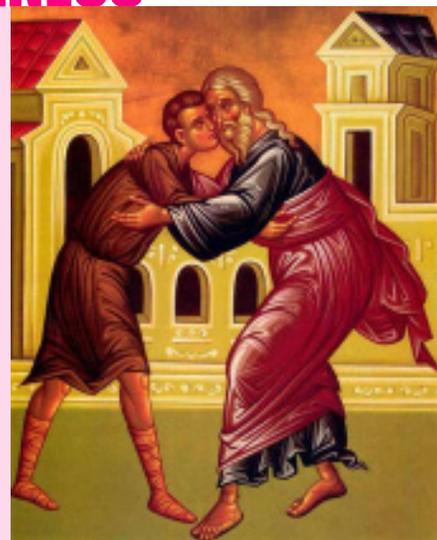


5 • WHAT JESUS SAYS ABOUT FORGIVENESS

Jesus Christ's teaching on forgiveness went far beyond that taught by the religion of His time. When He revealed that we are to forgive "seventy times seven," he introduced an entirely new understanding of our relationship God and with others.

- Obviously, Jesus did not mean that we should literally "keep a log" of the number of times we've forgiven others until we reach 490, only to reject the person we've forgiven thereafter. What He was doing is illustrating in a dramatic way **the unlimited nature of Christian love, rooted in the very God Who is Love Itself.**
- **Why forgive others?** Because **God forgives us.** It is in His very nature to forgive; if we are to become like Him, then we too must forgive. All of **Christian action is rooted in God.** Thus, Jesus did not give us a philosophical or ethical "system." Instead, He continually reveals what God is like and asks us to be like Him.
- The human reaction to injury is the impulse to retaliate; hurt those who hurt you. Jesus taught that **evil can only be overcome with goodness.** He challenges us to **break down the vicious cycle** of an "eye for an eye" and a "tooth for a tooth."

By hurting those who have hurt us, we perpetuate evil; by forgiving others, we ignite goodness.



Look up each of the following passages and write down what Jesus Christ says about forgiveness.

MATTHEW 18:21-35

MATTHEW 6:12

MATTHEW 6:14-15

MATTHEW 6:23-24

MATTHEW 6:38-44

MARK 11:25-26

LUKE 6:37

LUKE 23:24

LUKE 17:3-4

MATTHEW 6:23-24

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

God unconditionally forgives those who are truly repentant

How can we apply what Jesus reveals in this parable to our own lives?

LUKE 15:11-32