

## Forgiveness

September 27, 2015 Matthew 18:21-35 Ben Skeat  
Staying Free, part 8

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**MAIN IDEA:** God requires his people to forgive in the same way that he has forgiven them. Forgiveness is as essential to life and freedom in Christ as breathing.

### When we withhold forgiveness we choose imprisonment over freedom

*“Not forgiving is like drinking rat poison and waiting for the rat to die” - Anne Lamott*

Not a tolerable state of affairs and God will do everything he can to get our attention

### It can be easy to forget what God has done for us as we live our everyday lives

*“Time wounds all heels” - Groucho Marx*

The servant forgot that the king had forgiven him. He didn't see it as an action to imitate and that angered the king.

### The cure is to come back to the king and receive mercy

What does this look like?

- Confess your own sin (1 John 1:9)
- Humble yourself before the Lord (Jas 4:17)
- Be willing to obey. Test and see that the Lord is good (Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Psalm 34:8 NKJV)

## We are invited into relationship with this king

Peter had the good sense to come to Jesus and ask his question about forgiveness (Matt 18:21).

We are invited to do the same!

### Biblical steps to forgiveness

1. Set yourself to learning about and knowing and obeying Jesus  
(John 14:23, 2 Pet 1:6-9, Matt 11:28-29)
2. Recognize your own state before the Lord  
(1 John 1:9, James 4:17)
3. Be honest with God about your feelings  
(cf. Book of Psalms)
4. Release the debt to God  
(Rom 12:19, Deut. 32:3-4, 1 Cor 13:5)
5. Act out of your new identity in Christ  
(Col 3:12-14)
6. Keep short accounts with others  
(Matt 18:15, Matt 5:25, Eph 4:26)
7. Speak blessing over those who have wronged you- *Eg. “Lord, I ask that [xxxx] would experience your forgiveness and mercy in the same way I have”*  
(Matt 5:44, Psalm 103:12)
8. Practice blessing over those who have wronged you- *Ask God to show you what would bless the other* (Rom. 12:21, Jas 2:26, Jas 2:12-13)
9. Practice, as far as possible/appropriate, reconciliation in your relationships  
(Rom 12:18, Matt 23-24)