



---

## Sermon Notes

**Text: Matthew 18:19-35**

### Intro:

This Sunday we explored the importance of forgiveness by looking at the parable of a king forgiving the debt of a servant. To begin, we defined what forgiveness is not.

Forgiveness is not:

1. A sign of weakness.  
It is a sign of strength!
2. A feeling.  
It is an act of will! It is a choice.
3. An excuse for bad behaviour.  
Forgiveness doesn't mean that the forgiven person is given your trust.

### How often should we forgive?

In Jewish culture, the standard practice was to forgive someone 3 times. Yet when Jesus is asked how often we should forgive others, his response is 70x7 times. This is a phrase found throughout the Old Testament and speaks to an overwhelming need for vengeance. And yet Jesus invites us to pursue forgiveness with the same kind of tenacity.

### The King & the Servant

When we look at the parable found in Matthew 18, we are presented with 2 figures, the king and the servant. It is important that we recognize that our place in the story is that of the forgiven servant. As a servant, it is not our role to judge and punish. Rather, Jesus calls us to forgive.

### Our Response to Forgiveness

As human beings, we have all messed up. We are sinners and deserve death and separation from God. This is our enormous debt, and yet God chose to extend mercy to us. He has forgiven this great debt.

Our response to this forgiveness is important! What God desires from us is a repentant heart. This is beautifully demonstrated to us by King David in Psalm 51:1-4.

If we instead live like the servant of the parable who fails to extend the same forgiveness that the king extends to him, God will judge us harshly. And we will reap what we sow.

### Conclusion

It can feel overwhelming to consider forgiving someone 490 times. And yet we extend that same amount of forgiveness every day. We extend it to ourselves. It is possible for us to continually extend forgiveness to those around us, but it requires an intentional choice.

No where is this life of forgiveness better demonstrated than in the life and death of Jesus.

## Connect Group Discussion

### Warm up:

1. What do you think forgiveness looks like?
2. Imagine that you were the king in the parable found in Matthew 18. Would you find it hard to forgive a debt of millions of dollars?

### Study & Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 18:19-35. What stands out to you in this passage?
2. What does it feel like to consider forgiving someone 490 times? Have you ever needed to extend forgiveness to someone time and time again?
3. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that it is our job to judge & punish those who wrong us. How do you practically keep yourself in a posture of forgiveness rather than judgement?
4. Read Psalm 51:1-4. What do you find challenging in this passage?
5. Tell a brief story of a time when you were shown forgiveness.

### Practice:

Living a life of forgiveness is a tough thing to put into practice. It requires constantly bringing our desires for justice to God and asking for the strength to extend forgiveness instead.

So this week, let's set aside time in prayer, asking God who we need to forgive.

Find a quiet space where you won't be interrupted and pray this:

"God, I want to live a life of forgiveness. But I need Your help to forgive those who have wronged me. Would You speak to me now of who I need to forgive?"

Then, let God lead and direct your thoughts. It may be helpful to have a journal or a piece of paper to write things down as they come to mind.

When you feel ready, tell God that you forgive that person/those people. And then take it one step further! Spend time praying God's best over each of those people. It's amazing how prayer can relieve us from our desire to judge, and push us to more easily forgive.

### Prayer: