

# Sermon Notes | God Wants You to Forgive - Matthew 18:21 - 35

## Matthew 18:21–22

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times."

**Big Idea: God Wants You to Forgive**

## Matthew 18:23–35

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.

31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.

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

## A. We are Enormously Indebted to God

"No sin is small. No grain of sand is small in the mechanism of a watch." – Jeremy Taylor

- *Psalms 14:2-3* — “The Lord looks down from heaven... They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.”
- *Jeremiah 17:9* — “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”
- *Mark 7:21-23* — “For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness... and they defile a person.”

### **Guilt and Shame (worldviews):**

- Nietzsche — “The more we reject religion and God, and the moral reflexes that they created, the more our feelings of guilt and shame will melt away.”
- Freud — “Humans are crushed under guilt and shame imposed through ‘interdictions’, condemning judgments imposed on people by families, tribes, religions and other oppressive groups.”
- Marx — “Moral claims are the way those in power keep their oppressive power over people.”
- *Psalms 51:4a* — “Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.”

## **B. God's Forgiveness is Exceedingly Generous**

- “And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.” (Matthew 18:27)
- *Ephesians 1:7-8* — “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us.”
- “Among the attributes of God, although they are all equal, mercy shines with even more brilliancy than justice.” – Miguel De Cervantes

## C. We Must Forgive as We Have Been Forgiven

- *Ephesians 4:32* — "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."
- *Colossians 3:13* — "...forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."

### What is Forgiveness?

"Forgiveness is a decision and a promise to release a person by cancelling the real debt that person has with you." – Aaron Sironi, *Journal of Biblical Counseling*

#### Forgiveness is not:

- Forgetting
- A feeling
- A minimizing or enabling of sin
- A psychological release
- A guarantee of reconciliation
- A means to your gain

#### How do I know if I haven't forgiven someone?

- I rehearse the offense over and over in my mind (*Isaiah 43:18*)
- I feel bitterness towards that person (*Hebrews 12:15*)
- I want them to suffer (*Romans 12:19*)
- I speak negatively about them to others (*Ephesians 4:31*)
- I avoid them or feel cold towards them (*Matthew 5:44*)
- I define them by what they did (*1 Corinthians 13:7*)

- I am not willing to pray for them (*Luke 6:28*)
- I never want to see that person again (*1 Corinthians 13:7*)

### **How to Forgive:**

1. Pray – for the grief of your own sin, for the person, for the Spirit to change your heart.
2. Share the Gospel with them.
3. Decide.
4. Take steps towards reconciliation (*Romans 12:18* — “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”)

## **D. Forgiven People Forgive People**

- “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*)
- “We need not climb up into heaven to see whether our sins are forgiven; let us look into our hearts, and see if we can forgive others. If we can, we need not doubt but God has forgiven us.” – Thomas Watson

## **Big Idea: God Wants You to Forgive**

- Be honest with God about it.
- Ask for help.
- Release it daily to God.
- Remember often what God has done for you.

# Discussion Guide | God Wants You to Forgive - Matthew 18: 21 -35

Read Matthew 16:21 -35

- What is your attitude towards your sin or offense to God?
- In your own words, what is the Gospel message?
- What does forgiveness look like?
- Why should you forgive?
- Who is God asking you to forgive?
- What are some ways this week you can make steps towards forgiving someone?
- As a group, pray for your hearts to swell with gratitude for being forgiven by God, and ask Him to change your hearts to forgive those you need to forgive.