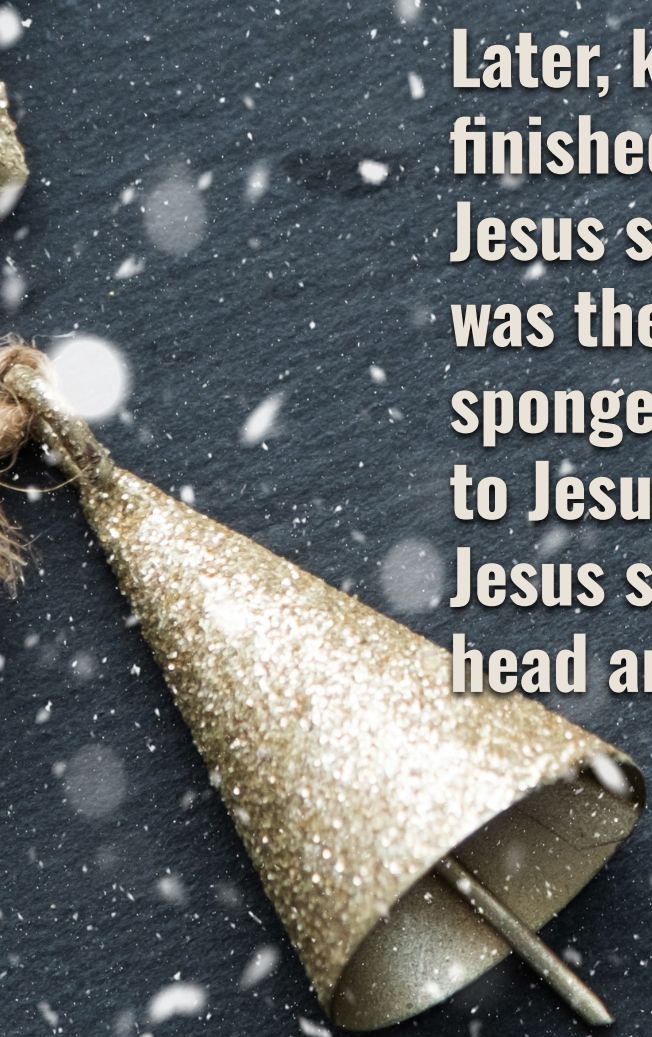




2024

the year of...



Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit

John 19: 28-30 NIV

What is Forgiveness?

- Nothing held against us anymore
- Tetelestai is the Greek word
- Forgiveness is strong and firm
- Forgiveness allows us to move forward



Punchline

**Don't forgive to forget, forgive
to move forward**



Hopscotch



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?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times

Matthew 18: 21-22 NIV



Keep Forgiving

- How often should we forgive?
- Peter asks up to seven times?
- Rabbi's would teach that you forgive three times
- There is no frequency to Jesus - it's unlimited



Lifetime Supply.



