



MESSIAH

JOHNS CREEK

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Christian Worship Lectionary		
FIRST LESSON	Genesis 50:15-21	How hard it is to forgive like God! We may forgive someone who hurts us, but we never forget.
SECOND LESSON	Romans 14:5-9	Restricting my freedom out of love for my brother is service to Christ that pleases God and brings righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit
GOSPEL LESSON	Matthew 18:21-35	Forgiveness must be learned, and Peter thought he had figured it out.
PSALM	103	

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Lord, we pray that your mercy and grace may always go before and follow after us that, loving you with undivided hearts, we may be ready for every good and useful work; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

VERSE OF THE DAY:

Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Church forgives as God forgives. Anytime we try to imitate God, we quickly realize our inadequacy. Yet today God tells us to model our forgiveness on his: a boundless, free, and loving forgiveness based on the sacrifice of Christ. How could our sinful hearts ever forgive like that? The Prayer of the Day asks that the mercy and grace of God precede us and follow after us, that we might love God with undivided hearts— hearts always ready to forgive as God does: sins are forgiven, forgotten, forever.

BACKGROUND:

- The occasion upon which Peter asks the question is not in response to a horrible thing that has been done to him. Rather, Jesus has just been talking to the disciples about how they should treat a “brother who sins against you”. He tells them they should go to the person privately to show them their sin and give them a chance to repent. If they don’t listen, Jesus tells the disciples to give them another chance to repent by bringing two or three others along. If they still don’t listen, Jesus tells the disciples they should give them yet another chance to repent by bringing the matter before the entire congregation. It is clear that Jesus wants His disciples to expend a considerable amount of effort in order to lead a person to repentance.
- This gets Peter to thinking. How many times do you have to go through this entire process? I mean isn’t there a point when you have to say enough is enough? Let’s say you go through this entire process and lead a person to repentance but then a month later they commit another sin against you, do you go through this whole process again? What if they sin against you every week? Should we go through this process every week? What if it is every day? What if every single day they sin against you? If we offer forgiveness to a person every single day, aren’t we just letting them manipulate the process?
- Peter seems to be concerned about the integrity of the process. I am not so sure that is our main concern. Our main concern is not so much about the integrity of the process, our concern is about the integrity of our person. We don’t like to be manipulated, we don’t like it when people take advantage of us, we don’t want to look like fools, and we are afraid that is exactly what will happen if we forgive people who sin against us again and again and again.

Exegesis of Matthew 18:21-35¹

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” ²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

21 Τότε προσελθὼν ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· κύριε, ποσάκις ἁμαρτήσῃ
Then having gone toward the Peter said to him Master how often might sin

εἰς ἐμὲ ὁ ἀδελφός μου καὶ ἀφήσω αὐτῷ; ἕως ἑπτάκις ; 22 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ
to me the brother of me and I might send off him Until seven times Says to him the

Ἰησοῦς· οὐ λέγω σοι ἕως ἑπτάκις ἀλλὰ ἕως ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτά.
Jesus not I say to you until seven times but until seventy times seven

- “Then” -
 - *Jesus had just encouraged the disciples to have a searching love for sinners and to be ready to make repeated attempts to bring sinners to repentance. It may well have occurred to Peter that this practice, if faithfully carried out by believers, could easily be abused. A sinner brought to repentance and assured of his forgiveness could easily turn around and sin again—and again. Peter may have been concerned that people could take advantage of God’s forgiveness and the forgiveness offered by the brothers they have offended. His question could well have been natural and innocent: “Is there a limit to God’s forgiveness? Is there a limit to the times that I should forgive others? At what point am I to say, ‘That’s enough; I can forgive you no more!’?” - ILCW*
- **ἁμαρτάνω:** to act contrary to the will and law of God—‘to sin, to engage in wrongdoing, sin.’ -LN
 - fut. act. ind.
 - there are many words for sin. This one means miss the mark. Like hitting the bartender instead of the bullseye on the dartboard.

