**Intro**

**What thing (event, person, movie, song, etc.) first comes to mind when you think of forgiveness? Why?**

**Share a time when you have been forgiven? What did it feel like?**

**Sermon**

**What was something from the message that really stood out to you?**

**Were there any passages that hit you from the message? What were they, and why?**

*Read Matt 18:21-35*

Have you heard or read this story before? Where and what was the takeaway (if you remember)?

What do you think about the master? What about the servant?

*Read Matthew 18:1-20*

**Why did Jesus tell this parable?** Jesus is in pure, practical, teaching mode. He Begins this session by pointing out that his words and God's kingdom are not just for adults but for all people, including children (1-5). He then spends the next 15 verses talking about how his followers are to relate to one another. Notice that this is a ton of practical law, but it has a twist.

**How are followers of Jesus supposed to interact with one another, according to v.15-20? Why do you think this is?** We are to approach one another as brothers and sisters, at least how ideal brothers and sisters interact. When we have a problem or when we are wronged, we should go to the person with the goal of reconciliation. If Christians can't resolve their differences between themselves, they bring in a trusted third party. If reconciliation still cannot be had, then you bring in the whole family, that is the church. The last step is breaking off the offending person from the family. This is often referred to as the Matthew principle.

Jesus instructs us to do this because we are people of love, which means we approach one another with love. We always strive to speak well of one another, and we try to put other's actions in the best construction possible. This is because we recognize that we make mistakes and hurt others all the time, sometimes intentionally and others times unknowingly. With these in mind, we focus on the identity that binds us, and that has reconciled us to God. If Christ has achieved the most significant reconciliation of all in our place, we can find reconciliation for our squabbles.

**What did Peter ask Jesus? “**Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

*Contextual note: The wisdom of the day is not much different than the wisdom of today. Teachers and leaders told everyone that forgiveness should be given three times for the same offense. Today is not much different; three strikes and your out. Peter was being very generous.*

**How much did the servant owe the master? What did the master do for the servant?** He owed 10,000 talents. A talent is the equivalent of 20 years of wages. *For fun, you can have your students try to figure out how much money that would be in today’s dollars. (The average household income in Ohio is $54,021.) The amount comes to about $10,804,200,000. This is close to the entire wealth of the Roman Empire at the time.* The master forgave all of it.

**Do you think the master was being gracious or foolish? Why?**

**How is the master like God in this way?** God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Psalm 103:8). To our eyes, his love and mercy looks reckle….nope, I'm not going to say it…foolish.

**How much did the other servants owe the first servant? What did this servant do for them?** 100 denarii, or about 100 days of wages. *Referencing our last figure, it would come to about $18,000.* It's still a significant amount but nothing compared to his own debt, and yet he through the man into prison.

**Do you think the master was right in his actions against the servant? Why?**

**Reflection**

**How are we like the servant?**

**Has there ever been a time in your life where someone refused to forgive you? Have you ever refused to forgive them?**

**Is there someone that you need to forgive?**

**How does Christ change how we forgive?**

**Why should we forgive?**