Unlimited Forgiveness

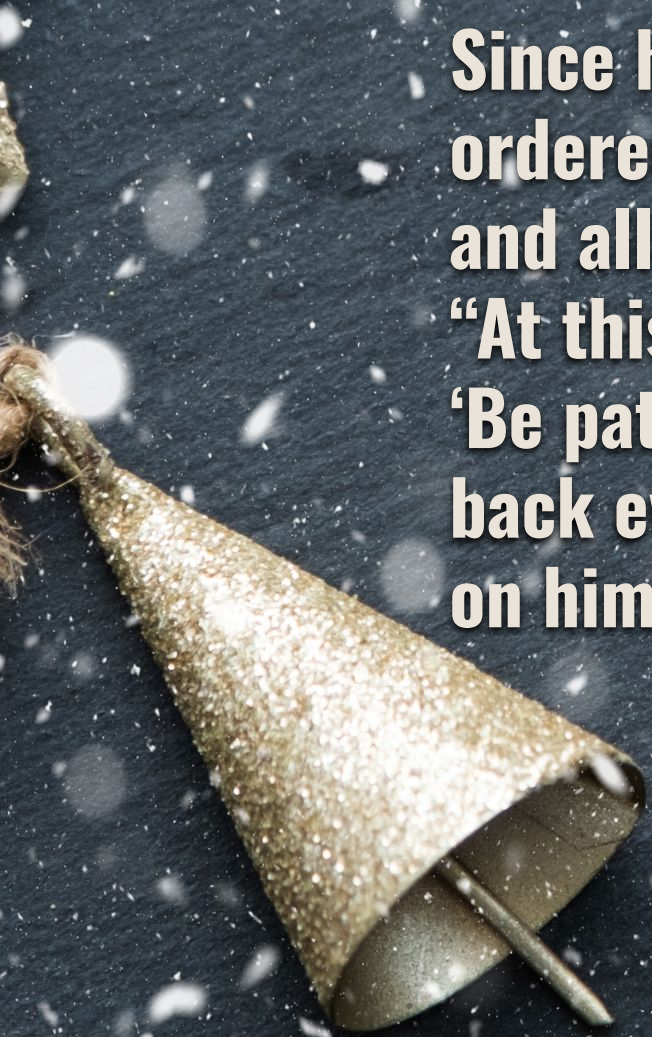
- We have unlimited forgiveness to give
- You can forgive and release a wrong and still protect yourself
- Takes strength to say “you hurt me and I’m not holding that against you now,”
- Don’t keep records of how much forgiveness you give



“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[h] was brought to him.

Matthew 18: 23-24 NIV





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. “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go

Matthew 18: 25-27 NIV



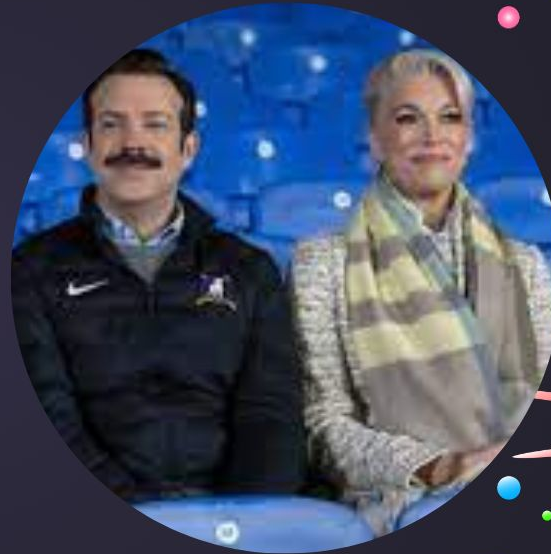
Forgiveness is Given

- 10k bags of gold would be impossible to pay back
- Servant begs the King to be patient
- King totally forgives the debt
- The man is totally free even though the debt was huge

