

Overcoming Through Forgiveness – Mary 4 & 5, 2019
Follow-up Bible Studies

Written by Maggie Baxter

Day One: Micah 7:18-20

- In this conclusion of Micah's prophecy, what rhetorical question is found (18)? Regarding their sin, how is the Lord gracious to his people (18)? Describe both God's anger and mercy (18). Imagine for a moment God as merciless and ceaselessly angry. What would that mean for you? What will the Lord do again (19)?
- What imagery captures the power of God's forgiveness (19)? Recall times when your sin weighed you down. Why do you think you felt this way? Re-read verse 19. Picture your sin "hurled to the depths of the sea." How does this make you feel?
- How does the prophet remind the Lord of his faithfulness and love (20)? God's forgiveness is both a supreme act of compassion and a faithful display of love. Consider whether this motivates you to forgive those who've sinned against you. What are some steps you can take to forgive as you've been forgiven?

Day Two: Matthew 6:9-15

- What is Jesus teaching his followers to do (9)? Who does Jesus talk to when prays (9)? When you're hurt or worried and go to God in prayer, what is your picture of him? A father? A friend? Or something else? How do you think he sees *you* in prayer?
- What does Jesus say about God (9)? What does he want to happen (10)? What does he ask for each day (11)? Describe his request for forgiveness (12). What protection does he desire (13)? Receive God's forgiveness and deliverance; taste his Kingdom in this way. What are some ways you can invite others to partake?
- What happens when we forgive people (14)? What about when we fail to do so (15)? If Jesus indeed forgives us according to the way we forgive others, what does this mean for you? Talk to God about any worry or relief this brings to your heart. Pray you would make room in your life for the hard, multi-step work of forgiveness. How will you begin to walk this out?

Day Three: Matthew 18:21-35

- What did Peter ask Jesus (21)? Why do you think he asked this; what was on his mind? How did Jesus respond (22)? This is his way of saying our forgiveness of others should be unlimited. Talk to the Lord about what makes it hard for you to unconditionally forgive. What do you sense him speaking in response?
- Summarize the parable Jesus then tells (23-34). Do you see yourself in the story? Explain. What does the parable convey about the role of forgiveness in the Christian's life, both now and in eternity (35)? What do you think it means to forgive from your heart, and what do you need from the Lord in order to do this?
- Take a deep breath and imagine God's forgiveness as the air in your lungs. If you did nothing but try to hold it in, you would die. Now, breathe out, imagining it as a gentle wind of forgiveness touching those who've sinned against you. Repeat this a few times; allowing pertinent people and memories to come to mind.

Day Four: Matthew 26:26-30

- Set the scene of this text (26). What did Jesus do (26)? What did he say about the bread (26)? What did he do next (27)? What did he say about the cup (27-28)? Communion is a pause to remember that our sins are forgiven not because we've earned it, but because of Jesus' sacrifice. If you keep this at the forefront of your mind each time you

take communion, what might you gain? What about those who've wounded you – how will it impact them?

- When will Jesus next drink from this cup (29)? What do you think he means by this? How do you think the disciples felt during these moments with Jesus? Do you think they had any idea at all of what Jesus' immediate and long-term future would look like? After dinner, what did everyone do (30)? Picture yourself next to Jesus, singing with him and walking with him. Even without full understanding of who he is, what impact is he making on you?

Day Five: John 20:19-23

- Shortly after Jesus' crucifixion and Mary Magdalene's report of his resurrection, what were the disciples doing (19)? Why do you think they feared the Jewish leaders?
- Describe Jesus' sudden appearance (19). What did he say to the disciples, and what did he do (19-20)? What do you make of this greeting? How did the disciples respond (20)?
- What did Jesus then repeat, and what charge did he give the disciples (21)? Why *did* the Father send the son to Earth? What sort of impact do you sense this should make on how you interact with others – especially those who've hurt you?
- What did Jesus do next (22)? What do you think this moment was like for the disciples? What did Jesus tell them to receive (22)? And what did he say about forgiveness (23)? So soon after his resurrection, why do you think Jesus spoke about this? Today, what is he speaking to *you* about forgiveness?