

This Is US



Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?”
“No!” Jesus replied, “seventy times seven!”

“For this reason, 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. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn’t pay, so the king ordered that he, his wife, his children, and everything he had be sold to pay the debt. But the man fell down before the king and begged him, ‘Oh, sir, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ Then the king was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

“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. His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and jailed until the debt could be paid in full.

“When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him what had happened. 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. Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ Then the angry king sent the man to prison until he had paid every penny.

“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters in your heart.”

1. Realize the high cost of failing to forgive

It dishonors my master

"I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?" (32,33)

It impairs my prayers

*(Jesus) "Pray for anything, and if you believe, you will have it. But **when you are praying, first forgive** anyone you are holding a grudge against" (Mark 11:24,25)*

It imprisons me emotionally and spiritually

"Then the angry king sent the man to prison" (34) "to be tortured" (NIV)

2. Reject wrong ideas of forgiveness

Forgiving is not minimizing the seriousness

Forgiving is not forgetting it ever happened

Forgiving is not restoring immediate trust

3. Forgiveness is a choice to release thoughts of revenge and resentment

(Jesus) "forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against" (Mark 11:25)

4. Look past injustice & trust the judge

*"Christ...is your example. Follow in his steps...He did **not retaliate**...he did **not threaten to get even**. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly." (1 Peter 2:21-23)*

5. Look past their faults & see their needs

(Jesus) "Father, forgive these people, because they don't know what they are doing." (Lk 23:34)

6. Move past my feelings & do forgiving actions

(Jesus) "love your enemies. **Do good** to those who hate you. **Pray for** the happiness of...those who hurt you." (Luke 6:27,28)

7. Move past the offense & seize the opportunity

"Do you think you deserve credit merely for loving those who love you? Even the sinners do that! ...Love your enemies! Do good to them! Then **your reward** from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be **acting as children of the Most High**" (Luke 6:32,35,36)

Opportunity to represent Christ

"you will truly be **acting as children of the Most High**"

Opportunity to win approval from Christ

"your **reward** from heaven will be very great"

Opportunity to change the world for Christ

"If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink, and **they will be ashamed** of what they have done to you. Don't let evil get the best of you, but **conquer evil by doing good.**" (Romans 12:20,21)