Ted Lasso



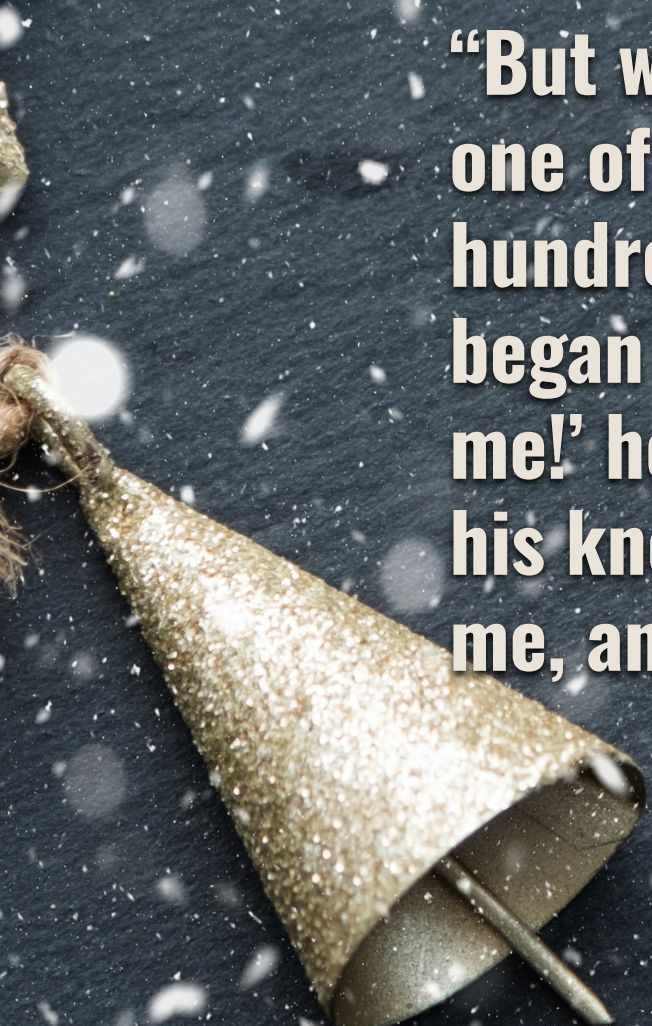
FORGIVE



God Forgives Us In Full

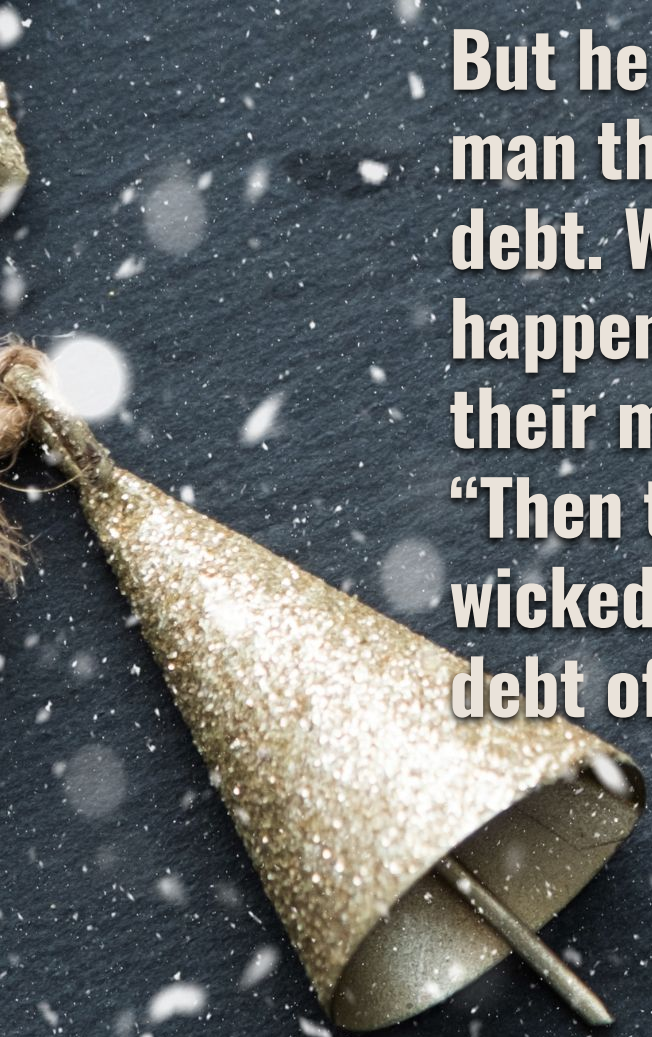
- We have a spiritual debt we can't pay
- We are forgiven **IN FULL**
- God doesn't see forgiveness as a negative thing
- Accept that God has forgive you
- He will continue to forgive you






“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. ‘His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’”

Matthew 18: 28-29 NIV



But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.

