

## Friendship: Forgive

### Key Scriptures

**Matthew 18:21-35** Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

<sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. <sup>23</sup> "Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. <sup>24</sup> "And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. <sup>25</sup> "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

<sup>26</sup> "The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' <sup>27</sup> "Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup> "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'

<sup>29</sup> "So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' <sup>30</sup> "And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> "So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. <sup>32</sup> "Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. <sup>33</sup> 'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' <sup>34</sup> "And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. <sup>35</sup> "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

**Key Point:** Forgiveness is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian. It comes at a cost.

## TALK IT OVER

**Start talking:** Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- Think of your best friends. What are the things about your friendship that you appreciate the most?

**Start thinking:**

- Looking back at the context of this passage, why did Peter bring up the question about how often he should forgive someone who sins against him?
- Why does Jesus choose 10,000 talents (an unpayable amount) in this parable?
- Why do you think the servant whose debt was cancelled was so unforgiving to his fellow servant who owed him?
- What does this part of the parable (v. 29-31) represent? (how is it parallel to our lives?)
- What do you understand verse 35 to be saying? (Cf. Matt 6:15)

Tim Keller writes, "This does not mean we can earn God's forgiveness through our own forgiving, but that we can disqualify ourselves from it. No heart that is truly repentant toward God could be unforgiving toward others. A lack of forgiveness toward others is the direct result of a lack of repentance toward God. And as we know, you must repent in order to be saved (Acts 2:38).

**Start sharing:**

- Do you believe forgiveness must be granted before it is felt? Why or why not?
- How difficult has it been for you to offer forgiveness in your lifetime?
- Which is more difficult: forgiving a debt that someone owes you, or forgiving something that is not a financial issue? Why?
- In what ways does forgiveness free the person who grants it?

**Start doing:** Jesus commanded us in v. 35 that we must forgive from our heart. Is there anyone you have not yet forgiven from your heart? What will you do to grant this person forgiveness?

**Prayer Requests:** Spend time praying together about what you shared tonight. It may be helpful to pray the scriptures back to God.

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