

Who Gets Left Out of Our Prayers

Mercy after Personal Harm

War Room Prayer Line Student Handout Bible Study by Phone

Friday, October 9, 2026 | 7:00 AM ET | Facilitator: Ed Gray

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Central Thought

Praying for someone who harmed us can begin with asking God to stop the harm and lead that person to genuine repentance. We can seek protection and accountability while learning the Father's mercy.

Opening Question

Who gets left out of our prayers, and what does that reveal about the limits of our compassion?

Key Biblical Movement

The wound → The command → The mirror → Accountability → Honest prayer

We bring our pain before God, hear what Jesus asks, examine our response, and begin a prayer that seeks changed conduct and wisdom.

Foundational Scriptures

- Luke 6:27–36 Jesus calls us to love, do good, bless, and pray.
- Jonah 3:8, 10; 4:1–11 Repentance changes conduct; God's mercy exposes Jonah's resistance.
- Romans 12:17–19, 21 Refuse revenge, do your part for peace, and overcome evil with good.

Scripture Reading Guide

Supporting passage	What to notice
John 18:22–23	Jesus challenges a wrong without striking back.
Luke 19:8–9	Zacchaeus offers restitution as part of his changed life.
Job 23:10	Job speaks of God's knowledge while still struggling.

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version. Study length: 30 minutes.

Major Teaching Movements

Hearing What Jesus Asks of Us

Read Luke 6:27–36 and notice the actions Jesus gives people who have experienced hatred, cursing, and mistreatment.

Luke 6 verses 27 through 36

27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

“Despitefully use” means mistreat. Disagreement alone does not make someone an enemy. Jesus calls us to costly love and generosity while our feelings may still be painful.

John 18 verses 22 and 23

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

Jesus names the wrong without retaliating. Read his conduct alongside Luke 6: refusing revenge can include speaking truth and seeking protection from ongoing harm.

WRITE THIS DOWN The person who hurt me is responsible for their action. I am responsible for the response I choose.

Seeing Ourselves in Jonah

Nineveh turns from violence. God relents from the threatened calamity. Jonah knows God is merciful, yet becomes angry when these people receive mercy.

Jonah 3 verses 8 and 10

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Here, “God repented of the evil” means God relented from the calamity he had warned about. It does not describe God committing a moral wrong.

Jonah 4 verses 1 through 11

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

3 Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?

5 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

6 And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

The “gourd” is the plant that gives Jonah shade; “sixscore thousand” means 120,000. God’s final question turns Jonah’s attention from his comfort toward the people of the city.

WRITE THIS DOWN If the person genuinely changed, would I welcome that change?

Practicing Mercy with Accountability

Romans 12 verses 17 through 19 and 21

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you” acknowledges a limit. We are responsible for our part; peace also depends on what the other person is willing to do. We can seek a just outcome without making another person’s suffering our purpose.

Luke 19 verses 8 and 9

8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

Zacchaeus voluntarily offers repair. Genuine repentance includes facing what happened and changing conduct. We can pray for repentance while seeking restitution and watching for evidence of change over time.

Job 23 verse 10

10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Job speaks while still struggling. Ed’s testimony also includes more than ten years of recovery. Healing can take time, and we can bring our unfinished struggle before God.

Principles to Carry Forward

- Prayer can seek the person’s well-being, an end to harmful behavior, and genuine repentance.
- Protection, truthful reporting, boundaries, and accountability can serve people’s good.
- Reconciliation involves both people. Prayer can begin even when the other person refuses responsibility.
- Welcoming genuine repentance and verifying a claim of repentance are different tasks. Trust takes evidence over time.

WRITE THIS DOWN Can I seek truth and repair without making revenge my purpose?

F.A.I.T.H. means “Forsaking All, I’ll Trust Him.” Trusting God includes seeking wisdom and acting responsibly while entrusting to him the outcome we cannot control.

Discussion and Personal Reflection

Reflect privately. During discussion, share a principle without naming anyone or revealing personal details.

1. What becomes hardest when you think about praying for someone who harmed you?
2. Which action in Luke 6 challenges you most: love, do good, bless, or pray?
3. What does Jonah's response reveal about knowing God's mercy but resisting its reach?
4. What is the difference between seeking accountability and seeking revenge?
5. What evidence would show that repentance has reached someone's conduct?
6. Is there someone whose genuine repentance you would struggle to welcome?

This Week's Practice

Privately choose one person you struggle to pray for. Each day, tell God honestly where you resist, ask for the harm to stop, pray for genuine repentance, and seek wisdom for your response. Contact with the person is not required.

Beginning an Honest Prayer

Lord, you know what happened and what it cost. Bring the truth to light. Stop the harmful behavior and protect everyone affected. Care for this person and lead them to genuine repentance. Help them accept responsibility and repair what they can. Give me wisdom about boundaries and the next faithful step. Keep me from passing my pain to someone else. Help me live freely while I rebuild. In Jesus' name, amen.

Closing Declaration

Father, teach us your mercy without abandoning truth. Protect those who are being harmed, care for those who are rebuilding, and help us seek justice with integrity. Form your character in our responses. In Jesus' name, amen.

WRITE THIS DOWN Can I ask God to transform the person who hurt me while trusting him to care for the wounds they left?

Notes

The principle I need to carry with me:

The next faithful step I will take:
