

DAILY READING PLAN

Week of January 8, 2022
Extraordinary Forgiveness
Matthew 18:23-33



Day #1 - Read Matthew 18.21-33 | Read and Meditate

Peter approached Jesus and asked, "How many times do I have to forgive my fellow believer who keeps offending me? Seven times?" Jesus answered, "Not seven times, Peter, but seventy times seven times! The lessons of forgiveness in heaven's kingdom realm can be illustrated like this: "There once was a king who had servants who had borrowed money from the royal treasury. He decided to settle accounts with each of them. As he began the process, it came to his attention that one of his servants owed him one billion dollars. So, he summoned the servant before him and said to him, 'Pay me what you owe me.' When his servant was unable to repay his debt, the king ordered that he be sold as a slave along with his wife and children and every possession they owned as payment toward his debt. The servant threw himself facedown at his master's feet and begged for mercy. 'Please be patient with me. Just give me more time and I will repay you all that I owe.' Upon hearing his pleas, the king had compassion on his servant, and released him, and forgave his entire debt. "No sooner had the servant left when he met one of his fellow servants, who owed him twenty thousand dollars He seized him by the throat and began to choke him, saying, 'You'd better pay me right now everything you owe me!' His fellow servant threw himself facedown at his feet and begged, 'Please be patient with me. If you'll just give me time, I will repay you all that is owed.' But the one who had his debt forgiven stubbornly refused to forgive what was owed him. He had his fellow servant thrown into prison and demanded he remain there until he repaid the debt in full. "When his associates saw what was going on, they were outraged and went to the king and told him the whole story. The king said to him, 'You scoundrel! Is this the way you respond to my mercy? Because you begged me, I forgave you the massive debt that you owed me. Why didn't you show the same mercy to your fellow servant that I showed to you?'

To live more extraordinarily, we'll dive deeply into forgiveness this week. This will be a challenge but stay with me. It may also be a good idea for you to download the written message as you work through these days devotionally. Today, as you read and meditate on the entire passage from Matthew 18.21-33, pay attention to the sensations you experience as you meditate on this passage. What do you notice in this passage? What is the greatest challenge you face from this passage?

Day #2 - Read Matthew 18:21-22 | Identifying Hurt

Peter approached Jesus and asked, "How many times do I have to forgive my fellow believer who keeps offending me? Seven times?" Jesus answered, "Not seven times, Peter, but seventy times seven times!"

What do you hear when you read this? A healthy experience of forgiveness begins with identifying the hurt. Bring to mind an experience of having to either give or receive forgiveness. Identify the hurt that you feel. Do you find yourself holding on to that pain? How do you understand Jesus' response to Peter?

Day #3 - Read Proverbs 28:13 TNIV | Embrace Apologizing

"Those who conceal their sins do not prosper, but those who confess and renounce them find mercy."

As the saying goes, "It takes two to tango." And because relationships are like a dance, in most relationships where some hurt has taken place, it is rarely the responsibility of one person to express forgiveness. So as you think about repairing a broken relationship, take a few moments to consider your responsibility for that repair.

Day #4 - Read Ephesians 4:32 TPT | Choose Forgiveness

"But instead, be kind and affectionate toward one another. Has God graciously forgiven you? Then graciously forgive one another in the depths of Christ's love."

Extending forgiveness is challenging work. Here's a way to think about it. Imagine holding on to a rope tied to a boat in the water. The boat is filled with all the hurt and pain in a relationship. The boat is being pulled away from you by a strong current. But for whatever reason, you don't want to let go; you continue to hold on to the rope. You struggle against the current, trying to separate yourself from the pain and hurt in the boat. What would it feel like to let go of the rope? How would that change your relationship with the boat?

Day #5 - Read 1 Peter 1:3 TPT | New Day

"Celebrate with praises the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us his extravagant mercy. For his fountain of mercy has given us a new life—we are reborn to experience a living, energetic hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

At the end of the process, there can be a celebration. Try this: Bring to mind the need for giving and receiving forgiveness, and say, "***New Day... New Day.***" This can be a mantra that helps shift your head and heart. "New day, new day" can signal the desire to let go of the rope that holds the boat of hurt. It's hard work, but it can work. And what comes after that is what we can call the gift of God's amazing grace and awesome love, which opens the door to comfort, tenderness, love, forgiveness, and joy.