- “forgive”-
 - **ἀφίημι**; **ἄφεσις**, **εως** *f*; **ἀπολύω**: to remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing—‘to pardon, to forgive ...It is extremely important to note that the focus in the meanings of **ἀφίημι**, **ἄφεσις**, and **ἀπολύω** is upon the guilt of the wrongdoer and not upon the wrongdoing itself. The event of wrongdoing is not undone, but the guilt resulting from such an event is pardoned. To forgive, therefore, means essentially to remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. - LN
 - **ἀφιέναι**, “to send off,” is richly attested in Gk. from an early period, and is used in every nuance, both lit. and figur., from “to hurl” (e.g., missiles) to “to release,” “to let go,” or “to let be.” - TDNT
 - Fut. Act. Ind.



What does it mean to forgive?

- I think part of our problem with forgiveness is we don’t understand what it is. I think sometimes we get confused and think that forgiveness means we condone the sin. If I forgive the murderer am I saying that murder is O.K.? NO! Other times we think we accept the sin. I have preached at my children for years and years not to say it’s O.K. when they are forgiving someone. Sin is never O.K. When we forgive a person we are letting go of our right to revenge. We are taking the guilt that is associated with the sin and throwing it away/ let it go/ release them from its burden. To steal Jesus’ description from the previous section of Scripture, we are untying them from the binds of their sin....
- They still did a horrible thing and they may still have consequences to face. The adulterer may have to deal with divorce, the murderer may have to go to prison. the liar may lose a friend, but the guilt that will send them to hell has been removed.
- Johnny Cash “I hung my head” was playing in the background as I studied this text. It is a song about a young man who accidentally kills another man and though he repents of his crime he is still hung at the gallows.
- “seven times” - **ἑπτὰκις**: seven occurrences—‘seven times.’ **ἕως ἑπτὰκις** ‘as many as seven times’ **Mt 18:21**; **καὶ ἂν ἑπτὰκις τῆς ἡμέρας ἁμαρτήσῃ εἰς σέ** ‘even if he sins seven times a day against you’ **Lk 17:4**. It is also possible to understand **ἑπτὰκις** in these contexts as referring to a relatively large number, that is, more than one would expect from the context.
 - *Peter wondered how far forgiveness should be extended for repeated offenses. **Seven times?** Rabbinic teaching (based on **Amos 1:3**; **Job 33:29, 30**, ASV) demanded only three. **22**. Jesus, however, lifted the matter beyond the realm of practical computation by requiring **seventy times seven**. Rather than seek a numerical standard, the believer must follow the example of his Lord (**Col 3:13**) - WBC*
- “seventy-seven times” -
 - **ἑβδομηκοντάκις****a**: seventy occurrences—‘seventy times.’ **ἕως ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτὰ** ‘up to seventy-seven times’ **Mt 18:22**.....**ἑβδομηκοντάκις****b**: seventy multiples of a quantity—‘seventy times.’ **ἕως ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτὰ** ‘seventy times seven’ (a total of 490 times) **Mt 18:22**. One should not, however, interpret **ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτὰ** as referring to a specific number, such as 490, but simply an unusually large number with symbolic significance of being totally adequate or complete. - LN

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 talents 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, canceled the debt and let him go.

