

## RECEIVING AND GIVING FORGIVENESS

Jesus tells His disciples that there is a relationship between the Kingdom and forgiveness.

### In which two moments does forgiveness play a role in the following story?

 *Matt 18:23-35*

In this story we see the king's servant must pay the king a great debt. One estimates that this debt was around a few million Euros. The servant was not able to pay this and was on the verge of being put in prison by his master. The servant decided to ask for mercy. The king was not intent on tormenting the servant or doing him any evil. He decided to forgive the servant his debt and offered the mercy which was requested.


In this lesson we will look at forgiving yourself and in the next lesson we will cover forgiving others.


### Grace

Do you recognise in this story anything about the debt you have with God? How do we actually run up these debts with God?


Another word which the Bible uses for debt is sin. Sin is actually nothing more than living outside the will of God. It is not trusting God and not wanting to be dependent upon Him. You yourself decide what is good and bad. You determine for your own life what you can and cannot do. Telling a small lie is allowed, but a friend telling a big lie is not allowed. Robbing a bank is wrong, but being dishonest to your parents and not telling them the whole truth is permissible. It does not matter which sin we commit, big or small, even if we only break God's rules for living on one point, we are guilty.

God gives us rules for living so we can live righteously. He does this in love. His love is conveyed through the rules. He does not want us to hurt anyone. Everyone is made by Him. If we break His rules then we are not only hurting those around us but also their maker. A debt is created. And these debts are so big in God's eyes that we can never pay them back in our lifetime. The consequence of sin is death. We cannot escape death by working hard and trying to do good. We need God's grace.


 *James 2:10*

 *Rom 3:23*

Read how you can receive this grace.

 *Col 1:13,14*


## What do these verses say about forgiveness? How do we receive this forgiveness?

 Acts 26:18

 Matt 26:26-28

Forgiveness is therefore receiving something you do not deserve. Jesus paid the sacrifice for the debt you have with God. **Grace is a gift you have not earned.**

### The price is paid

 Rom 5:12

Here we read that sin is punishable with death. In the OT it was possible to bring a blood sacrifice in the temple. Through this there was reconciliation between God and man. But this had to be done time and time again because people kept on sinning.

We see that through His Son Jesus, God has paid the price for our sin once and for all. Jesus gave His life as a sacrificial lamb and freed us from our debt by doing so. God asks us if we believe this. Through faith we receive forgiveness from the debt we have. Through our faith we will enter into His kingdom. By this we are free!

### He took our place

In the Second World War a German officer was killed by someone from the resistance. The Germans were so angry that they gathered lots of men from the village where the attack had taken place and assembled them in the village square. A long row was formed and all the men who had even numbers had to take a step forward. There was a young father of two children in the row with an even number. The German giving orders told all the men with an odd number that they could go home. The others would be shot down. An old neighbour stood behind the young father. He pulled the young father to his place and took his place instead. The young neighbour looked at him wide-eyed. What should he do? What would happen? He should die and not his neighbor. Eventually he chose to accept the man's offer. He didn't deserve to, but he decided to receive the gift. He would never forget this day. A few moments later the neighbour was gunned down by the bullets which were meant for him.




## Completely clean

This is the heart of the father. He wants his children to be completely free of debt. The sense of guilt and shame in your heart will disappear. The result is a sense of being clean inside.

Years ago I went wading in the mud flats with a group. For hours we walked through shallow water. Everything I had got covered with mud, even my hair. Once we finally reached firm ground there was not one part of my body which was not dirty. You can understand that I was in real need of a warm shower. The organisation running the mud flat wading had accounted for this. Within five minutes I was enjoying a warm shower. What a wonderful feeling; clean water washing away all that mud. After a few minutes I stood outside completely clean.

This is what happens in your soul when you receive forgiveness. Jesus' sacrifice makes you completely clean on the inside. No trace of the sin can be found any more. All guilt has gone. The blood sacrifice of Jesus will completely cleanse you if you believe that Jesus did this for you.

### EXERCISE:

-  Do you want to decide and believe today that God, through His son Jesus, wants to forgive you? Open up your heart and receive forgiveness.
-  Really take the time to be quiet before God. Ask Him to show you your heart and write down for yourself the things God shows you and the things for which you need forgiveness. Write the events down in detail and then write down the main points on the 'Free of debt' cheques which are attached. Tell God the Father about this and ask for forgiveness. Ask Jesus to make you clean by His blood and thank Him for His forgiveness.
-  Read together with your mentor 1 John 1:7-9. If you experience that God wants you to tell your mentor about specific sins and bring them to the cross, then do that. Let your mentor speak forgiveness out over you.

It can be such a relief to bring certain things which have taken place in secret to light. Only do this if you feel completely safe with your mentor.

## TEXTS PART 1 LESSON 7

*Matthew 18:23-35*

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 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.

26 “The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

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

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.

33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”

*James 2:10*

10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

*Romans 3:23*

23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

*Colossians 1:13-14*

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

*Acts 26:18*

18 To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

*Matthew 26:26-28*

*26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."*

*27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

*1 John 1:7-9*

*7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

*8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*