

# SERMON SERIES DISCIPLING GUIDE

Series: As It Is In Heaven • Sermon: The Way of the King • Date: Jan. 12/13, 2019 • Speaker: Ron Gray

## INTRODUCTION

Take some time to check in from last week and pray together. Pray specifically for open ears to hear what God may be saying to each person in the group.

Read through **Matthew 5:38-48**.

Ron took some time to clearly encourage and remind everyone that God loves us; that there would be no one thinking otherwise. Why do you think that is so important with this scripture?

Think of a time where someone insulted you. **Be bold and share.** *What was your response? What would it have looked like to employ Jesus' words in that situation? What are the difficulties that all of us face when trying to "turn the other cheek"? Despite the difficulties, what are the possibilities if we do follow Jesus' words?*

This all leads us to forgiveness. Read **Ephesians 4:31-32**. We are to remove evil and seek to be forgiving. We are to be forgiving to those who we feel inconvenience us and give them time. We need to trust God to cover any sense of loss we have felt. We need to forgive injustices. It's the radical message of Jesus, and if we are honest with ourselves it just sometimes doesn't sit right.

Why do you think we justify our non-forgiveness? What stands in the way of forgiving? Why is it that forgiving can "just not feel right" to us?

Forgiving is a powerful spiritual weapon that Jesus has given us and modelled. It helps us loosen the grip that person has had on our lives. It helps heal. It helps separate and cut any unhealthy bond. It does not restore trust or relationship; but it can release you from ongoing negative effects (spiritual, emotional, etc.) and remove a possible foothold where the enemy can grip onto and leverage. **When done honestly and earnestly, forgiveness is powerful.**

## PRAYER EXERCISE

So let's move from the theoretical to the personal. It may be good to do this in groups of 2-3 instead of a big group.

1. Take 3 minutes to quietly pray. Ask God if there is anyone you need to forgive. List their name(s).
2. Take some time to discuss (careful to be wise and tactful depending on present company - and careful to only state the situation or memory, not to slander). *Who has He put on your heart? Why? What was the offense? What was the pain? What was your response?*
3. Slowly, pray through this prayer of forgiveness out loud, taking time for each person to have the opportunity.

*"Jesus, I give you all of my pain and the offense that I have just voiced. I choose not to carry it any more. I choose to forgive (name of person) and not hold these things against him/her/them. I release them from my judgments and from all debts they might owe me. I release them to you, Lord for a blessing. Forgive me Father for carrying this offense. Thank you that you have forgiven me."*

*"Jesus, I give you all the pain that has come from this incident. I hand it over to you along with (name of person)."*

*"Lord God, is there a way that I have reacted to this offense that I need to repent of?"*

**--- If God reveals something to you, confess it ---**

*"Holy Spirit come and fill me with yourself. All the places where unforgiveness and evil have taken up space in my life, I ask you now to fill me and seal the work you have done by the life of your Spirit in me."*

There is nothing easy about all of this - so encourage one another and end your time together with a prayer of blessing.