: MEETING JESUS IN THE WOUND

SESSION 06 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

63. How can lament and forgiveness exist together?
 64. What pain have you tried to rush past in order to look spiritual?
 65. Where might Jesus be inviting you to receive care before taking another step?
 66. What boundary or support would help you remain truthful and safe?

The empty chair beside the cross

Place an empty chair near you. Imagine it represents the presence of Jesus—not the offender. Speak honestly: what happened, what it cost, what you fear, and what you cannot yet release. End with: “Jesus, carry with me what I cannot carry through.” Silence is an acceptable prayer.

PRAYER Wounded Savior, You know the pain we are in. Sit with us in the longest day. Hold what we cannot name, protect what must be protected, and let forgiveness grow without denial or force. Amen.

LEADER WATCH This session may surface abuse, addiction, bereavement, betrayal, or trauma. Remind participants they may pass, step out, or speak privately. Know your church’s safeguarding and mandated-reporting procedures before group.

Before the next session

Spend five quiet minutes with Jesus each day. Do not force a forgiveness statement; practise honest presence and ask for the next faithful step.



LEADER: SEND THE HOMEWORK TEXT

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NOTES

SESSION 07 / BEFORE GROUP

The Three-Part Prayer

13 I Forgive Them | 14 Forgive Me for Holding This

KEY TRUTH Forgiveness becomes concrete through a repeatable prayer: Father, forgive them. I forgive them. Forgive me for holding this.

CORE SCRIPTURE Luke 23:34; Colossians 3:12-15; Psalm 139:23-24

Participant preparation

67. Listen to Tracks 13 and 14. Read Colossians 3:12-15. Underline the verbs that describe what believers put on, bear with, forgive, and allow.
68. Write the name or description of one person you may be ready to place into the three-part prayer. Use initials if privacy matters.
69. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

- Complete the participant preparation before leading.
- Read every core passage in its surrounding context; note what the text says and what it does not say.
- Plan to play only the first verse and chorus of each song during group.
- Choose four to six discussion questions. Do not race through all eight.
- Review the Leader Watch on page three and identify any needed safety or referral resources.

Opening question

Without naming another person, what word describes where forgiveness feels today: possible, costly, confusing, unwanted, hopeful, numb, or something else?

PERMISSION TO PASS No participant is required to disclose a story, name an offender, or make a public declaration. Honest silence can be participation.

NOTES



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SESSION 07 / BEFORE GROUP: THE THREE-PART PRAYER

SESSION 07 / BIBLICAL LENS

The Three-Part Prayer

Father, forgive them

We ask God to do what only God can do: pursue truth, awaken repentance, judge rightly, and extend redeeming mercy. This prayer places the offender in God's hands.

I forgive them

This is a decision to release personal vengeance and the demand to control repayment. It may need to be repeated. It does not automatically restore trust, relationship, access, or position.

Forgive me for holding this

We do not repent for being hurt, grieving, remembering, reporting, or needing boundaries. We repent for the ways we enthroned bitterness, fed revenge, distorted truth, or refused God's custody of the debt.

Lyric windows

"I just take my hands off judgment / And give You back it all."

"I wanted resurrection / Without surrendering the tomb."

Discuss the text

70. Which line of the three-part prayer is hardest for you to say? Why?
71. What is released when you say, "I forgive them"? What is not restored automatically?
72. Why is repeated forgiveness not proof that the first prayer was fake?
73. What is the difference between remembering and rehearsing?

NOTES



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SESSION 07 / BIBLICAL LENS: THE THREE-PART PRAYER

SESSION 07 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

74. Where have you dressed accusation in the language of concern?
 75. How can “forgive me for holding this” be used without blaming the injured person?
 76. What evidence would be required before rebuilding trust?
 77. What would open hands look like while wise boundaries remain closed?

Pray it without pretending

Use the three lines slowly. After each, pause and name what it means today. 1) Father, forgive them: “I place their soul and judgment with You.” 2) I forgive them: “I release my right to personal vengeance.” 3) Forgive me for holding this: “Show me where pain became poison.” If you cannot honestly say a line, pray: “Make me willing to become willing.”

PRAYER Father, forgive them. By the mercy You gave us, we forgive them. Forgive us for holding what belongs to You. Search us, lead us, and keep truth and grace together. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Do not require participants to name offenders aloud or contact them. A forced public declaration can be unsafe, performative, or premature. The work is before God first.

Before the next session

Pray the three-part prayer daily for one week. Add the date to your journal each time; note what changes and what returns.



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NOTES

SESSION 08 / BEFORE GROUP

Walking into Freedom

15 Let It Go | 16 The Truth Will Set You Free

KEY TRUTH Freedom is not forgetting the past. It is refusing to let the wound remain your jailer, preacher, or identity.

CORE SCRIPTURE John 8:31-36; Galatians 5:1; Philippians 3:12-14

Participant preparation

78. Listen to Tracks 15 and 16. Read John 8:31-36 in context. Note the connection between continuing in Jesus' word, knowing truth, and becoming free.

