

# Life of Christ

## The Man Who Wouldn't Forgive

Matthew 18:12-14; 21-35

### Younger Verse

Forgive people when they sin against you. Matthew 6:14

### Older Verse

Forgive people when they sin against you. If you do, your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you. Matthew 6:14

### Lesson Goals

Understand that Jesus teaches us that we must forgive others  
Learn Jesus' parable about the servant who wouldn't forgive  
Recognize that Jesus will not forgive us until we forgive others

### Welcome Time

Have you ever forgiven someone for doing something to you, and then they didn't forgive you for something? That doesn't feel good. Jesus taught His disciples about forgiveness in today's lesson.

### Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Jesus was a great storyteller. His stories always had a meaning He wanted to teach. After Jesus taught His disciples about having faith like children, He told them a story about a shepherd and some sheep. A shepherd had 100 sheep, and one of them got lost. He left the 99 sheep to look for the one sheep that was missing. He was so happy when He found the sheep!

Jesus said that He wants all people to be saved. He doesn't want anyone to be without Him.

Then Jesus spoke about what to do when someone doesn't treat you right. Peter asked Jesus how many times he had to forgive someone. The Jewish laws had a certain number of times a person had to forgive someone. Peter thought that seven times should be enough to forgive someone.

But Jesus said that seven times is *not* enough. Instead, He told Peter that he should keep forgiving a person seventy times seven times! Jesus didn't really mean for Peter to multiply those numbers and then keep a count. It was His way of saying that we should forgive others EVERY time they hurt us!

Then Jesus told another story about a king and a servant. The servant owed the king a huge amount of money. The servant could never have repaid the king all of the money. It was like owing someone \$10,000,000 (yes, that's 10 million dollars) today. One day, the king told the servant he needed his money. The servant begged the king to give him more time to come up with the money.

Instead of just giving the servant more time, the king decided to erase the debt of the servant. The servant was cleared of his debt! He didn't owe the king anything!

Not long after that, the servant who had been forgiven found a man who owed him

just a few dollars. He grabbed the man and demanded that he be paid the money. The man asked the servant for more time to pay him back. But the servant was mean and had the man thrown into prison!

When the king found out what the servant had done, he was angry with him. The king said the servant should have forgiven the man just as he had forgiven the servant. Then the king had the servant put in prison!

Jesus told this story so that we can remember to show patience and mercy toward others—even when they have done us wrong. Jesus loves us and wants to forgive all of our sins. But we must be willing to forgive people when they hurt us, too.

Jesus was a great example of what He taught. He had patience and mercy. He showed love to others even when they tried to hurt Him. In fact, do you know how far Jesus went to show mercy? He died. Jesus died for the wrong things that other people did. He died for everyone. That includes all the people that hurt Him. But that wasn't the end. Jesus came back to life! He arose from the grave. People saw Him and knew that God did a miracle. Jesus was alive again.

Because Jesus is alive, we know that if we believe in Him, we will go to Heaven one day. That's exciting. That's real mercy. That's real love.

#### Review Questions

1. What did the king do for the servant who owed him a huge amount of money? (He cleared his debt; forgave him)
2. What did the servant do to the man who owed him just a few dollars? (demanded that the man pay him back the money)
3. Did the servant forgive the man of his debt? (No)
4. How should we treat people when they do wrong to us? (Forgive them.)

#### Prayer Time

Thank God for ALWAYS forgiving us when we confess our sins to Him. Pray that we will be more forgiving with others who hurt us.

#### Life Application

God wants us to be right with Him and each other. He knows that we need to forgive each other. Forgiveness helps us to forget about the past and move toward our future. If we keep thinking about what someone did to us, it just makes us mad and upset.

Jesus even said that if we want Him to forgive us, we have to forgive others. Whenever we refuse to forgive someone, we are blocking God from forgiving us! We don't want to be in a place where God will not forgive us. We must get things right with Him. That is the only way we can have a good relationship with God.

If it is hard to forgive someone, pray and ask God to help you. Think about Jesus and what people did to Him. When He was on the cross, He said, "Father, forgive them." If He was able to forgive those who hurt Him, beat Him, and killed Him, we should be able to forgive people who have hurt us. Let's follow Jesus' example!

Planning for Next Lesson  
Jesus and the Rich Man  
Matthew 19:16-26

## **Preschool Lesson for The Man Who Wouldn't Forgive**

Jesus was a great storyteller. His stories always had a meaning He wanted to teach. After Jesus taught His disciples about having faith like children, He told them a story about a shepherd and some sheep. A shepherd had 100 sheep, and one of them got lost. He left the 99 sheep to look for the one sheep that was missing. He was so happy when He found the sheep!

Jesus said that He wants all people to be saved. He doesn't want anyone to be without Him.

Then Jesus told another story about a king and a servant. The servant owed the king a huge amount of money. The servant could never have repaid the king all of the money. It was like owing someone \$10,000,000 (yes, that's 10 million dollars) today. One day, the king told the servant he needed his money. The servant begged the king to give him more time to come up with the money.

The king felt sorry for his servant, so he decided to forgive the man! He told him that he no longer had to pay him any money. Whew! What a relief for the servant.

Not long after that, the servant who had been forgiven found a man who owed him just a few dollars. He grabbed the man and demanded that he be paid the money. The man asked the servant for more time to pay him back. But the servant was mean and had the man thrown into prison!

When the king found out what the servant had done, he was angry with him. The king said the servant should have forgiven the man just as he had forgiven the servant. Then the king had the servant put in prison!

Jesus loves us and wants to forgive all of our sins. But we must be willing to forgive people when they hurt us, too.

Do you want to stay mad at people when they hurt you? Jesus says we need to forgive them. Then we will be happy and God will be happy with us.

Sing, "If You're Happy and You Know It," and add the verse, "If you're happy and you know it hug a friend."

Pray, thanking Jesus that He forgives our sins. Ask Him to help us forgive others and love them.

## **Hands-on Activities for The Man Who Wouldn't Forgive**

This is a good lesson to act out. You may want to bring black crepe streamers to hang from a door to resemble a jail. Make paper money and crowns. Act out the story.

Veggie Tales has a video called *God Wants Me to Forgive Them?!* It tells the story about the Grapes of Wrath and how they learn to forgive and stop holding on to their anger.

When we show forgiveness to others, we gain peace with them and God. Sing the song "I've Got Peace Like a River."

The mean man would not forgive. Is there someone that we need to forgive? Ask the kids to think about someone that has hurt them. Share how important it is to forgive them and let God take care of everything.

Ask the kids if they have ever played the game "Mercy?" Ask them what it means when someone cries "Mercy?" Talk about today's story and what mercy and patience are all about.