23 Διὰ τοῦτο ὠμοιώθη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ἀνθρώπῳ βασιλεῖ, ὃς
Through this was likened the kingdom of the heavens to man king who
ἠθέλησεν συναῖραι λόγον μετὰ τῶν δούλων αὐτοῦ. 24 ἄρξαμένου δὲ
wanted to lift up together word with the slaves of him Having begun but
αὐτοῦ συναίρειν προσηνέχθη αὐτῷ εἷς ὀφειλέτης μυρίων ταλάντων. 25
him to lift up together was offered him one debtor of ten thousand talents
μὴ ἔχοντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀποδοῦναι ἐκέλευσεν αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος πραθῆναι καὶ τὴν
Not having but him to give back commanded him the master to be sold and the
γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ πάντα ὅσα ἔχει, καὶ ἀποδοθῆναι. 26
woman and the children and all as much as he has and to be given off
πεσῶν οὖν ὁ δοῦλος προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων· >> μακροθύμησον << ἐπ’
Having fallen then the slave was worshiping him saying be long tempered on
ἐμοί, καὶ πάντα ἀποδώσω σοι. 27 σπλαγχνισθεῖς δὲ ὁ κύριος τοῦ
me and all I will give back to you Having had affection but the master of the
δούλου ἐκείνου ἀπέλυσεν αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ δάνειον ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ. 28
slave that he loosed off him and the loan he sent off to him

- **συναίρω:** to settle or check on accounts with someone—‘to check on accounts, to settle accounts.’ ἄρξαμένου δὲ αὐτοῦ συναίρειν ‘as he began to check on accounts’ Mt 18:24. - LN
- aor. act. inf.
- we would do well to think of our sins as debts that we owe. We would not expect the IRS to overlook back taxes, or JCPenny to dismiss our bill, or the credit card company to pay our balance. Why do we expect God to just act like we have not accumulated an astronomical debt?



When does the settling of accounts take place for us?

- “ten thousand talents” -
 - **τάλαντον, ου n:** a Greek monetary unit (also a unit of weight) with a value which fluctuated, depending upon the particular monetary system which prevailed at a particular period of time (a silver talent was worth approximately six thousand denarii with gold talents worth at least thirty times that much)...The ‘ten thousand talents’ referred to in Mt 18:24 would be equivalent to millions of denarii. The sum in this parable is perhaps greatly exaggerated, precisely in order to emphasize the vast differences between the two debts. - LN
 - **τάλαντον (talanton), ου (ou), τό (to):** n.neu.; = Str 5007—LN 6.82 **a talent of money** (of silver valued at 6,000 day’s wage; gold 180,000 day’s wages) - DBL
 - Johns Creek’s the average person makes \$65,000 a year or \$178 a day. Do the math and this servant owes the king about 10 billion dollars.
 - The servant’s debt— by any measure of calculation—was impossibly high (perhaps 150,000 years’ wages). Who could have accrued debt such as this? Who could ever hope to repay? What an arresting picture of our debt of sin before God!

- **“sold to repay the debt”** -
 - **πωλέω**: to dispose of property or provide services in exchange for money or other valuable considerations —‘to sell.’ - LN
 - aor. pass. inf.
 - wife and children were thought to be part of the man’s property and therefore whatever value they had would be used to pay the debt. This was a common practice but in no way does this indicate that my wife and children are responsible for my sin. This is an obvious detail of the story that does not have a direct meaning to the lesson.
- **ἀποδίδωμι**: to make a payment, with the implication of such a payment being in response to an incurred obligation—‘to pay, to render.’ - LN
 - The idea of a debtors prison was that you could work as a slave to pay off your debts. The problem was that part of your pay was used to pay for your living expenses. As a result it was impossible to get out of debtors prison.
- **πίπτω**: to fall from a standing or upright position down to the ground or surface—‘to fall, to fall down.’ - LN
- **“begged”** - **προσκυνέω**: (an idiom, literally ‘to incline the face to the ground’) to prostrate oneself before someone as an act of reverence, fear, or supplication—‘to prostrate oneself before.’ - LN
 - impf. act. ind
 - this is the body language of worship
- **“be patient”**- **μακροθυμέω**: (derivative of μακροθυμία ‘patience,’ 25.167) to demonstrate patience despite difficulties—‘to be patient, to remain patient, to wait patiently.’ καὶ - LN
 - aor. act. Impv. - the servant commands not as an authority but as a subject. Still it seems out of place for him to be so bold. But as we will see this servant likes to give imperative commands.
- **“pity”** - **σπλαγχνίζομαι**: to experience great affection and compassion for someone—‘to feel compassion for, to have great affection for, love, compassion.’ - LN
 - aor. pass. pt.
 - the guts are stirred.
- **“canceled”**- **λύω**; **ἀπολύω**; **ἀπαλλάσσω**: to release from control, to set free (highly generic meaning applicable to a wide variety of circumstances, including confinement, political domination, sin, sickness)—‘to release, to set free.’ - LN
 - The master did not reduce the debt to a manageable amount. This isn’t some sort of settlement that the two parties reach, this is a flat out gift that is given to the servant.
 - this draws the disciples back to Jesus proclamation “whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven”.
 - **as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Psalm 103:12**
 - **You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. Micah 7:19**