Matthew 18: 30-32 NIV



Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Matthew 18: 33-35 NIV

Forgive Others

- The forgiven man is owed something as well
- The man should erase this debt right???
- Has his debtor thrown in prison
- God has forgiven you more than you'll ever have to forgive someone else



Pay It Forward



Forgive As We've Been Forgiven

- “Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?”
- Are you answering yes and doing it?
- Our spiritual debt is higher than what someone “owes” us



Forgive As We've Been Forgiven

- Forgive like the King not like the servant
- That's what God wants because it's what He did for us



Wrap Up: How Does Forgiveness Move Us Forward?

- **Accept forgiveness from God and then grow in God**
- **We are free to move forward personally and spiritually**
- **Forgive and move forward**



Audio file

[Forgiveness Audio \(1\).mp3](#)

Transcript

Right. We all have things in life we're supposed to do, but we don't do. I'm sure I could come up with quite the list of them. Myself. I'm supposed to do a lot of them. Exercises for my back and neck cause. Apparently I'm old now and I have arthritis. In my back. I'm not good about that. And then all of a sudden my back starts to hurt and Stacy my wonderful wife is like, have you been stretching like, no. I haven't been. That's why you hurt. Right. So we're supposed to do a lot of things, right? Flossing came up all these different things. It's great. We know we're supposed to do them in our minds. We're supposed to do these things, right? But we don't always do them. And sometimes we just need a reminder. And that's kind of what we're going to get out a little bit in these first two weeks of this series we started last week. On a series called 2024, the Year of dot dot dot where we're looking at a different word each week and words are themes that I think we could make part of. The year last week we talked about repentance and how repentance isn't exactly an easy thing to do and how repentance is really redirecting our lives towards God and admitting some of the faults of the things we've done wrong. If I had to also pull us, I'm not sure how many of us would say we're super good or great about repenting, and that's OK. It's something to work on. Today is yet another word that I think fits that. Category and that is forgiveness where you. About forgiving other people today, which is something we're going to look at. The Bible teaches us to do. I think as Christians, we know we're supposed to do, but it's really hard. Maybe we don't do it as much as we should, or guys maybe getting at us. But we kind of push that to the side. So we're going to look at forgiveness today and try to look at it as a way to really help us. Kind of move forward. So we're going to. Dive into a. Parable a little bit later, but I want to start out with first. What is forgiveness? When I talk about individual words, I like to kind of define them or. Want to look at what the word means so we can all get on the same page, so I want to look at a passage quickly in John. This will be up here on the screen behind this will be John 19 versus 28 through 30. Feel free to follow along in the Bibles on your tables. Follow along up here. If you brought your own Bible, phone, tablet computer all great I will be in the NIV translation today. So we're going to start John 19. Verses 28 through 30. This is actually Jesus on the cross as he's about to die. It says this later, knowing that everything had now been finished and so that Scripture would be fulfilled. Jesus said I am thirsty. A jar of wine was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plants, and lifted it to Jesus's lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said it is finished. With that, he bowed his head and gave up. His spirit stopped there. So this is Jesus on the cross. And this is where if you think about what the cross really means and we'll celebrate communion later, this is where Jesus came and wiped away our sins. Our debt was cleared, our debt was completely forgiven. What we owed God is now forgiven our spiritual debt because of what Jesus did on the cross. So when he's going to die, he says it. Is finished, meaning his task is over. The debt is now paid. Nothing is held against us anymore. It's gone. Totally and completely wiped, clean and forgiven the Greek word that is used there is called tetelestai and I learned about this for a few years ago when someone I was in seminary and I love this word. First off, for what it means because it means it is finished because it means that my sins are cleared, that they've been wiped away by Jesus. But also like the sound of the word. For me to tell us that it just

