

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³ “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵ 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.

²⁶ “The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began

to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹ “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’

³⁰ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”

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Birkdale Baptist Church

LOVE
like
JESUS
“By this they will know”

FOR REFLECTION

Last Sunday night, Anna spoke about the extreme forgiveness that Jesus showed Peter after Peter had denied, deserted and disowned Him. What impacted you most out of that message? How does the parable of the unforgiving servant help to deepen your understanding of what it means to love like Jesus?

Who do you identify most with in this parable?

- a. Peter
- b. The king
- c. The first servant
- d. The second servant
- e. Other _____

What actions or behaviours do you find hard to forgive? What is your initial reaction when someone wrongs you?

Why would Peter ask Jesus this question (v21)? Should there be a limit on how many times we forgive? Other translations of the Bible have Jesus response as, “not seven times, but seventy times seven”; that’s 490 times! Do you think Jesus’ answer was literal? What was His point?

Is there someone in your life right now who you are finding difficult to forgive? In light of this parable, what do you think Jesus would say to you? (Sometimes the process of forgiveness can be difficult depending on the nature of the offence. If this is the case for you, you may need to talk to someone privately.)

The cross shows how much it cost God to forgive us. Spend some time dwelling on God’s love and pray that He

might pass on that love for others, to you.

