

Year A - 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 18:21-35

I did not say to you to forgive seven times, but seventy-seven times.



Peter came up to the Lord and asked, "How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?"

Jesus answered: "Not just seven times, but seventy-seven times! This story will show you what the kingdom of heaven is like:

"One day a king decided to call in his officials and ask them to give an account of what they owed him. As he was doing this, one official was brought in who owed him fifty million silver coins. But he didn't have any money to pay what he owed. The king ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all he owned, in order to pay the debt.

The official got down on his knees and began begging, 'Have pity on me, and I will pay you every cent I owe!' The king felt sorry for him and let him go free. He even told the official that he did not have to pay back the money.

As the official was leaving, he happened to meet another official, who owed him a hundred silver coins. So he grabbed the man by the throat. He started choking him and said, 'Pay me what you owe!' The man got down on his knees and began begging, 'Have pity on me, and I will pay you back.' But the first official refused to have pity. Instead, he went and had the other official put in jail until he could pay what he owed.

When some other officials found out what had happened, they felt sorry for the man who had been put in jail. Then they told the king what had happened. The king called the first official back in and said, 'You're an evil man! When you begged for mercy, I said you did not have to pay back a cent. Don't you think you should show pity to someone else, as I did to you?' "The king was so angry that he ordered the official to be tortured until he could pay back everything he owed. That is how my Father in heaven will treat you, if you don't forgive each of my followers with all your heart."

Forgive

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God forgives



- Introduction**
- This week Jesus teaches us that if we want God to forgive us, then we must first of all learn to forgive each other.
 - Jesus insists that our forgiveness, like God's forgiveness, should be without limit. Matthew uses the Jewish symbol for absolute perfection or completeness: the number seven. But this symbol is even multiplied here; seventy-seven times! The parable illustrates the point and expands the motivation.
 - As we have been forgiven, we are called to forgive. This is how we live as a disciple of Jesus.

- Discussion**
- Begin by checking with the children if there are any words or phrases that they don't understand. Also check if there are any words or phrases that stood out for them.
 - I wonder what Jesus meant when he said we should forgive a person not seven times but seventy-seven times
 - What did the king do to the servant?
 - What did the servant do to the man who owed him money?
 - What happened to the servant when the king found out how he had treated the man who owed in money?
 - I wonder what you can do this week to spread Jesus' message of forgiveness. How will you treat other people in your home, school, community?

