

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of September 19, 2021

Learning to Forgive, Matthew 18:21-35

Pastor Hall- 8:30 & 10:30 Contemporary, William Murphree- 10:30 Traditional

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?

- Are there joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- **Opening Discussion Question-** Do you tend to be a person who is quick or slow to forgive? How do you normally handle it when someone has wronged you?
(Lyman Coleman)

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows. There are more questions than you will have time for, so it is ok to be selective.

Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who 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 bags of gold 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 "At this 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 silver coins.

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 it 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 outraged 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 handed 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 or sister from your heart."

1. If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?

2. "Aphiemi" means to forgive, release or abandon. How is forgiving a financial debt analogous to forgiving a wrong against someone else? Does it also include forgetting or trusting?
3. Ten thousand bags of gold would have taken 150,000 -200,000 years to earn back the money to repay. Why do you think Jesus used such a high amount of debt in this parable?
4. Pastor Michelle asked the question- Why do you think we are so quick to forget what God has done for us?
5. How do you think Peter responded to this teaching that followed his original question (verse 21)?
6. Why the number 70 times 7 (verse 22)?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

1. Would a volunteer please read aloud the following except from the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:14-15 and Ephesians 4:32-
 - a. "and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us..."
 - b. 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
 - c. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32
2. On what basis does Christian faith require forgiveness of others?
3. How does the identity of the one speaking the words of Matthew 6:14-15 add strength to the moral case for the need to forgive others?
4. How do these teachings apply in situations where the person in the wrong is not sorry?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

1. As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
2. Why are we so quick to forget what God has done for us?
3. The following excerpt is taken from the liturgy of communion at Christ Church- "for we confess that we have all sinned and fallen short of Your glory. We have broken your laws, we have rebelled against Your ways, and we have not loved others as You have loved us. Forgive us we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, and grant that we may serve and please you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Your name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."
 - A. How does confession such as this one, help us to keep a proper perspective on our relationship with the Lord?
 - B. How does our confession with the Lord affect our relationships with others?
 - C. Any personal experiences to share about questions A or B?
4. Who is someone you either need to offer or receive forgiveness from?

Witness and Closing (10 minutes)

- Where have you seen forgiveness extended to another person be a powerful witness for Christ?
- Where have you seen a Christian not offering forgiveness to be a negative witness for Christ?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting