

## ***The Gospel of Matthew: Church Discipline***

Icebreaker: How did you practice BLESS this week?

Discussion: For group discussion to be fruitful and engaging for everyone in your group, make sure that your discussion groups are not larger than 4 people. If possible, break up into groups of 2 or 3.

Larger Group: (5 minutes)

- Welcome everyone
- Introduce the direction for the evening.
  - Read Ephesians 4:32 highlight the following
    - The starting place of this conversation is that we are forgiven - “God in Christ forgave you.”
    - Our goal is to “forgive one another”
    - So, let us “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted”
  - Which of the previous statements is harder for you to receive?
- Break into smaller groups

Smaller Groups (20-25 minutes) Give the following instructions and break into small groups (2-3 people).

Have someone read Matthew 18:21-35. The context of Peter’s question is Jesus’s teaching on how we handle it when people sin against us (Matthew 18:15-17). Jesus is clear: we can forgive much because we have been forgiven much!

- Jesus’ parable reveals a king that doesn’t treat people as they deserve.
  - What’s the hardest thing for you about not treating others as they deserve?
- The servant miscalculates the size of his debt (18:26).
  - What are some ways that you have miscalculated the debt you owe God? Others?
  - What are some ways that you have tried to bargain with God rather than simply ask for mercy?
- In Jesus’ parable unforgiveness is shocking to the fellow servants.
  - Have you considered how shocking it is when you fail to forgive someone? Please explain.
  - In light of how much you have been forgiven by God, what hinders you from forgiving others?

Have someone read John 13:17.

- Jesus says this because he wants us to live a blessed life. How does this help you as we consider forgiving other people?
  - How can we help each other to practice forgiveness today?
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*(see more on next page)*

Larger Group:

Return to larger group to give summary of your discussion in smaller groups (5-10 minutes)

Have someone read John 13:35. How does forgiveness help the progress of the gospel?

Allow time to pray for the lost, end with B.L.E.S.S. (10-15 minutes)

Where are group members in the B.L.E.S.S. process? Model for them how to answer briefly, for example:

"I'm praying for \_\_\_\_\_".

"I have been having good conversations with

\_\_\_\_\_". "I'm having lunch with \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ on

\_\_\_\_\_ (day of the week)."

Closing prayer - (2-5-minutes)