



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

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?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Matthew 18:21-22

The business of forgiveness

A popular basketball tournament is held every year in my community. It's free!

Each player plays for free. Every attendee can have free food and drink. The MVP from each game receives a free pair of Air Jordan basketball shoes. At half-time of every game, free bikes are given away to young kids. It's all free!

Except someone needs to pay for everything given away for free.

My friend works for the organization that hosts the tournament. He once told me the cost to his organization so others can eat free food, wear free shoes, and ride free bikes. What an amazing act of selfless generosity!

You know what else is free? Forgiveness! The forgiveness God gives to you for every sin you have ever done or will do, is and always will be absolutely free for you. You never have to pay for forgiveness. You never have to do anything to earn forgiveness. God forgiveness is free!

Except someone had to pay for that forgiveness.

Your friend, Jesus, paid for it all! With his blood on the cross, Christ cancelled the massive debt you owed for your millions of sins. Because Jesus rose from the dead, you owe no payment. The price for sin we could never afford, Christ paid in full. Freely! Do you know what we call that act of selfless generosity? Amazing grace!

In Matthew 18, Jesus tells his disciples a story to illustrate the immensity of his free forgiveness! Jesus tells the story so we not only know of his free forgiveness to us, but also so we show free forgiveness to others.

What about when people sin against us a lot? What if the same person continues to commit the same sin against us? Jesus disciples asked, "Should we stop forgiving at seven times?" I mean, that's pretty generous, right? Jesus answered that at seven times, you are just getting warmed up! Giving forgiveness to those who have wronged us can be difficult. So how do you give forgiveness when it feels like it costs you a lot?

Remember Christ's forgiveness! When Christ forgives, he also gives you the ability to *give* forgiveness. When Christ's Word tells you "I forgive you!" he gives you a forgiveness that gives, and gives, and gives and won't run out.

Freely you have received; freely give. Be in the business of forgiveness. Cancel the debt of sins someone owes you, because you know in Christ how rich you really are!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we thank you for your forgiveness of our sins, which you freely give to us. Forgive us for being unforgiving to those who sin against us. Strengthen us in the message of sins paid in full so we might go and forgive like you. Amen.