

Forgiven to Forgive

Matthew 18:21-35

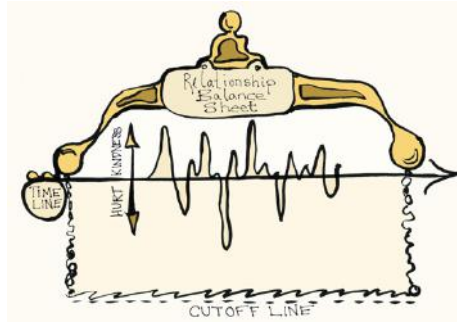
Why is it hard to forgive? Again? And again and again?



21-22:

23-34:

35:



The Main Point

Those who are forgiven by God must forgive others without restriction

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." *Matthew 5:7*

"And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Matthew 6:12

"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." *Matthew 6:14-15*

"Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment."

James 2:12-13

77 times

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." *2 Corinthians 5:21*

Application

Recognize the overwhelming grace of God

Our unpayable debt was cancelled!

We are treated as completely righteous!

"Those who are forgiven little love little" *Luke 7:47*

Forgive—from the heart

Spirit of God empowering

Love = truly seek the best for others

No desire for retribution ("Father, forgive them")

Prevent further harm

Bring transformation

Bring restoration

Our debt = unfathomable

"Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart.

Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge

against anyone among your people,

but love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the Lord." *Leviticus 19:17-18*

Love includes...

Direct rebuke

True forgiveness

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What does it mean to forgive?
2. What makes it hard for you to forgive (again and again...)?
3. Are there certain kinds of offenses that are harder for you to forgive? Why might that be?
4. What is your own sense for how big your debt is or was before God? How does that relate in your life to Jesus' statement, "Those who are forgiven little love little" (Luke 7:47)?
5. What is your personal reaction to the forgiveness we have in Christ? Is that a good reaction?
6. Where does the power come from to forgive?
7. Is there someone you need to forgive? What steps will you take?
8. How does forgiveness relate to preventing further harm, pursuing transformation, and pursuing restoration?

Conversation starters with people in daily life, whether or not they are Christians

How do you understand forgiveness?

How does forgiveness relate to just consequences?

Where does forgiveness come from?

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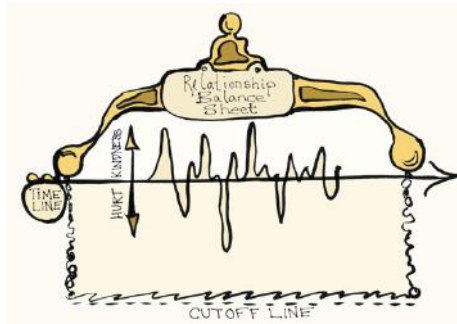
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