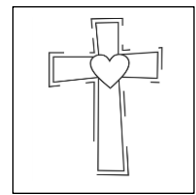


Perley Lutheran Parish  
September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Lectionary 24



Welcome and Announcements

- Ordination & Installation Planning – more info to come.
- DONUTS!!!
- We continue to monitor the COVID crisis and watch for implementation of our Re-Opening Plan
- Continue to send in your offerings. Keep in touch – if you need something please reach out and invite friends to watch!

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. Amen

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Faithful God,

**Have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgement on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of +Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Prayer of the Day

**O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Psalms 103: 8-13 (Read Responsively)

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. **He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.** He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. **For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;** as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. **As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.**

First Reading Genesis 50:15-21

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

## Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18:21-35, **Glory to you O Lord**

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

## Children's Message

### Object

A soccer ball, a yellow card and a red card.

Do you like sports? What do you think is the most popular sport in the world? Most articles that I have read seem to agree that soccer is the most popular sport in the world. If you are playing or watching soccer, it is very important to know and follow the rules. How many know what this is? (Hold up the yellow card.) Even if you have never seen a soccer game, you could probably figure out that this is called a yellow card. In a soccer game, the referee holds up a yellow card to warn a player for a dangerous or unsportsmanlike play. For example, if a player tries to kick the ball out of the goalie's hands, that is dangerous. The goalie could be hurt, so the referee shows the player a yellow card as a warning not to do it again. If that player makes another dangerous play, the referee shows him the yellow card again, but then he would show him this card. (Hold up the red card.) Do you know what that means? The player is out of the game! That is pretty rough punishment, isn't it? You get one warning and then you are out! In baseball, the batter gets three strikes before he's out. In basketball, a player gets five or six fouls before he is out. The sport of soccer isn't very forgiving, is it?

How many times do you think a person should be forgiven for doing something wrong? Once? Twice? Three times? If you were to ask Jesus how many times you should forgive someone, what do you think he would say? Well, we don't have to guess, because the Bible gives us the answer.

One day, Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive someone who sins against me? Should I forgive him seven times?" I imagine that Peter thought he was being pretty generous to forgive someone seven times. I don't know about you, but I think I agree with Peter. To forgive someone seven times is be pretty generous. Guess what? Jesus didn't agree.

Jesus answered Peter, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven."

Wow! Seventy times seven! That's four hundred and ninety times. I think that before I got to four hundred and ninety I would lose count. You know, I think that is probably what Jesus was trying to get Peter to understand and he wants us to understand it too. We shouldn't worry about keeping count of how many times we have forgiven someone -- we should just keep on forgiving. Isn't that what God does? He doesn't keep count of how many times he has forgiven us. He just keeps on forgiving.

Some churches have a soccer league for boys and girls in grades K-6 called Upward Soccer. Most of the rules are the same as regular soccer, but there is one rule that is very different. In Upward soccer, there are no yellow cards and no red cards! I like that rule. We all make mistakes and we all do things that we should not do, so let's forgive them -- at least four hundred and ninety times!

Dear Father, we are thankful that you love us and forgive us without keeping count. Help us to love and forgive others as you have forgiven us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **Message**

Grace and Peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

We ended last Sunday with a discussion on not getting even and forgiveness and this week we continue in that same line of thinking and teaching. I know – myself now - that I have many things, many actions, many thoughts and words, many people that I should forgive. I also know that there are many things, many actions, many thoughts and words, many other people that I should seek forgiveness from myself. We all have those people that we didn't deal with or end with too well. Whether it be an old friend, maybe a girlfriend or boyfriend, maybe a neighbor or co-worker – whomever it is we were offended by something they said or did and we are hurt. We know we should forgive them but we hold on to the hurt – even though we know that we are doing so just out of spite or anger. And even better – perhaps the person that we really need to forgive is ourselves. Our Gospel today is a teaching about forgiveness. Jesus teaches all of us in the passage about forgiving and the need to do so.

Once again we have Peter this morning seeking more information from Jesus. Peter says "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" First we need to realize that in the time of this passage – church was a loose term being used in that it wasn't a building or the organization as we know the church to be today. No, in fact church in this passage simply referenced the community of believers – those that believed what Jesus was teaching and were gathering to hear and learn more.

Peter is sincere – he wants a number – an answer to just how many times he needs to forgive. What is the limit? Just how many chances do you get to be forgiven? After all, if someone hurts you over and over and over again, and comes to you seeking forgiveness, what do you do? And what about times when you are seeking forgiveness and the answer to your request is outright "NO!"?

Jesus response – well it was "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times". True, he has given us a number of 77 but the reality is that Jesus has thrown that number out more as a symbol. There really should be no limit – we are to forgive WITHOUT limits.

Jesus is saying we don't stop forgiving and that the forgiveness that we do offer is unconditional – it shouldn't be offered in exchange for something. It also should be given freely and without a requirement of asking for. That's a lot to ask for, right? Not only can we find ourselves asking - Why? Why do we have to automatically and unconditionally forgive even if we don't feel they deserve it or need it? Also a perhaps even bigger question is how? How do we forgive those that have hurt us? Thankfully Jesus gives Peter – and us – a motivation for forgiveness in our Gospel today.

