

**“Let me tell you a story” Part 4**  
**Reckless and Extravagant Forgiveness**  
**Matthew 18:21-35**  
**January 22, 2023**

- I. The **IMPORTANCE** of a parable’s **CONTEXT**. (Mt. 18:10-20)
  - A. The **TEACHING** that comes **BEFORE**. (v.15-20)
  - B. The **PARABLE** prior to the **TEACHING**. (v.10-15)
  - C. How to treat a **PAGAN** or a **TAX COLLECTOR**. (v.17)

Sometimes we forget that the gospel writers weren’t just taking dictation, following Jesus around and recording every word like a court reporter. They chose to put the stories and events together in a way to communicate something that Jesus had communicated to them. Context is always important...the parable is about more than just the parable.

- 1. Kid’s Question: When have you made a promise that you knew you couldn’t keep?
- 2. How would Jesus want us to treat a “pagan or a tax collector”? Do the parables that surround it change your perspective on v.15-20?

- II. **LOOKING** at the parable **ITSELF**. (v.21-35)
  - A. A **QUESTION** for **CLARIFICATION**. (v.21)
  - B. An **ANSWER** that is hard to **BELIEVE**. (v.22)
  - C. A **RIDICULOUS** story as an **EXAMPLE**. (v.23-35)
    - 1. A ridiculous **PROPOSAL**. (v.26)
    - 2. A ridiculous **RESPONSE**. (v.27)
    - 3. A ridiculous **REACTION**. (v.28-30)

This story flows out of Peter’s question. It’s a question that seems to be Peter trying to elevate himself. But Jesus answers Peter and tells the parable in response and those who hear it can’t believe the audacity of what He is saying. This is forgiveness that seems reckless and extravagant.

- 3. How easy is it for you to offer forgiveness to others? What aspects of forgiving make it difficult?
- 4. Doesn’t continued forgiveness let people off to easy? Is there a point where we stop forgiving?
- 5. What seems to be the most ridiculous aspect of the parable Jesus tells from your perspective? What might God be saying to you through that?

**III. It's a STORY that EXPOSES us. (Heb 4:12)**

- A. Who is at the CENTRE of the STORY? (Eph. 1:8-10; Mt. 16:24-25)**
- B. Our gifts for DISCONNECTION and UNAWARENESS. (Mt. 16:5-7; Rom. 12:10)**
- C. We can RECEIVE without REALIZING. (v.26-30; Jn 13:7)**
- D. But REALIZING changes EVERYTHING. (I Jn. 4:19; Mt. 10:8)**

And, as always, the teachings of Jesus hit home, if we will allow them to do so. This parable shows us some tendencies in our own life that we would prefer to avoid. And it challenges us to forgive in the same reckless and extravagant way that we have been forgiven.

- 6. How can we know who is at the centre of our story? What role do others play in my own discernment of this for my life?
- 7. Where do you see areas of disconnect and lack of awareness in your own life?
- 8. What has been the extent of God's forgiveness to you? Is it hard to offer the same to others? If so, what makes it a challenge?