**FORGIVENESS: Simple or Complicated?**

How important is forgiveness in order to maintain a close relationship?

Forgiving other, simple or complicated?

Asking for forgiveness, simple or complicated?

What does it mean to forgive?

Some other really hard questions:

1. Does my salvation depend on my willingness to forgive?
2. Do I have to forgive if they never repent?
3. How often do I have to forgive someone for the same sin?
4. Does forgiveness mean forgetting?
5. Does forgiveness require reconciliation?
6. Is forgiveness for me or for the offender?

What the bible says about forgiving others: (use the space below the scripture to write your thoughts)

Mat\_6:14  For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15  But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Mat 18:21-22Then 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.

Mar\_11:25  And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Luk 17:3-4  So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.  (4)  Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

Joh\_20:23  If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Col 3:13  Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Eph 4:32  Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**In order to truly forgive another, we must first understand how “in Christ God forgave you.”**

There are a few parables that help us to understand how this happens:

Matthew 18:23-27

Some important facts:

1. The debt was owed
2. The debt owed is greater than the man’s ability to pay
3. The punishment was severe
4. The debt was canceled because of the master’s mercy not because of the goodness of the man
5. Cancelling the debt was a gift to the servant but a cost to the master

Luke 15:11-24

Some important facts:

1. The son believes he is entitled to his father’s fortune
2. The Father gives him his inheritance
3. The son wastes everything
4. The Father did not chase the son
5. The son “came to his senses”
6. The son returns to the father
7. The Father forgives the son, restores him, and celebrates his return
8. The forgiveness of the father was free to the son but at a cost to the father

What can we learn about God’s forgiveness in these two parables?