

SERIES	Untangled
BIBLE	Matthew 18:15-35
TITLE	#3: Forgiving Others
OVERVIEW	One of the hardest things for you to follow Jesus in, is forgiveness. Wounds from a friend or even an enemy get stuck in your heart and you hold on to them to the point where they become part of who you are. It is easier for you to die than to let go of these wounds. But the beautiful thing about letting Jesus redefine who you are... and especially your relationship to others... is to let His forgiveness so permeate your soul, that you can let those wounds go and forgive others like He has done with you.
SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN	<p>THE HOW (Mt. 18:15-20) The first thing to notice about HOW reconciliation should happen, is that it relies on YOU to make the first step. It doesn't depend on whether the other person deserves it or has asked for it. You can still do your part. Meet with the person and ask forgiveness and forgive. If there is reconciliation treat the person like nothing has ever happened. If not, keep adding more people to the conversation until the only resort left is to cut them off from community. This is one of the hardest things you can do to someone (literally cutting them off from the rest of the body of Christ) and should only be done when all other options have been exhausted for reconciliation. (SIDE NOTE: A person should be welcomed back with open arms when they decide to reconcile! 2 Cor. 2:5-11)</p> <p>HOW MANY TIMES (Mt. 18:21-22) 7x77. The point of this number is to show that it is beyond what you and I think is possible. The number of times that you should forgive your brother and sister is infinite. This number stands for ALWAYS.</p> <p>THE WHY (Mt. 18:23-35) In conclusion, Jesus gives a story about WHY you should forgive. A man owes 10,000 bags of gold (roughly: 3 billion, 840 million dollars–160,000 years' wages!). Impossible to pay back, the man unexpectedly receives forgiveness. But right afterwards he goes and finds a man who owes him 100 denari (10,000 dollars – 3 months' worth of wages) and refuses to forgive him the same way, even to the point of throwing him into prison. When the original lender finds out, he "un-forgives" the man, charging him with having NO MERCY. Then Jesus says the craziest part: unless you forgive from the heart, the same thing will happen to you. This is not to cause us to live in fear, but to recognize what we SHOULD do because of what Jesus has already done for us.</p>
GOSPEL	Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
NEXTSTEPS	Call people forward to accept forgiveness. Call people to go and forgive right now.