

A Debt Too Great To Pay
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Rich Sherwood
May 15, 2022

Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)

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?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. “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?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Why is forgiveness so hard?

Why is it so important to God?

Three steps to make forgiveness a part of your life.

1. Start with an honest look at who we are.
2. Don’t dwell on your own need, “make things right” and don’t feed other people’s needs.
3. Learn to remember people by their best instead of their worst.

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[This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss]

Going deeper:

Start by reading Matthew 18:21-35

1. Who are the three main characters in the story and who do they represent?
2. Can you relate to the servant who was forgiven a great debt? Can you think of things in your life that may have required a lot of forgiveness on the part of God and possibly others?
3. Are there times in your life that giving forgiveness to someone else was very difficult?
4. Are there people in your life that even now you're not ready to forgive but you know that you need to?

Read through these other verses about forgiveness and give your thoughts:

Colossians 3:13

¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Matthew 6:14-15

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Luke 17:3-4

³ Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, ⁴ and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

Close in Prayer: Start praying. Be bold and pray specifically.