



October 31st Discussion Guide

Proactive Forgiveness: Matthew 5:38-42

This is a 5 week study from the Book of Matthew. Content for this discussion guide is based on the sermon, so participation in weekly worship will enhance the conversation on this topic. If you want to watch the sermon it can be viewed at [Sermons Archive - Good Shepherd Church Naperville](#)

Prayer

Open your group in prayer.

Icebreaker (10 min)

Share with your group about your favorite costumes, candy, or fall rituals.

Discussion (45 min)

1. Read Matthew 5:38-42 and Exodus 21:22-25 (also Lev. 24:20, Deut 19:21)
 - a. Discuss the difference between the “you have heard...” and Jesus’ “but I tell you...” facts in the Matthew passage.
 - b. How have we misinterpreted “eye for an eye” to permit retaliation, instead of punishment that appropriately fits the crime?
 - c. Read 1 Cor 6:1-8, Deut 15:7-11, Matthew 18:21-22. How does Jesus and Scripture command us to respond to our enemies? How do you usually respond?
2. What do each of these verses say about forgiveness?
 - a. Ephesians 4:32
 - b. Matthew 6:14
 - c. Colossians 3:13
 - d. Luke 6:37
3. How can you benefit from forgiving someone who has not apologized or does not deserve forgiveness? Why should we forgive? (see Ephesians 2:4-5)
4. Read Psalm 18:16, 55:22, Matthew 11:28-30, 1 Cor. 4:5. How do these verses guide and encourage you to forgive?
5. Share a time when you forgave someone or were forgiven by someone when it was not deserved.

Application question: What will you do differently this week to obey this passage of Scripture?

LORD, You demonstrated Your own love for us by dying for us while we were still sinners. We pray for the power and strength to forgive like You do. Remove the weight and sorrow of retaliation, unforgiveness and bitterness so we may have freedom! We trust our circumstances to You, the Just Judge.