sounds strong it sounds. Firm and that's what forgiveness is. I think forgiveness is actually strong and. Sometimes forgiveness can get taken as a weakness, as that we forgive too much and it's weak, or we're letting somebody off the hook for what they did. But I don't think that's totally accurate. We're not forgetting. What somebody did or we're not saying that what was done to us is OK, we're not minimizing anything that was done to us. It's saying that that was wrong and I'm not going to hold it against you anymore. I'm releasing that. Again, we talk about this a lot. It doesn't mean you're going to be best friends with the person that hurt you or wrongs you again, or they're going to come right back into your life if it's been abusive or harmful. I don't believe that God would want you to just pull that person right back in, but you can't forgive without doing that. You can say I'm not letting that hold me back anymore. I'm not holding that against you anymore. You might be able to bring that person back into your life. You might not, but either way, what this allows us to do. Is move forward. You familiar with the phrase forgive and forget like I've heard that a million times in my life and I get it. But I want us to think about forgiveness a little differently, to kind of the punch line of today. Don't forgive to forget, forgive, to move forward. Right. Don't forgive to forget, forgive, to move forward. I was thinking about. This a little bit this week and I don't know why, but the game hopscotch came to mind. Somebody played hopscotch before, right? Right. It's pretty familiar. I tried to look up the origins. Apparently you can trace this game way, way, way back. It was kind of crazy, but you have all these different squares with numbers kind of built. And usually the way it's played is you toss a rock into one of the squares and you would hop right, you might go. You know, 1 foot one foot, you know, two, I'm pretty. I'm pretty killer at Hopscotch. Not going to lie. Play it on a trampoline. Sometimes that gets really fun. We did that with our kids. We drew on the trampoline. Super good time, but. You keep moving forward to go get the. Rack right. You keep going forward. But you don't forget where you did or where you came from. Cause if I'm on 2 feet, I gotta remember I'm there to jump off 2 and go to 1, so we're not forgetting where we were, but the focus is still moving forward, kind of how I see forgiveness. We're not forgetting what was behind us. We're not forgetting what moved, what's going on or what happened, right. Forgetting where we are currently. But the focus is forward. So I want to look at a. That Jesus told all about forgiveness that's going to hopefully help us be able to forgive, to move forward. This parable talks about how we've been forgiven and then how we are supposed to forgive. So it's going to be the parable of the unmerciful servant from Matthew Chapter 18. This is bookmarked on your Bibles there. If you want to open those or again follow along however. You would like. We're going to start, which is the first couple verses. Of the parable, this kind of sets. It up right? So this is going to be Matthew. 18 versus 21 and 22. Says this. 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? Jesus answered. I tell you, not seven times, but 77 times. We're going to stop there. So Jesus, parables were often taught based on a question or a concern. Maybe he's being trapped by the Pharisees. Today it comes from Peter's question about how many times you forgive someone who sins against you and he says up to seven times. So it turns out back in the day, rabbis would teach you would forgive somebody three times. After that third time, you no longer had to forgive. So this is quite possibly Peter being like I know it's seven times. I'm gonna say 7, right. I'm extra generous. I'm gonna forgive somebody seven times. We're not sure. There's also a callback to a story in Genesis about somebody being avenged. Seven times. Could be where this seven comes from. In either case, Peter is trying to put a number or a frequency on how much forgiveness to. And Jesus responds by saying no 77 times. Some translations have heard render it more like $70 * 7$, but it's not about the number, right? It's not 77, it's not 490. If you do the math on the $70 * 7$ right there is no cap on it. There's no frequency to Jesus. Jesus is basically saying. It's unlimited. I remember watching

