

Forgiveness

Pastor Seth Trimmer

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" ²² Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times." Matthew 18:21-22

"Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. ³⁵ This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart." Matthew 18:32-35

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' ¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Matthew 6:9-15

- Share a funny childhood story of when you held a grudge.

Word and Reflection

Forgiveness for Christ followers isn't an option. God asks us to forgive others as you have been forgiven. When we recognize the great debt you had with God, and the relatively smaller debts that other have of you, it should motivate and inspire us to quickly and readily forgive. In fact, Jesus even challenges us by saying, "If you don't forgive, you will not be forgiven."

Matthew 18:21-35; Matthew 6:9-15

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention or challenged you?
- Read Matthew 18:21-25. When you hear these words from Jesus, what are your first impressions? How seriously does Jesus describe our forgiveness of others? Why do you think this is so?
- On Sunday we talked about a few important aspects of forgiveness. How are forgiving someone and trusting someone two different things?
- Read Matthew 6:9-15. Forgiving people can feel more like an ongoing process than a one-time decision. How have you seen this to be true and experienced this in your relational conflicts?
- Forgiveness is letting go of personal vengeance. This means handing them over to a higher court, not letting them get away with it. When should you hand someone over to God, and when should you also let others know? (Pastors, parents, friends, police, etc.)
- When it comes to your need to forgive others the question is never "if" but "who?" Without naming names, share what God stirred in your heart this Sunday regarding who you need to forgive.

Action

- Who is God asking you to forgive? Surrender this person and your situation in prayer to God.

Prayer

- Pray for God to give you a revelation of the greatness God's forgiveness extended to you through Jesus.
- Pray for your group and for those to whom you're reaching out.