79. Complete: "The truth is I was wounded ... The truth is they were wrong ... The truth is God has not abandoned me ... The truth is my next step is ..."

80. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

- Complete the participant preparation before leading.
- Read every core passage in its surrounding context; note what the text says and what it does not say.
- Plan to play only the first verse and chorus of each song during group.
- Choose four to six discussion questions. Do not race through all eight.
- Review the Leader Watch on page three and identify any needed safety or referral resources.

Opening question

Without naming another person, what word describes where forgiveness feels today: possible, costly, confusing, unwanted, hopeful, numb, or something else?

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SESSION 08 / BEFORE GROUP: WALKING INTO FREEDOM

SESSION 08 / BIBLICAL LENS

Walking into Freedom

Truth is larger than the wound

Freedom does not require false positivity. Track 16 names both truths: “I was wounded” and “I was pardoned.” The injury is true, but it is not the whole truth about God, you, or your future.

Letting go is often repeated

Track 15 rejects the fantasy of a one-time emotional release. Some days the same sorrow returns. Forgiveness becomes a practised direction, not a perfect feeling.

Freedom needs a new way to live

Leaving a cell is not the end of recovery. We learn new thoughts, relationships, boundaries, prayers, and habits. Christ frees us not merely from something, but for love, worship, courage, and life.

Lyric windows

“Forgiveness is not lying / It does not call the darkness light.”

“Freedom means the wound stops preaching.”

Discuss the text

81. What false message has your wound been preaching?
82. Which truths in Track 16 need to be held together rather than choosing only one?
83. Why can “let it go” sound cruel when detached from lament, truth, and safety?
84. What is the difference between a returning feeling and reversing your decision to forgive?

NOTES



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SESSION 08 / BIBLICAL LENS: WALKING INTO FREEDOM

SESSION 08 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

85. What new habit could replace one resentment habit?
 86. What freedom have you already noticed during this study?
 87. What boundary protects freedom rather than punishing the offender?
 88. What are you now free for?

Write a freedom statement

Write five lines: 1) What happened was wrong. 2) What it cost me was real. 3) I release personal vengeance to God. 4) The boundary or next wise action is _____. 5) By Christ's grace, this wound will not define my identity or future. Read it when old rehearsals return.

PRAYER Jesus, You are the truth who sets captives free. Keep us honest about the past and hopeful about the future. Teach us to walk out of the cell and into the life Your grace has opened. Amen.

LEADER WATCH Avoid celebrating only dramatic breakthroughs. Quiet changes matter: sleeping better, fewer rehearsals, asking for help, setting a boundary, praying honestly, or feeling grief without feeding revenge.

Before the next session

Read your freedom statement daily. Add one concrete action that uses your recovered attention for love, service, rest, creativity, or worship.



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NOTES

SESSION 09 / BEFORE GROUP

FORGIVENESS: A Personal Freedom Plan

17 FORGIVENESS Sermon by Ron Lauber

KEY TRUTH Forgiveness is giving others what God has given us, acting by faith, and accepting God's invitation into freedom.

CORE SCRIPTURE Matthew 18:21-35; Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 17:3-6; John 8:31-36

Participant preparation

89. Listen to Ron Lauber's complete sermon, including Roxanne's testimony. Re-read the four core passages and review your notes from Sessions 1-8.
90. Identify the one truth, lyric, Scripture, or practice that has most changed your understanding of forgiveness.
91. Pray: "Jesus, show me the truth without shame and the next faithful step without force."

Leader preparation

- Complete the participant preparation before leading.
- Read every core passage in its surrounding context; note what the text says and what it does not say.
- Plan to play only the first verse and chorus of each song during group.
- Choose four to six discussion questions. Do not race through all eight.
- Review the Leader Watch on page three and identify any needed safety or referral resources.

Opening question

Without naming another person, what word describes where forgiveness feels today: possible, costly, confusing, unwanted, hopeful, numb, or something else?

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SESSION 09 / BEFORE GROUP: FORGIVENESS: A PERSONAL FREEDOM PLAN

SESSION 09 / BIBLICAL LENS

FORGIVENESS: A Personal Freedom Plan

Giving what God has given

Ron's first definition is gospel-shaped: forgiveness flows from Christ's mercy to us and then through us. The source is grace, not emotional strength.

An act of faith

The apostles' "increase our faith" recognises that forgiveness often begins before feelings cooperate. Faith entrusts the offender, the outcome, and the future to God.

An opportunity for freedom

Forgiveness cannot control another person's response, repair the past, or guarantee reconciliation. It can change the heart that has been living beneath the debt.

Lyric windows

Ron: *"Forgiveness doesn't just flow to us; it flows through us."*

Roxanne: *"Jesus ... will bear it with you, and we'll share it together."*

Discuss the text

92. Which of Ron's three definitions do you most need now: gift, faith, or freedom?
93. What did Roxanne's testimony reveal that a list of principles could not?
94. How has your definition of forgiveness changed?
95. What have you learned forgiveness does not require?