some of those like game shows or quiz shows when I was younger and so many of them you could live like win an unlimited supply or a lifetime supply of something you familiar with. These other few of these up it's like how do they do this? Apparently one time somebody won a lifetime supply of Donuts, which they were able to get a coupon. For two dozen a day, so that apparently was the lifetime problem was apparently six months after they got it. The owner of the shop died and the son took over and cancelled it. But it was two dozen a day. Somebody won a lifetime supply of movie rentals from blockbuster. But then blacklisted through in bankrupt. So I don't think that's happening anymore. There was a lifetime supply of ice cream. Apparently that was a coupon for a gallon a month alright, fair. They got a lifetime supply of razors. They got a one time shipment of a crate of razors and cartridges. Groceries. This was they were sent \$100 a month gift card, but then once they total out of \$10,000, they were going to cancel it like. They get you. Through a lifetime, but this is probably my favorite one. Somebody want a lifetime supply of Oreos? They were sent a pallet equaling about £1000 worth of Oreos. I hope that lasts a lifetime. Does anybody think it will last a lifetime? 1000 lbs. I can't even. Is there a shelf? Life issue do they expire? I don't know. They probably do. It's fine, right? So the point is though, like even these unlimited or lifetime supplies, they're always quantified somehow. We're always putting a number on it. But not forgiveness. Forgiveness is truly unlimited. We have a lifetime supply of forgiveness to give. We have unlimited forgiveness to give. It may not feel like it. We actually do. And when this gets hard for me, I like to remember back to this. First section we talked about about what forgiveness really is. First off, I can forgive and not let somebody back into my life if it's like. I want. To let this go, but I can't pull them back in. I can forgive and release they're wrong. Or they're dead and. Still kind of protect myself a little bit. Right. God Forgives us and welcomes us back in with him fully. He asks us. To forgive people fully. So that's what we want to do right now. God allows us back into a relationship. We may not pull somebody back in, but he does forgive us fully. And also to remember it's strength, not weakness, I think that's an important one to remember that the forgiving is actually strength. You're not weak for continually forgiving some. Jesus wasn't weak for going to the cross to forgive our sins. God wasn't weak for sending his son to come to Earth and die for us. It takes strength to say you wronged me or you hurt me and I'm not gonna hold that against you anymore. And it takes even more strength to do that. More than once. If you lift weights, think about it this way, right one Rep is can be tough. If it's a heavyweight. But multiple reps gets even harder. It's hard to do. It takes strength to continually lift that weight. It takes strength to continually. Forgive, but that's what God does for us. God continually forgives us. That he will like. Thank goodness God doesn't keep a tally. Mark, you know, have my name up on the chalkboard. And like, oh, there's a wrong from Jeff and wrong from Jeff had to forgive him. We just keep telling it up. And then at some point, he would stop and say that's too much. He doesn't do that. Thank goodness we shouldn't do it either. So don't keep a record of how much. Forgive you give. How many times you had to forgive someone? It's not something to take lightly, but it's something we're supposed to continually give and not run out of. All right, so we're supposed to give forgiveness now before we actually get to us, giving it in the parable, Jesus actually talks about how we've been forgiven. So let's keep going in the parable, Matthew 18:23 through 27. This is where forgiveness is given basically to us. Therefore, the Kingdom of heaven is like a king who wants to settle accounts with the servants as he began to begin the settlement, a man who owed him 10,000 bags of gold was brought in. 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. At this the servant fell on his knees before him. Be patient with me, he begged. I will pay back. The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go. We'll stop there. So Jesus explained what forgiveness in the Kingdom of heaven is like.