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred 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 you 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 greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

ἔξελθὼν δὲ ὁ δοῦλος ἐκεῖνος εὔρεν ἓνα τῶν συνδούλων αὐτοῦ, ὃς
Having gone out but the slave that found one of the co-slaves of him who

ὤφειλεν αὐτῷ ἑκατὸν δηνάρια, καὶ κρατήσας αὐτὸν ἔπνιγεν λέγων·
owed him hundred denaria and having held him he choked saying

>> ἀπόδος << εἴ τι ὀφείλεις. 29 πεσὼν οὖν ὁ σύνδουλος αὐτοῦ
give back if some you owe Having fallen then the co-slave of him

παρεκάλει αὐτὸν λέγων· >> μακροθύμησον << ἐπ’ ἐμοί, καὶ ἀποδώσω
was encouraging him saying be long tempered on me and I will give back

σοι. 30 ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἤθελεν ἀλλὰ ἀπελθὼν ἔβαλεν αὐτὸν εἰς φυλακὴν
to you The one but not wanted but having gone off he threw him into guard

ἕως ἀποδῶ τὸ ὀφειλόμενον. 31 ἰδόντες οὖν οἱ σύνδουλοι αὐτοῦ τὰ
until he might give off the thing owed Having seen then the co-slaves of him the

γενόμενα ἔλυπήθησαν σφόδρα καὶ ἐλθόντες διεσάφησαν τῷ κυρίῳ
things becoming were grieved exceeding and having gone they clearly told the master

ἑαυτῶν πάντα τὰ γενόμενα. 32 τότε προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτὸν ὁ
of themselves all the things becoming Then having called to him the

- “fellow servant” - σύνδουλος, ου m: one who is a fellow slave or a slave alongside another slave—‘fellow slave.’ - LN
 - this is an equal, not a subject of the subject.
- “hundred denarii” - δηνάριον, ου n: a Roman silver coin equivalent to a day’s wage of a common laborer —‘denarius.’ - LN
 - this amount is a fraction of a fraction of the debt that was forgiven by the master.
 - If these servants were living in Johns Creek, GA the one would owe the other \$17,808.21. If Andean Chevrolet were like this servant I would be in prison by now.
- “grabbed” - κρατέω; ἔχωb; ἄπτομαιa: to hold on to an object—‘to hold on to, to retain in the hand, to seize.’ - LN
 - According to TDNT the idea of force and violence is associated to this action.
- “choked” - πνίγωa: to apply pressure around the neck in order to harm or kill—‘to choke.’ - LN
 - The image is as clear as it is disturbing. You can see the white knuckles and the clenched teeth the rage in his eyes the pure hate spitting from his voice. It is an act of violence aggression. This is the action of a man out for blood.

