

Praying Through Matthew 18:21-35

International Bible Lesson

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Lord Jesus, we seek to obey You because we love You. With words and actions, You have told and shown Peter and us that we should not even bother to count the number of times we forgive someone because we have developed the godly practice of forgiving all those who come to us and ask us to forgive them. Please help us appreciate and understand how much and how many times You have forgiven us. Remembering Your forgiveness, please help us to always be ready to confess our sins and repent of our sins with deep sorrow whenever we are carried away by our self-interest into sin once again. Please continue to teach us truths from Your Word, help us look for ways to promote Your interests, and give us the guidance and power of Your Spirit to do Your will.

Lord Jesus, remembering how You died in our place to lead us to repentance and faith in You, we pray that You would help us share this good news with others who need to know of Your love for them and Your desire to forgive them for all their sins. Lord, some have sinned against us in ways that have hurt us deeply. But we know how wicked people sinned against You in ways similar to but far worse than we have experienced. And as You died on the cross, You remained willing to forgive them. Please help us become willing to forgive all who have sinned against us whether or not we anticipate their ever coming to us with sorrowful repentant hearts. Please give us the ability to forgive them from our hearts whether they ever repent and ask our forgiveness or not. Help us to pray for them so they can come into a right relationship with You — the most important relationship in this world and in the next. In Your Name, we pray. Amen.

Please Note: I first learned about “Praying Through the Bible” from Edith Schaeffer, the wife of Francis Schaeffer. You might like to close your class with the above prayer as a way of beginning to teach your class how they too can pray through the Bible. First, you might like to teach your class how to pray through the *International Bible Lessons* each week. [Perhaps some of them would learn how to pray through portions of the Bible during their daily Bible reading and quiet time.] Second, a week in advance, perhaps some of your students would like to write their own “Prayer Through the Bible” using the *International Bible Lesson* scripture text and read their prayer at the close of class. Third, eventually, your students will be able to pray through the Bible without needing to write their prayer in advance before they pray at the end of class. If you would like to learn more about prayer from Edith Schaeffer, read [How God Teaches Us to Pray](#): Lessons from the Lives of Francis and Edith Schaeffer, Kindle Edition, by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.