

Activities for Juniors.

- **You can learn more of what Jesus teaches about forgiving others.**

In our story last week Jesus was advising the disciples how they should deal with difficult situations that might occur in the new Christian church. In particular Jesus spoke about how they should treat someone who was doing wrong. At the end of the reading Jesus reminded the disciples that if they forgive someone when they have done something wrong, that God will forgive the person too. Today's reading follows straight on from this. Peter (Simon Peter) asks Jesus how much he should be prepared to forgive another person. The response that Jesus gives is very different to Peter's suggestion. Jesus knows that Peter will be perplexed, rather muddled, by his reply. Jesus tells a parable story to help Peter to understand. You can read the story to find out what Jesus says.

- **You can read the story as it is told in Matthew.**

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Sir, how often should I forgive a person who does something wrong against me? Seven times?"

"No!" Jesus replied, "Much more, seventy times seven!"

Then Jesus told this story. "The Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date. One of his servants who owed him money was brought in to see him. The servant owed a huge amount of money, 10,000 talents. He couldn't pay, so the king ordered him to be sold for the debt, and also his wife and children and everything he had. But the man fell down before the king, his face in the dust, and said, 'Oh, sir, be patient with me and I will pay it all.' Then the king was filled with pity for him and released him and forgave his debt.

But when the man left the king, he went to a man who owed him 100 denarii. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. The man fell down before him and begged him to give him a little time. 'Be patient and I will pay it,' he pleaded.

However the servant wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt would be paid in full.

Then the man's friends went to the king and told him what had happened, how the King's servant had treated their friend. The king called for his servant, the man he had forgiven, and said, 'You evil-hearted wretch! Here I forgave you all that tremendous debt, just because you asked me to—shouldn't you have mercy on others, just as I had mercy on you?'

Then the angry king sent the servant to the worst prison until he had paid everything he owed.

So shall my heavenly Father do to you if you refuse to truly forgive your brothers.”

- **You can think about the reading.**

In his parable story Jesus tells how the king forgives the huge debt that his servant owed. A talent is actually a measure of weight, how heavy something is. Each talent is worth a large weight of silver, so 10,000 talents might be the more than £3,000,000 if it was in our money nowadays. The servant had no way of repaying the king. At that time it was common for people to be bought and sold as slaves. A good, strong slave could be sold for a high price. The king plans to sell the servant to try to get back some of the money owed. In fact the king has the power to sell the servant’s wife, his whole family and everything he owns.

The servant is desperate so he begs the king for more time to pay. When the king sees this he changes his mind, he forgives the servant, cancels the debt and lets him go. Now the servant owes the king nothing, the huge debt has gone away.

However, a moment later the servant sees another man who owes him money. A denarii is a Roman silver coin. 100 of these would still be a lot of money, maybe about £700, but much, much less than the servant owed the king. Like the servant did to the king, the man begs for more time to pay. Now it is the servant who needs to forgive the debt, after all he has just been forgiven a much, much bigger one. But no, he has the man put in prison. Is that fair and just? The king treated his servant with compassion. He felt sorry for him and forgave him. However the servant does not learn to do the same for the man who owed him.

In the end the king finds out what has happened. It is as if the king cancels his forgiveness and the servant is made to pay every last bit of the money he owed.

The message in the parable is clear and will show Peter that forgiveness is very important. Showing compassion to someone who is sorry for things they have done wrong, or the things they have failed to do, is the way Jesus wants us to live.

“So shall my heavenly Father do to you if you refuse to truly forgive your brothers.”

Jesus makes it plain with his last sentence that God wants us to forgive and show each other compassion too.

Saying sorry and forgiving people can be some of the hardest things to do.

When someone does something to hurt us, we can feel very upset, disappointed, angry, betrayed, lots of different emotions and feelings. Whatever they are, they make us feel sad. Sometimes our anger is very strong and we want to make sure the person is punished. It's only fair, we think. They have done something wrong, so they deserve to be punished. God teaches us through Jesus that we should try to show compassion. We should try not to want to punish other people immediately. What happens when they realise that they have done a hurtful thing? What happens when they come to us and say sorry? They are acknowledging that they have done wrong and want to begin again. How should we treat them? If people repent, that is they say sorry and feel sad about what they have done wrong, then we have to try to be brave enough to forgive them.

Think about your friendships. Have there been any times when you have fallen out with your friends over something? How did you feel? Maybe it was you that did something to hurt one of your friends? How did you feel then?

When a friend realises that what they did was wrong and they come to say sorry what difference does that make? Are you able to forgive and forget? This is what God wants us to do. This is what God has promised to do for us when we say sorry. God forgives us but also forgets the bad thing. It is like the debt which was completely cancelled.

Think about how you can be a good friend. What can you do? Can you say sorry when you need to? Can you forgive and forget?

- **You can watch a cartoon based on the story of the Unforgiving Servant.**

If you click on the link below you can watch a cartoon which is based on the story. The cartoon is on YouTube, so please make sure you have permission to look at YouTube and that you only watch it when you have an adult with you. The cartoon lasts about 5 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDLMex-Wm3o>

- You can do a wordsearch based on Peter's question about forgiving.

Keep On Forgiving

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 18:21-22



A P T Z U H W J E S N N M H H
 A W U K G T K E S X G X Q D X
 H T K G T W U S M A N Y I D B
 E K A J I B F U B C G E U K G
 A F S T I M E S U K O O C U W
 M W K W N B O T G P E T E R A
 O P E R G R E L P W W O X H T
 F A D X B R O T H E R G H X E
 K O N A F X S D C R Z L Q W Y
 X E R S V Q J L E I L O Z R Q
 E Z B G W Q D Q D V O R K P H
 E N Z Y I E J P Z L M D J I O
 S W U Q H V R S E V E N A C W
 W L B Q L L E E I I F W C A C
 H U S I N S K T D C F X M T C

PETER
 SINS
 ASKED

ANSWERED
 FORGIVE
 TIMES

MANY
 HOW
 BROTHER

JESUS
 LORD
 SEVEN

- **You can colour some pictures based on the story.**

Look at these pictures. They tell part of the parable that Jesus told. Which part of the story does each of them show? Can you decide what each person is saying? You can colour in the pictures and write a caption for each of them to tell the story in your own words.



