

Study Guide
The Kingdom Has Come
Matthew 18:15-35

For months we've been talking about the nature of the Kingdom of God and our place in that Kingdom. Throughout the book of Matthew, Jesus has been blowing the minds of the crowds, the religious elite, and his own disciples. He is envisioning a new way to live and so much of that way is culturally upside down. In Matthew 18, we find another mind-blowing lesson on how God's people should demonstrate outrageous forgiveness. It begins when Peter asks a critical question: "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" (v.21)

Big Idea: The Kingdom of God demands OUTRAGEOUS forgiveness

Read the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

Jesus drops a bomb in the last line: ³⁵"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

- *How does this verse make you feel at first glance?*

OUTRAGEOUS forgiveness brings reconciliation. The God of the Universe is in the business of reuniting broken parties.

- *When was the moment you experienced reconciliation with God?*
- *What's the greatest reconciliation story you have ever heard between two people?*
- *How might forgiveness be love's toughest work?*

OUTRAGEOUS forgiveness demonstrates the power of the Gospel

- *How has the process "settling accounts" between you and another person been complicated or messy?*
- *We hurt → We hate → We heal → We move ahead. Can you share a positive account of moving through this process?*
- *Have you ever experienced how failing to forgive impacts your relationship with Jesus?*

OUTRAGEOUS forgiveness is an act of faith

- *Have you ever experienced difficulty in accepting the forgiveness of God? How would you explain that experience to another person?*

- *Have you ever experienced Jesus entering into your pain? How would you explain that experience to another person?"*
- *Unpack how has this statement been true for you: "Feelings follow after the work of forgiveness has begun."*

God forgives us because of what Jesus has done for us; but then he obligates us to forgive others because of what Jesus is doing in us.

- *Are the shackles of bitterness that you feel comfortable sharing? Do you feel stuck in the process of forgiveness? Explain.*

Pray for one another

A Prayer: "God- You are the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. We thank you for forgiving our impossible debt and we pray that you would give us the strength to forgive others. We have access to outrageous power through Jesus Christ to forgive. God, we do not want to be imprisoned by our sin or shackled by our hatred. Speak to us. Give us wisdom for the next steps as we walk with you.