



Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)

Forgiveness is always **GAIN** even when it feels like **LOSS**.

*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.”

Forgiveness is **RELEASING**.

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

How to receive forgiveness from God:

- 1) Admit you, like everyone else, need new LIFE in Jesus.
- 2) Ask God to forgive your sins by the sacrifice of Jesus.
- 3) Receive new LIFE from God by trusting in Jesus as your Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to live for you all the days of my life. In Your name, Amen.

If you chose to follow Jesus today, text “FAITH” to 309-250-2007 to receive additional information about next steps in following Jesus.

For Further Reflection:

:: What is one thing God has been teaching or reteaching you through our “selfLESS” journey?

:: Pastor Shawn said, “How we handle forgiveness matters.” Share a time where you sought to **give** or **get** forgiveness. What happened as a result? What would you want to do differently if you could?

:: Read Matthew 6:14-15. How do you feel when you read what Jesus said? Why do you think that is? How should his words shape the way we live each day?

:: Identify an area of your life God is inviting you to embrace forgiveness. What is one thing you can “release” this week that will position you to experience that?

:: Ask someone you trust to pray for you as you seek to take that next step.

“In the shadow of my hurt, forgiveness feels like a decision to reward my enemy. But in the shadow of the cross, forgiveness is merely a gift from one undeserving soul to another.”

- Andy Stanley

Unless otherwise noted, today’s Scripture is from the New International Version [NIV].

Shawn Cossin (@shawncossin) – May 30 & 31, 2020

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