

The ABC's of Spiritual Vitality: Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35 (NLT)

²¹Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" ²²"No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!" ²³"Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. ²⁴In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. ²⁵He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. ²⁶But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' ²⁷Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. ²⁸But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. ²⁹His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it,' he pleaded. ³⁰But his creditor wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. ³¹"When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. ³²Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. ³⁵"That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart."

Introduction: One of the hardest tasks any of us has is to forgive someone who has hurt us. But Jesus offered a new teaching on forgiveness.

I. First of all, forgiveness is an a_____.

II. Second, when we forgive others, h_____ takes place within us.

III. Finally, only G_____ can empower us to forgive others.

Conclusion: How many times are we to forgive others? There's no limit. Forgiveness is an attitude. It's recognizing that we've been forgiven.