

**Why Can't We All Just Get Along?
We Haven't Truly Forgiven One Another**
Matthew 18:21-35

"For all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God." **Romans 3:23**

"The heart is deceitful above all things, & desperately sick; who can understand it? I the LORD search the heart & test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds." **Jeremiah 17:9-10**

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, & in sin did my mother conceive me."
Psalm 51:5

"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing."

Romans 7:18-19

"...all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment..." **Isaiah 64:6b**

An Incalculable Mountain of Sin is Against Us! HOWEVER...

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." **2 Corinthians 5:21**

"Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." **Isaiah 1:18**

**God Forgave Us of our Incalculable Sin Debt at Great Expense to Himself
Conflict is an Unavoidable Reality of Our Lives!** Jesus talks about it...

"If your brother sins against you, go & tell him his fault, between you & him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile & a tax collector." **Matthew 18:15-17**

Why Doesn't It Go Well? Because we take these verses out of context, & end up approaching it with the wrong mindset, goals & attitudes.

Main Idea: Forgiven People Forgive People

"Then Peter came up & said to him, 'Lord how often will my brother sin against me, & I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife & children & all that he had, & payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, & I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him & forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, & seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down & pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, & I will pay you.' He refused & went & put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, & they went & reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him & said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." **Matthew 18:21-35**

I. True Forgiveness Glorifies God – Vs 21-27

Peter thought 7x's forgiveness (vs. 21) was exceptional, but Jesus would not have anything less than unconditional forgiveness among his followers.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." **Psalm 103:12**

II. True Forgiveness Blesses People – Vs. 28-31

"Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven..." **Psalm 32:1a**

"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." **John 13:35**

"Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to get sick." **Dr. Johnny Hunt**

III. True Forgiveness Sets the Captives Free – Vs. 32-35

The king called him wicked (vs. 32), not because of the sins of his life, but because he took his forgiveness for granted. The consequences were dire!

"So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." **Matthew 18:35**

"Christians are the most forgiven people in the world. Therefore, we should be the most forgiving people in the world." **Ken Sande (The Peacemaker)**

Forgiveness is NOT:

- **Feeling** – If you wait to feel forgiveness, you will never truly forgive.
- **Forgetting** – You can't consciously forget, but you can let someone off the hook
- **Excusing** – Forgiveness must be given, but trust must be earned.
- **Contingent** – You can forgive anyone with or without their consent.

Forgiveness IS:

- **A Decision** – Won't happen by accident, must be intentional.
- **A Process** – Once a decision is made, repetitious forgiveness is key!
- **A Short-Term Sacrifice for Long Term Gain** – Keep bitterness away

"Let all bitterness & wrath & anger & clamor & slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." **Ephesians 4:31-32**

Take time to dwell on Jesus. If you haven't been forgiven yourself, you will not be able to truly forgive others!

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- Tyndale Bible Dictionary – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- New American Commentary: Matthew – Craig Bloomberg (1992)
- MacArthur NT Commentary: Matt 16-23 – John MacArthur (1988)
- Exploring the Gospel of Matthew – John Phillips (2005)
- Word Pictures in the New Testament – A.T. Robertson (1933)
- Commentary on Matthew – C.H. Spurgeon (2010)
- The Gospel of Matthew – William Barclay (1976)
- The Bible Exposition Commentary – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary – Huges & Laney (2001)
- The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Craig S. Keener (1993)
- The Peacemaker – Ken Sande (1991)
- Win Your War #5 – Full Forgiveness – Mark Driscoll (2019)