- It is difficult to see how this man can so quickly go from a blubbering beggar to a callous collector but then I remember how quickly I undergo the same transformation from the time I leave to church to the time I open the garage door.
- **“pay back”- ἀποδίδωμι:** to make a payment, with the implication of such a payment being in response to an incurred obligation—‘to pay, to render. - LN
- aor. act. impv.
- **“demanded”** - The word “demanded” is not in the original Greek but it is clearly implied by the context (though I might argue it is not needed).
- the co-servant does not fall to his face in worship rather he **παρακαλέω:** to ask for something earnestly and with propriety—‘to ask for (earnestly), to request, to plead for, to appeal to, earnest request, appeal.’ - LN
Otherwise the co-servant asks for the exact same thing the first servant asked for; he asks his co-servant to “be long tempered”. “patient” Likewise he offers to pay the debt off. The difference is that his offer was a legitimate offer that could actually be accomplished in his lifetime.
- **“refused”** - οὐκ ἤθελεν “not wanted” It is not that the servant could not forgive the debt of his fellow servant. He did not want to forgive it.
- **“thrown in prison”** - **βάλλω:** to put or place some object or mass in a location, with the possible implication of force in some contexts—‘to put, to cause to be put. - LN
- aor. act. ind.
- **“other servants”** -
- **“distressed”** - 1. λύπη, “pain,” “sorrow” (λυπεῖν, “to cause pain,” λυπεῖσθαι, “to experience sorrow,” “to be sad”), is in the broadest sense the experience of the natural impulse of both man and animals in the pursuit of ἡδονή. Since the natural impulse is the ψυχή, λύπη is a matter of the ψυχή, and since this is for the Gks. the sphere of bodily vitality as well as the intellectual life, λύπη can mean physical pain as well as sorrow of spirit - TDNT
- aor. pass. ind.



Who are the “other servants” and why are they so distressed?

- When i refuse to forgive I am not only hurting the person I hold to account but I harm my fellow believers. They can not understand how I can be so merciless when I have been shown so much mercy. When I fail to forgive I hurt”
 - the who sinned against me
 - those who observe my heartless actions
 - myself (as the parable will demonstrate next)
- *“Some identify the reporting by the other servants with the activity of Christians who bring the case of unmerciful fellow Christians before God in prayer. But this seems forced.” Franzmann*
- I think it seems as natural as any other explanation

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled 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 turned 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.”

ἐαυτῶν πάντα τὰ **γενόμενα** . ³² τότε **προσκαλεσάμενος** αὐτὸν ὁ
of themselves all the things becoming Then having called to him the
κύριος αὐτοῦ **λέγει** αὐτῷ · δούλε πονηρέ , πᾶσαν τὴν ὀφειλὴν ἐκεῖνην **ἀφῆκά**
master of him says to him slave evil all the debt that I sent off
σοι , ἐπεὶ **παρεκάλεσάς** με · ³³ οὐκ **ἔδει** καὶ σὲ **ἐλεῆσαι** τὸν
to you since you encouraged me not it was necessary also you to have mercy the
σύνδουλόν σου , ὡς κἀγὼ σὲ **ἤλεῆσα** ; ³⁴ καὶ **ὀργισθεὶς** ὁ κύριος
co-slave of you as also I you had mercy And having become angry the master
αὐτοῦ **παρέδωκεν** αὐτὸν τοῖς βασανισταῖς ἕως οὗ **ἀποδῶ** πᾶν τὸ
of him gave over him to the tormentors until which he might give back all the
ὀφειλόμενον . ³⁵ οὕτως καὶ ὁ πατὴρ μου ὁ οὐράνιος **ποιήσει** ὑμῖν , ἐὰν μὴ
thing owed Thusly also the father of me the heavenly will do to you except [n/a]

ἀφῆτε ἕκαστος τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν καρδιῶν ὑμῶν .
you might send off each the brother of him from the hearts of you

