

# Membership Covenant

The 5 G's  
Groups  
Giving  
Gifts  
Grace  
Growth

## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Matthew 18:21-35

Message for the Week: Sharing Grace

Sunday, March 3

### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week?  
Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

How many times has God our Father forgiven you? How many times does Jesus say his followers should forgive someone?

### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Matthew 18:21-35](#) out loud.

[Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## **Respond / Reflect:**

Is forgiveness instantaneous or a process? What happens when we forgive?

Why does Jesus say in verse 23, "The kingdom of heaven is like?"

What is Jesus trying to say with the amount that the first man owes?

How are we like the man who owed the amount that was impossible to repay? How are we like him when he goes to collect the smaller amount from his fellow servant?

Why were the king's other servants outraged (definition of outrage in vs 31 is to grieve, mourn, be distressed) when the first man beat up the second man?

What is your response when someone asks you to forgive them for something they have done wrong against you the first time? The seventh time?

## **Try It:**

Think about a time when you knew you had to offer forgiveness to someone for something they did or said about you that you took as an offense. Did offering forgiveness come easily to you? How did you feel after your offered forgiveness? Practice offering forgiveness when/where needed this week.

## **Prayer:**

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, thank you for the extravagant gift of grace which you have given to us, complete forgiveness of all our sins. Help us to remember what we have received from you and to share that precious gift in this world, in this time and place for the establishment of YOUR heavenly kingdom here on earth. AMEN

## **Missional/Spiritual Practice: Grace**

I commit to loving Jesus with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength knowing I have been saved by grace because of Jesus' death and resurrection; this is a free gift, not the result of anything I have done.

I commit to sharing my testimony of what God has done and continues to do in my life by his grace regularly and boldly as I am led by the Spirit.

## Matthew 18:21-35

### New International Version

**18** <sup>21</sup> 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?”

<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.<sup>[a]</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>32</sup> “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. <sup>33</sup> Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ <sup>34</sup> In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

<sup>35</sup> “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

### Footnotes

a. [Matthew 18:22](#) Or *seventy times seven*

b. [Matthew 18:24](#) Greek *ten thousand talents*; a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer’s wages.

c. [Matthew 18:28](#) Greek *a hundred denarii*; a denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer (see 20:2).

### The Message

**18** <sup>21</sup> At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, “Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?”

<sup>22</sup> Jesus replied, “Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven.

<sup>23-25</sup> “The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn’t pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market.

<sup>26-27</sup> “The poor wretch threw himself at the king’s feet and begged, ‘Give me a chance and I’ll pay it all back.’ Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

<sup>28</sup> “The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, ‘Pay up. Now!’

<sup>29-31</sup> “The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, ‘Give me a chance and I’ll pay it all back.’ But he wouldn’t do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king.

<sup>32-35</sup> “The king summoned the man and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn’t you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?’ The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt. And that’s exactly what my Father in heaven is going to do to each one of you who doesn’t forgive unconditionally anyone who asks for mercy.”