



SERMON STUDY GUIDE

“Matthew 18:21-35” on April 8th and 11th, 2021

CONNECT

How did last week's passage we read/discussed from John 20:1-23 affect your week?

DISCOVER: MATTHEW 18:21-35

1. What did the passage say (in your own words) or did you take away from the sermon this week?
2. How does this passage or did the sermon point you to Jesus (teach us about Jesus)?
3. Did you find anything challenging about this passage (words you didn't understand, phrases that didn't make sense, etc.)?

MATTHEW 18:21-35 In this passage, Jesus uses the Parable of the Unforgiving Debtor to teach His disciples about forgiveness – that the very nature/essence of God is forgiveness, and what that meant in the lives of those who were about to become leaders of His Church.

FORGIVENESS: Think about the concept of 'forgiveness.' What does 'forgiveness' look like and feel like to you...

- As a person being forgiven?
- As the person offering forgiveness to one who has wronged you?

FORGIVENESS: GOD'S FORGIVENESS

- What does it mean to you, knowing that God's very NATURE or ESSENCE is forgiveness?
- How does that impact your willingness or reluctance to recognize and receive His forgiveness?
- How does that impact your willingness to forgive those who have wronged you?

FORGIVENESS: RECEIVING IT. In the story of the Prodigal Son, the father runs toward the prodigal son, not only welcoming him with open arms, but clothing him with a cloak and acknowledging him as his child, despite the error of his ways. When we have sinned and seek God's forgiveness, He does the same for us, not only welcoming us, but clothing us with CHRIST, covering our sin, and acknowledging us as HIS children!

- Do you remember the moment you recognized God had forgiven you for your sins? Are you excited about that realization? How did that create an emotional response within you?
- Can you think of or describe a time when you felt your sins were unforgivable?

FORGIVENESS: Your ability to GIVE it. Divine and human forgiveness go hand in hand.

- Meditate upon Psalm 130, Matthew 5:7, and Isaiah 55:6-11 as you consider this question: What part does the recognition that God has forgiven you play in your ability to forgive?
- What reasons/rationalizations might you be using to justify withholding forgiveness for someone who has wronged you? Do you put a limit on forgiving others?
- Can you describe a time when you or someone you know got caught in the trap of exaggerating the sins of others while rationalizing and diminishing your/their own sins? What was the outcome of that?

THE FORGIVENESS CHALLENGE: Jason described Jesus' teaching here as a 'toolbox' for His followers in leading the church forward, representing Jesus.

- Prerequisites for being handed this 'toolbox': Can you say, "I am sorry" and "I forgive you"?

RESPOND

- How does this passage encourage you, challenge you, or change you in your efforts to become more like Jesus?
- What is one thing you learned about yourself from God's Word? How will you respond in obedience this week?
- Who is someone you can have a conversation with about what Jesus is doing in your life or invite to join you at a CU Church gathering.

PRAY

Pray for each other and spend time praising God. Pray that he will show you how to better love God and love people.