

Beyond Sunday

7.5.2026 — Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Fundamental Attribution Error — *Matthew 18:23-35* — Dan Perkins

Gather

These questions help build connections with others as you share personal experiences.

1. Think of a time when you hoped someone would give you the benefit of the doubt instead of judging you by one mistake. What happened?
2. Why do you think it is often easier to notice other people's faults than our own? Can you think of a recent example?

Grow

These questions guide your group through Scripture from Sunday's sermon, helping us better understand God's Word and His work in our lives.

1. Read: **Matthew 18:21-35**

- Why do you think Peter suggested forgiving someone seven times? What does Jesus' response ("seventy-seven times" or "seventy times seven," depending on your translation) teach us about God's view of forgiveness?
- How does Jesus shift the conversation from "How much is enough?" to something much bigger?
- The servant owed an impossible debt—one he could never repay. What does this enormous debt represent?
- What does the king's decision to completely cancel the debt reveal about God's grace toward us?
- Why is it significant that the servant could only ask for mercy rather than earn forgiveness?
- Why do you think the forgiven servant was unable (or unwilling) to extend the same mercy he had received?

2. Read: **Hebrews 4:15, Luke 23:34, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:1-5. Then discuss:**

- What do these passages teach us about how Jesus understands our human situation?

- Why is it significant that Jesus, who alone could rightly judge us, instead chose mercy and sacrifice?
- How does remembering the cross change the way we view people who have hurt us?

3. Responding to the quote, "Unlimit your forgiveness because you've received unlimited forgiveness."

- What makes forgiveness difficult in real life?
- What is the difference between forgiving someone and pretending that the hurt never happened?
- How does remembering God's forgiveness empower us to forgive others?

Give / Go

These questions help us apply God's Word in practical ways.

1. Is there someone you've been viewing primarily through their worst moment instead of through the lens of grace? What might change if you chose to extend mercy instead of judgment?
2. What is one practical step you can take this week toward forgiveness? It might be praying for someone, initiating a conversation, releasing bitterness to God, or asking forgiveness from someone you've wronged.

Prayer

Prayer Focus:

Spend time thanking God for the immeasurable debt He has forgiven through Jesus Christ. Ask Him to soften your heart toward those who have hurt you and to help you see people through His eyes of compassion rather than judgment.

You may close by praying **Ephesians 4:32** together:

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Prayer Question:

How can our group specifically pray for you this week as you seek to receive God's forgiveness more deeply or extend forgiveness to someone else?

Going Deeper

If you are interested in exploring the themes of this week a bit deeper, check out one of these resources:

Book

- **Forgive: Why Should I & How Can I?** By Timothy Keller
- <https://a.co/d/05ROjns1>

Video

- **BibleProject: Characteristics of God: "Grace"**
- <https://bibleproject.com/videos/character-of-god-grace/>

Article:

- **How to Avoid the Fundamental Attribution Factor** by Scott Crabtree
- <https://www.happybrainscience.com/blog/how-to-avoid-the-fundamental-attribution-error/>