

# The Unforgiving Servant

December 29, 2024 | *Matthew 18:21-35*

## THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT:

FORGIVING AS WE'VE BEEN FORGIVEN

MATTHEW 18:21-35



### Observations from Matthew 18:21-35:

What is happening in these verses?

#### **Peter's Question (v. 21):**

- How many times shall I forgive my brother? - is there a limit to forgiveness?

#### **Jesus' Answer (v. 22):**

- “Not seven times, but seventy-seven times,” symbolizing limitless forgiveness.

#### **The King's Mercy (v. 23-27):**

- A servant owes 10,000 talents, an unpayable debt (a single talent equals one year's wages)
- The King forgives the debt entirely out of compassion.  $7 \times 7 = \infty$

#### **The Servant's Ingratitude (v. 28-30):**

- The forgiven servant refuses to forgive a much smaller debt of 100 denarii (about three months' wages).

#### **The King's Judgment (v. 31-35):**

- The king revokes the servant's forgiveness and hands him over to the jailers, illustrating the consequences of unforgiveness.

---

Ontario Community Church: **Encouraging, Equipping and Engaging lives for Christ.**

John 6:47 (ESV) “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever **believes** has eternal life”

# The Unforgiving Servant

---

## Lessons from Matthew 18:21-35:

What can we learn (interpret) from these verses?

- **God’s Forgiveness is Beyond Measure (v. 23-27):**
    - The servant’s massive debt is symbolism for our sin, which we could never repay. God’s forgiveness is an act of grace, made possible through Christ’s sacrifice. (*Ref: Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9*)
  - **Forgiveness Reflects God’s Heart (v. 28-30, 35):**
    - The forgiven servant’s refusal to forgive others shows a failure to grasp the grace he received. Forgiving others mirrors who God is and shows others that we are forgiven. (*Ref: Matthew 6:12; Colossians 3:13*)
  - **Unforgiveness Leads to Bondage (v. 31-34):**
    - The “prison” symbolizes the relational and spiritual consequences of unforgiveness—bitterness, anger, broken relationships, and a lack of peace. It is not about losing salvation but disrupting our connection with God. (*Ref: Hebrews 12:15; Romans 12:19*)
- 

## Application from Matthew 18:21-35:

How can I apply / live out these verses?

- **Reflect on God’s Forgiveness**
    - Reflect on the depth of Christ’s forgiveness and the grace you’ve received. Consider how much God has forgiven you.
      - *Ref: Psalm 103:10-12*
  - **Forgive as an Act of Faith**
    - Forgiveness is a part of living out your faith. Trust in God to handle justice as you release the debt owed to you by others.
      - *Ref: Matthew 6:12; Romans 12:19*
  - **Reconcile Before the New Year**
    - Take time this season to seek reconciliation with God or someone who has trespassed against you. Be forgiven by God and forgive others.
      - *Ref: 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Matthew 5:23-24*
- 

Ontario Community Church: **Encouraging, Equipping and Engaging lives for Christ.**  
John 6:47 (ESV) “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever **believes** has eternal life”