

The Connection

Weekly Bible Verse: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

August 23, 2020

Together



Together we can continue to make sure that children hear the stories of the Bible and of God's love and promises! Together let's keep doing kid's ministry at the time our kids need it most.

Forgive and Forget

How many times do you think a person should be forgiven for doing something wrong? Once? Twice? Three times? If you were to ask Jesus how many times you should forgive someone, what do you think he would say? Well, we don't have to guess, because the Bible gives us the answer.

One day, Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive someone who sins against me? Should I forgive him seven times?" I imagine that Peter thought he was being pretty generous to forgive someone seven times. I don't know about you, but I think I agree with Peter. To forgive someone seven times is pretty generous. Guess what? Jesus didn't agree. Jesus answered Peter, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven." Wow! Seventy times seven! That's four hundred and ninety times. I think that before I got to four hundred and ninety I would lose count. You know, I think that is probably what Jesus was trying to get Peter to understand and he wants us to understand it too. We shouldn't worry about keeping count of how many times we have forgiven someone – we should just keep on forgiving. Isn't that what God does? He doesn't keep count of how many times he has forgiven us. He just keeps on forgiving. In response to Peter's question about forgiveness, Jesus tells the story of a servant forgiven by his king of an unpayable debt. This servant then refuses to forgive



the small debt of another. The point, according to Jesus, is that we should forgive others because God has first forgiven us.

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

The Unforgiving Servant

²¹ "Then Peter came to him and asked, 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?'"

²² "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

²³ "Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. ²⁴ In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. ²⁵ He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

²⁶ "But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.'" ²⁷ Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

²⁸ "But when the man left the

king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

²⁹ "His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it,' he pleaded. ³⁰ But his creditor wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

³¹ "When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. ³² Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me.

³³ Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be

punished until he had paid his entire debt.

³⁵ "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."



Additional Pages:

Coloring Page - Unforgiving Servant/ Forgiveness (2)

Word Decoder - Keep on Forgiving

Resources:

Veggie Tales "God Wants Me to Forgive Them!"

Forgive Us Our Debts from Nest Entertainment

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant - Saddleback Kids



Questions for Today's Lesson

I wonder who I need to forgive today?

How would you like to be treated when you do something wrong?

What part of the Lord's Prayer pertains to this parable?

Digging Deeper

Forgiveness in Action:

- ◆ Have your children practice thinking of a blessing they can say when other children say or do unkind or hurtful things. In difficult situations, have your children pray for the person who they need to forgive and also say good things about them. Gently remind your children that they are being like Jesus when they forgive the other person – even when the other person hasn't asked for forgiveness. 1 Peter 3:9
- ◆ Get a jug of water and some effervescent tablets. Encourage the children to think of someone they need to forgive. Talk about how when we are hurt and angry it hurts us too, but we can ask God to help us to let go of these feel-

ings. Put the tablet in the water have them imagine asking God to help them forgive. As the bubbles start to come off the tablets, imagine giving the hurt feelings to God. The tablets take a while to dissolve, which also illustrates that sometimes it takes a long time to forgive. The water might also have changed colour, which illustrates that it's not as if the thing that hurt you had never happened, it's just been changed by God.

- ◆ Make bubbles. As the wand is dipped into the solution, ask them to think of something they would like to feel forgiven for. Then ask them to blow the bubbles as they pray for forgiveness (or think what it means to be forgiven). In a few moments the bubbles will have all popped and disappeared. Jesus can never be found again or put back into the container. That's what God's forgiveness is like.

Why Did Jesus Teach in Parables

Jesus teaching style took people by surprise. It was captivating and approachable. He taught in short allegorical stories called parables. In fact, Mark tells us that when Jesus taught, "He did not say anything to them without using a parable". That's why people were amazed at His teaching. The way He communicated was accessible to everyone, but it still carried an authority that first-century Jews had never experienced.

- ◆ Parables were easy to understand. Jesus wanted to bypass the teachers of the law and take His message straight to the people which means He had to communicate with them in a way that would resonate with them. By using parables, Jesus was able to share religious truths that could immediately connect with His listeners.
- ◆ Parables are easy to remember. Parables allowed salt-of-the-earth folks to connect abstract spiritual ideas with patterns that were meaningful to them. Jesus' parables had a familiar story-like method that people identified with: (1) beginning (2) challenge or problem (3) resolution.
- ◆ Parables reveal the hearts of the listeners. People like the Pharisees dismissed Jesus' teaching because the ideas were too accessible. The Pharisees wanted to be the sole owners/interpreters of the concepts. Jesus shared the truths of the kingdom in ways that even a child could understand. But because of the hardness of heart, many in Israel would not accept them. Jesus addresses this when he speaks to the disciples about why He speaks in parables. "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak in parables.