NOTES



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SESSION 09 / BIBLICAL LENS: FORGIVENESS: A PERSONAL FREEDOM PLAN

SESSION 09 / RESPONSE AND PRACTICE

Continue the conversation

96. Where do you still need truth, protection, accountability, or professional care?
 97. Which resentment habit has weakened? Which one still needs attention?
 98. Who can help you continue this work without becoming your jury?
 99. What will freedom make possible in the next thirty days?

Build your thirty-day freedom plan

Complete five commitments: TRUTH I will keep naming; DEBT I place with God; BOUNDARY I will maintain or seek counsel about; PRAYER I will repeat; FREEDOM HABIT I will practise. Choose one safe person who may ask about your plan in two weeks and again in thirty days.

PRAYER Father, forgive them. We forgive them by the mercy You gave us. Forgive us for holding what belongs to You. Increase our faith, protect the vulnerable, lead offenders to repentance, and teach every captive to walk in truth. Amen.

LEADER WATCH End with hope, not pressure. Some participants will experience release; others will have only begun. Faithfulness may look like a first prayer, a safety call, a counselling appointment, or the decision to stop rehearsing for one day.

Before the next session

Follow your thirty-day plan. At days 7, 14, and 30, review what changed, what returned, what support is needed, and what the next faithful step will be.



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NOTES

THIRTY-DAY FREEDOM PLAN

Freedom needs somewhere to walk.

TRUTH I WILL KEEP NAMING What happened, what it cost, and what God says now.

DEBT I PLACE WITH GOD The apology, repayment, explanation, punishment, or outcome I cannot control.

BOUNDARY I WILL MAINTAIN The limit that protects truth, safety, recovery, or wise stewardship.

PRAYER I WILL REPEAT The three-part prayer, a blessing prayer, or “make me willing to become willing.”

FREEDOM HABIT I WILL PRACTISE A replacement for rehearsal: worship, walking, service, counselling, rest, journaling, or calling a safe person.

PERSON WHO MAY CHECK ON ME A mature person who will support freedom without becoming my jury.

Review dates: Day 7 _____ Day 14 _____ Day 30 _____

A FINAL PRAYER**The door is open.****Father, forgive them.**

Not because the wound was small,
not because truth no longer matters,
and not because trust is cheap.

By the mercy You gave us, we forgive them.

We release personal vengeance,
the courtroom we kept reopening,
and the sentence we could never enforce.

Forgive us for holding what belongs to You.

Meet us where pain is still tender.
Protect the vulnerable. Expose what is hidden.
Lead offenders to repentance and repair.

Increase our faith.

Let grace flow through us.
Let the wound stop preaching.
Let truth turn the key.

We do not know what we are doing—
but God does.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE INDEX

Read these passages in full.

PASSAGE	ROLE IN THE STUDY
Matthew 5:43-48	Love and pray for enemies
Matthew 6:9-15	The Lord's Prayer and "as we forgive"
Matthew 18:21-35	Seventy times seven and the unmerciful servant
Luke 17:3-6	Repeated forgiveness and "increase our faith"
Luke 23:32-34	Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them"
John 8:31-36	Truth, sin, sonship, and freedom
Romans 5:6-11	Mercy while we were still sinners
Romans 12:17-21	No personal vengeance; overcome evil with good
Ephesians 2:1-10	Saved by grace, not earned repayment
Ephesians 4:26-32	Anger, bitterness, kindness, and forgiveness
Colossians 3:12-15	Put on compassion and forgive as the Lord forgave
Hebrews 12:14-15	The bitter root that troubles many
1 Peter 2:21-25	The suffering Christ entrusts Himself to the righteous Judge
Psalms 34:18	The Lord near to the brokenhearted
Psalms 103:8-12	God's compassion and removal of sin
Psalms 139:23-24	Invite God to search and lead the heart

STUDY NOTE Short lyric excerpts are used for discussion. Read the complete biblical passages in your preferred translation and listen to each full song before group.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

Brokenness, even in the word.

FORGIVENESS: The Freedom We Don't Deserve is a stripped-down Christian folk album inspired by a sermon from Ron Lauber. Built around the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 18, recovery, mercy, and the prison of bitterness, the album tells the truth: forgiveness is not fair, not easy, and not optional—but it is an invitation into freedom.

The study follows the sermon's three movements:

- Forgiveness is giving others what God has given us.
- Forgiveness is an act of faith.
- Forgiveness is an opportunity for freedom.

Acknowledgment

With gratitude to Ron and Roxanne Lauber for offering more than principles: an honest testimony of addiction, betrayal, endurance, recovery, costly forgiveness, and the grace of Jesus inside a long story.

**LISTEN TO THE ALBUM**

Scan to listen to FORGIVENESS and share the hidden listening page with your group.

<https://themeyvyn.com/listen-forgiveness/>

A note to participants

This workbook provides biblical formation and group discussion, not medical, legal, or mental-health treatment. If your story includes abuse, danger, trauma, addiction, self-harm, or criminal conduct, include qualified pastoral, clinical, legal, recovery, or emergency support in your next faithful step.

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