

Mental

Persistent Forgiveness

MATTHEW 18:21-35

SESSION 6.37



☐ *Prepare in Advance*

Facilitator: In advance of the session:

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.

Introduce

Introduce today's session by asking: Why do you think most people have such a hard time giving forgiveness?

Have someone read Matthew 18:21-35 out loud and show the *Bible Background Video*. Encourage the group to respond to the passage and then use the following questions to guide discussion.

☐ *Lots of Forgiveness!*

- Previously in this chapter (which we studied last week) Jesus speaks about dealing with conflict between believers. How does this passage follow and complement that teaching?
- This was a common question in Jesus' day (and maybe today) - people want to know how many times they should put up with someone else's sins. Have you ever wondered, like Peter did? If the group is comfortable, allow them to share situations that have tested their abilities to forgive.
- How does Jesus' answer change the discussion completely - going beyond the numbers? What kind of attitude change does this require?

☐ *Forgive as You Are Forgiven*

- Why does this story speak so much more powerfully than a simple statement about forgiveness?
- What is the number difference between the two debts that were owed, and why is this integral to the story?
- Some of Jesus' parables are difficult to interpret. But this one, given its context, seems pretty clear even though Jesus doesn't explain it himself.
- Who might the king represent? The first servant? The second servant?
- What does the large debt represent? The small debt?
- According to Jesus, why are we to offer unending forgiveness to others?

- In the last verse (35) Jesus says we must forgive "from your heart." What do you think this means, and how does it differ from other ways we might forgive?
- Jesus closes the story with a strong warning. What are the consequences of failing to forgive others?
- How does this parable relate to the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors?"
- This teaching speaks specifically of sins committed against us. Does this attitude carry over to other kinds of sins - are we also called to be forgiving of someone else's sinful habits or behavior, even if not directed toward us? Why or why not? If so, to what degree?

Close with prayer.

By Jon Parks

SPONSOR

Get a new website by Faithlab and help support Faithelement.

Learn more at Faithlab.com