Basically, here's how God will see forgiveness so as a king who is owed debts by multiple servants, and he starts to bring him in, we're going to come to account. We're gonna pay it off. One man comes in and he can't pay. He owes us 10,000 bags of gold. Now this would have been an impossible amount. To pay back. Totally. So the King's first thought is to sell the man and his family to start to pay it back. What he would have gotten probably monetarily in this type of sale, wouldn't even come close to covering it, but that was his first thought. So the servant. Begs the king. So be patient, be patient, he says. I'll pay it back. That's impossible, and this man knows he can't pay it back. He's like, just be patient. Well, the king decides to totally cancel the debt. Forgive it in full, basically. Yeah. Bad loan on my part. I'm going to eat that one. So the man is totally free of his debt even. Though what he did? What he had in debt was massive. Think about being forgiven for doing something massive. I've talked before. I loved the TV show Ted Lasso that was on Apple TV. It was a great show for mine. If you're not familiar, gonna spoil a little bit of the first season, but it's been out long enough, so I think we'll be. OK, so this guy. Here Ted Lasso comes to England. He's going to coach a soccer team that is now owned by this woman. Rebecca, it was her ex husband's team that she got in the divorce. Her whole point to bring him in is she wants to sabotage the whole team to really upset her ex-husband because he loved it. So she wants him to fail throughout the first season she does things to try to sabotage him to sabotage the club. And towards the end of the first season, it all comes to light and there's a scene where she walks into his office down in the locker room and she tells I did this. I sabotaged you, yadda yadda yadda. And he gets up. He's got this look on his face and he goes and stands and. He says I forgive you. Says I forgive you. She's like, what? Why, why would you? Do that. And he kind of gives a little speech about why and everything. But the point is he forgives her. She did something terrible. She brought him across the world and tried to sabotage him. But he forgives even though she did something terrible. God Forgives us in full. Think about how we've been forgiven. We have a spiritual debt that we cannot pay on our own. God created us. God loves us, and yet we sin against him and act in a way that doesn't honor him. But he still sent Jesus to come and cancel that debt and forgive it. Only Jesus could do it. And he did it and were forgiven in full. This isn't a partial forgiveness. He didn't just come and like, lower the interest rate on the loan, right? He didn't defer the payment or anything like that. He just totally and completely forgave it. I don't think God doesn't see this as a negative thing. He wanted to forgive us. He wants us to be released of our debt because he wants to be closer to us. So accept that God has forgiven you and he will continue to forgive you. I think that's an important part. We do accept that we are actually forgiven. What we've done. That feeling of guilt or anger or shame that comes with it. We have been forgiven and that is gone. You can say, man, I'm trying to be better, but I keep screwing up. I keep needing forgiveness. Right, that's an attitude I think we can all latch on to. I've tried, but I still just failed. God is patient. Also the servant in the parable, the servant asked the king to be patient. He would pay off his debt. Well, God's already forgiven us. But he's patient as we continue to work through it and grow on him. Now, next week we just talked about growing and we're going to talk about growth as our words. So we'll get there. But the point here is that believe and accept that God has forgiven you and he will continue to forgive. So we're forgiven. And we also forgive others. Let's look at the end of the parable to hear about this. Matthew 18. This will be 28 through 35. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him 100 silver coins. He grabbed and began to choke him. Pay back what you owe me. He demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him. Be patient with me and I will pay it back. He refused and said he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that happened. The master called the servant and you wicked servant, he said. I canceled all

the debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you in anger, his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured. Until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my Heavenly Father will treat each of you. Must you forgive your brother or sister from your heart? And stop there. So now we have the reverse. We have the man that was forgiven, the servant that was forgiven. He is now owed something as well. Now the amount that the forgiven man was owed was substantially less than what he owed the king. Let's just keep that in mind. It wasn't nothing, but it's definitely less. So he's owed money and this man says to him, be patient with me. I'll pay it back. Sound familiar? Same thing. He asked the king. Same thing. Now our conscience should be telling us this man that is owed the debt. Is going to erase it. Forgive it. Just like he was with the king. Right? That's what should happen. But that wouldn't make for a good pair. That would make. For a teaching. So he doesn't. He has this man thrown in debtors prison until he can. Pay it back now legally. He had every right. To do this, it's. Like, but really, you were forgiven this massive amount and you wouldn't forgive this other guy. So this story gets around, it gets back to the king, and the king calls this man in. This is like getting called to the boss's office when you know something's going down, you know you got caught on something. The king calls him wicked, and the king says. Shouldn't you have had mercy as I had on you? So the king throws the man into prison to be tortured until he can pay. This is a worse punishment than originally. So Jesus lesson kind of we we try to sum it up is God has forgiven you more than you'll ever have to forgive someone else. So forgive someone as you've been forgiven, do what's already been done for you. I've shared stories. I worked at a coffee shop for. A lot of. Years and years ago and we had a drive. Through window and there was a. A day when a customer started to pay it forward for familiar with these somebody. Pays for the drink of the people behind them and what they did is they were gonna leave a tip or they said or just pay for it. Pay for the person behind me. It's like, OK, we'll do it. And we want to see how long it would go. So we kept doing it and we had a number of cars actually do this. It was pretty cool. They would say, oh, no, leave it for the person. Leave it for the person I had my drink paid for. I'll pay for theirs right now. Eventually it stopped. And and somebody kind of ended it and that happens. But the idea is somebody. Did something kind or thoughtful for you? You're going to do the same thing for the next person. So we forgive as we've been forgiven. So to start with, remember how we've been forgiven. And then listen to the King's question in the parable. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had mercy on you? Talk about a question that can put you in your place, and it's like it's sort of rhetorical, but also. Not like we know it shouldn't need an answer. We know the answer. The King is looking for and he knows the answer. But also think about how you really feel about that question and how you would answer it. Are you answering? Yes and really doing. Are you showing? That forgiveness, like you've been forgiven. It's tough. Someone that really? Did you wrong or? Really hurt you. And forgiving them. Go back to the parable for a minute. Look at the amount of debt that was owed. The first servant owed the King Way more than what he was owed by the fellow servant. Our spiritual debt to God is always much higher than what someone else personally owes us owes us. Now, that's not minimizing what happened to you. It's not minimizing how you were hurt or how you were treated. Not at all. What the servant was owed and the parable was substantial. It was just much less than he owed the king. So remember. You are already forgiven more than what you'll need to forgive and then work to forgive like the king. Or like God, not like the servant. Take time and work through it right. It won't happen right away and that's OK. Work towards it with God. Pray about it. Spend time with God about it. When it's hard, talk to other people. Alright. Talk to your leaders, your small group people, anything. Right, worked through it. Personally I remember someone I needed to forgive that really hurt me and it took time. God put it on my heart and it. Did not

happen right away. Right. It took time to. Get there, but it honestly, and I can tell you, this was very freeing when I was able to close the book on that and forgive I didn't minimize it for myself. I certainly haven't forgotten it and I never. Will, but I released it. That's what God wants from us because he's done it for us. So do that and let it move you forward. As we wrap up, how does forgiving? Really. Move us forward. Except that we're forgiven and let that help erase any guilt you feel in your. Relationship with God. That allows our relationship with God to continue to move forward. It doesn't put something in the middle of that that we can't get past. We're not stuck and focused on how we sin against God. Then we can move forward and grow in God again. That's going to be our word. Next week is growth. When we forgive others, we aren't tying ourselves to the past. If we hold a grudge or anger, we're always tying ourselves to that person in that situation. Forgiveness releases the cord that holds us. In the past. We become free to move forward with our spiritual and personal lives. The past is always going to be there doesn't go away. What we've done, what's been done to us, but forgiving as God forgave us, isn't forgetting that. But it's allowing ourselves to move forward. Let's pray. Gotta thank you for this morning. Thank you for this parable of the unmerciful servant and the lesson we're taught. And God, we all thank you that we are forgiven by you. That what we've done is forgiven and I pray that we would remember that God, we would accept. Now we would be so thankful and grateful to you for that. And that remembering that, God, we would forgive others. In our lives. And God, I know it's hard. It's hard for me. I'm sure it's. Hard for everybody in this room to do. But I pray that you would help us forget. I pray that you would put on our hearts people that we need to forgive or situations that need to be forgiven. Really would help us work through those and help us to release. Any anger or grudges that are being held towards someone else. And I pray that in doing that guide, you would help us move. Forward in our own lives and in our lives with you. So God, we thank you again for this morning and for this, you know.