

## THE GOSPEL

### LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Sermon Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026

Sermon Passage(s): Romans 6:23, Matthew 18:21-35; Leviticus 16 (selections)

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### This Week's Main Takeaway

The gospel is this: What sin earned for us, Christ took for us, so that the life we could never earn could be freely given to us by grace.

### This Week's Memory Verse

*Romans 6:23 (NIV), "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

### Five Inductive Questions

#### 1. GOD :: What does this passage imply about *God*?

"But God..."

These words are some of the most powerful words from Scripture. In Matthew 18, we read about who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (vs.1-4), caution on causing others to sin (vs. 6-13), the practice of church discipline (vs. 15-20), and lastly what forgiveness looks like (vs. 21-35). In all this, we see the Father's heart for Biblical living and restoration in the context of the local church.

Leviticus 16 and Matthew 18:21-35 serve as a power reminder of the gospel: Jesus in my place. He forgave us of sin, something we could never do on our own account. He is enough. Romans 6:23 reminds us that the gift of God is a *gift*; we don't have to do anything to earn it. One commentator says, "Eternal life is in a Person, and that Person is Christ Jesus our Lord. All who are in Christ have eternal life."

#### 2. MAN :: What does this passage imply about *man*?

Biblically, sin carries significant weight.

In Matthew 18:21-35, we read about the unmerciful servant—one who was forgiven but then unwilling to forgive another (Matthew 21:33-34). In Leviticus 16:3, 6, 11, and 15, we see that the heaviness of sin required the transfer of people's sin to the scapegoat and the shedding of innocent blood to atone for sin. One commentator says, "Our debt is deep—infinately deep. But

Christ has paid it. Out of sheer compassion, the Father sent His Son to endure the wrath you and I deserve, and now we are free from sin's penalty—free not only as a servant, but as a son!" We come to Christ initially with child-like humility (because we can't fix the problem on our own) and then continue to follow Him. The way we live should reflect Christ.

### **3. PROMISE :: Is there a *promise* to claim in this passage?**

The gospel is this: What sin earned for us, Christ took for us, so that the life we could never earn could be freely given to us by grace. Jesus was both the Scapegoat and Lamb of God for all of humanity simultaneously for all time (Romans 6:23b), not just for one people group, for one year at a time (Leviticus 16:34).

### **4. COMMAND :: Is there a *command* to obey in this passage?**

Since Jesus forgave us, we are called to extend grace to others (Matthew 18:35).

For Matthew 18:21-35, one commentator says, "Because we have received extravagant grace in Christ, as Christians, we now extend extravagant grace. How harsh for this servant who was forgiven a large fortune to go to a man who owed him a tiny fraction of that amount and put him in prison for failure to pay. That's outlandish! Yet for a Christian not to forgive is to do the exact same thing. The Bible is not saying that it's easy to forgive or that it's natural to forgive; however, it's *Christian* to forgive. In fact, the Christian has no other option. We forgive not because we have to, but because in love we are compelled to. Only Jesus can enable the kind of forgiving heart this passage calls for."

### **5. REPENT :: Reflecting on this portion of God's Word, what can I *repent* of this week?**

*Have you accepted the free gift of salvation? Has salvation changed the way you live and forgive others?*

Sources:

*Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in Matthew (Holman Publishers)*

*CSB Study Bible Notes (B&H Publishing)*

*Believer's Bible Commentary (Thomas Nelson)*