- “wicked” - **πονηρός, ἄ, ὄν**: pertaining to being morally corrupt and evil—‘immoral, evil, wicked. - LN
 - this is what God calls me when I do not forgive.
 - it is an evil thing to fail to forgive
- “canceled” -
 - “because you encouraged” actually the servant commanded/begged
- “just as” -
 - “mercy” - **ἐλεάω** or **ἐλεέω**; **ἔλεος, οὐς** *n*: to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need —‘to show mercy, to be merciful toward, to have mercy on, mercy.’- LN
 - before it said that He had pity on the servant
 - In Gk. ἔλεος is a πάθος, i.e., the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else. - TDNT
 - **30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:30-32**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:19**, "that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."
 - **1 Corinthians 13:4-5**, "It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."
- “anger”- **ὀργίζομαι**: to be relatively angry—‘to be full of anger, to be furious, to be angry.’ - LN Unlike *thymós*, a complementary term, *orgḗ* is especially oriented to revenge or punishment. Thus it is applied to rulers who must avenge injustice. - TDNT
 - When I fail to forgive I make God angry. That should send chills down my spine. Over the years I have experienced the anger of many people. Some have made me sad, some have made me mad, some have made me frustrated, but the worst is the anger that scared me. The anger of the almighty is vastly more frightening than any parent.

- **“the jailers to be tortured” - βασιανιστής, οὐ m:** (derivative of βασανίζω ‘to torture,’ 38.13) a person serving as a guard in a prison, whose function was to torture prisoners as a phase of judicial examination—‘prison guard, torturer.’ - LN
 - According to TDNT the image is of a metal being tested for its purity. like the biting of a coin to see if it is a soft worthless metal or the real deal.
 - “owed” -
 - *“in this way Jesus pictures what a monstrous sin it is for a Christian to receive from God mercy of free forgiveness and then to prove himself unforgiving and unmerciful toward a fellow christian...By his unmercifulness, his stubborn refusal to forgive, he has forfeited the mercy of God and his forgiveness.” Franzmann*
- **“Treat each of you”** - If you lack the ability to forgive, you reject the offer of forgiveness. You can not be forgiven and be unforgiving at the same time. If you don’t forgive you will go to hell.
 - As Jesus concludes His story of the unmerciful servant we want to cheer. This is exactly what the servant deserves. Justice has been served and we are happy to see the horrible servant being tortured... but then Jesus applies the story and the application sends chills down our spines.
- **οὐτωςα or οὕτω** (a rarely occurring variant): with reference to that which precedes—‘so, thus, in this way.’ - LN
 - this unassuming Greek word ought to scare the hell out of me. Jesus is telling me this is what I can expect to happen to me. I can expect to be tortured if i fail to forgive.
- **“forgive from your heart”** -
 - **καρδία, ας f:** (a figurative extension of meaning of καρδία ‘heart,’ not occurring in the NT in its literal sense) the causative source of a person’s psychological life in its various aspects, but with special emphasis upon thoughts—‘heart, inner self, mind.’- LN



Why do you think Jesus stresses that we must forgive “from our hearts”?

- The debts owed to me are not ones that I can collect. They are stored in my heart and so from my heart they must be sent off. Jesus is telling me that we are not talking about money or property. we are talking about sin.
- *The duty of forgiving; we must from our hearts forgive. Note, We do not forgive our offending brother aright, nor acceptably, if we do not forgive from the heart; for that is it that God looks at. No malice must be harbored there, nor ill will to any person, one or another; no projects of revenge must be hatched there, nor desires of it, as there are in many who outwardly appear peaceable and reconciled. Yet this is not enough; we must from the heart desire and seek the welfare even of those that have offended us.MHCWB*
- *In a very pointed application to the parable, Jesus says, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” God is gracious and merciful. His forgiveness is free and full. This is the positive lesson of the parable. Those who appreciate God’s gift of forgiveness will be more than ready to turn around and forgive those who sin against them. But there is a negative lesson as well. If a forgiven sinner has an unwillingness to forgive, a desire to withhold mercy from others, or a need to seek revenge, it can only mean that God’s forgiveness means little to him. In wanting to exact punishment from others, he places himself under the judgment and justice of a holy God. - ILCW*