Hear again summary of the crazy story that Jesus tells about forgiveness. There is a servant who owes his master 10,000 talents. No, this is not a talent like singing, or dancing, or drawing, a talent is monetary and is equal to about 15 years-worth of wages. We are talking A LOT Of money in this story. Clearly, way too much money for a servant to ever be able to pay back. Sure, he said he would but at his rate of pay with take him about 150,000 years to make that happen. So the servant please and begs his master to forgive him – take away the debt and what he owes – and unbelievably the master does just that. He forgives all the debt and releases him from his obligations. I can't imagine what that must have felt like. I have a friend who posted on Facebook a few weeks back that she was completely debt free – now note she does not own a home but rather rents so that is not part of her financial obligations – but even still. To have all your credit cards and student loans and everything else paid is a great accomplishment. I fear they will be trying to collect on my student loans from my grave but that's another sermon for another time. HA

So we now have this servant free from his debt and rather than being thankful and appreciative toward others – he head right out to those who owe him and demands that they pay him up. We aren't talking the massive amount of debt that he had been strapped with this time – we are simply talking about a couple of hundreds and not only does he not forgive the debts, but he actually throws those who owe him into prison because they cannot pay. He has been forgiven a gazillion dollars – and he can't forgive a couple of hundreds when it comes to others? Sure the contrast between the amounts and actions are quite different – ridiculous and even shocking.

You, and I, and those in our Gospel are people who have been forgiven. If we remember that, realize that as the truth then that should motivate and enable us to forgive as well. You may look at the idea of the Cross and the extent that God went to – the life and death of Jesus – to find the depth of God's love and forgiveness. Or maybe you look to your baptism and your being brought into the family of God as a measure of the steadfast love that God has for you. Regardless of where you look, the amount or the depth of forgiveness isn't the important part of this and shouldn't be what motivates us. The important part is the vast love that God has for each of us. Immeasurable, unconditional and all-forgiving love for you and I.

Jesus sets out in this story – this lesson – to teach Peter and us that there is no limitations on just how far we should go and how much we should do when it comes to forgiveness. Jesus reveals to them – and us - why it's important to forgive in that we have been forgiven unconditionally. "Share God's love with others and forgive them" our passage says. He isn't telling them to forgive and forget. He isn't demanding that they return to exactly where, when and at the same level they were in relationship to each other before the hurt happened. No, in fact what Jesus is saying is that through forgiveness, a new future opens up, and that through forgiveness the past closes. Also important is the idea that our forgiving another is not and should not be based upon the other person apologizing for what has transpired. This isn't a "you apologize and I will forgive" situation – not at all. What Jesus is reminding us is that we are forgiven unconditionally and that is therefore how we are to forgive as well, without conditions or apologies or reason. And how many times do we do this, well maybe 77 times. Or maybe 77 times 77 times. To infinite and beyond some might say.

In this crazy world of ours today, it is in lacking forgiveness that we can see the breeding of hate and suffering. Hate can NEVER reflect what God wants for us nor the glory that God deserves.

I found the most amazing sermon written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I was lucky to take a couple of courses about Bonhoeffer in Seminary – he was truly an amazing man and has written so many amazing things to help us be good disciples and leaders in ministry. He summed it up best in a sermon that he wrote that ends like this:

*How can we get to the point that we are able to forgive each other's sins, all of those sins, from the bottom of our hearts? My dear friends, those who have experienced what it means for God to lift us up out of a great sin and to forgive us, those to whom God has in such an hour sent another brother or sister to whom we might then confess our sin, whoever knows how a sinner resists such help because the sinner simply does not want to be helped, and whoever nonetheless has experienced how a brother or sister genuinely can release us from our sin in God's name and in prayer—that person will surely lose all inclination to judge or to hold grudges and will instead want but one thing: to help bear the distress of others, to serve, to help, to forgive,—without measure,*

*without qualification, without end,—such a one can no longer hate sinful brothers and sisters, but will instead want only to love them all the more and to forgive them for everything, everything. Lord, our God, may we experience your mercy so that we, too, may practice mercy without end! Amen.*

Hymn of the Day: Here I Am, Lord

I the Lord of the sea and sky. I have heard my people cry.

All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.

I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of the wind and flame. I will tend the poor and lame.

I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.

I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Apostles Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen***

Prayers of the people (Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**)

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church through the world; make it a place of welcome. Nurture our and new ministries of education and growth in our learning from the Word and in you.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, where disastrous fires and damaging storms have created brokenness, we look to you to heal, renew and redeem your world. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Though we walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve us, deliver us, and fulfill your purpose for us. According to your steadfast love, grant healing and wholeness to those who are mourning as they deal with tremendous loss, we ask that you continue to send healing to those dealing with illness and recovery. We lift up those within our congregation and those that have reached out to us for prayers, like Alana and Jeff, like Kirk and Brent, like Doug and Paxley and all of those that we now name in our own hearts. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

In you, steadfast love and faithfulness meet, and righteousness and peace live together. Protecting God, we have created divisions you will not own. In places of conflict – be it from safe practices because of COVID or

from racial disparity. God of mercy, your grace is poured out for all. Inspire authorities, politicians and all of us to act with compassion. Teach us to overcome fear with hope, meet hate with love, and welcome one another as we would welcome you. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgement and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Words of Institution

#### Lord's Prayer

Our father who art in heaven hallowed be Thy name

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

#### Meal

#### Blessing

Mothering God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. Amen.

#### Sending Hymn: What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;

What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms.

Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms;

Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms.

Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

Dismissal      Go in peace. Remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**

#### Mark Your Calendars:

Sunday – September 20<sup>th</sup> – Outdoor Worship at Nora – 9AM. Please bring a chair

Sunday – September 27<sup>th</sup> – Outdoor Worship at Kirkebo – 9AM

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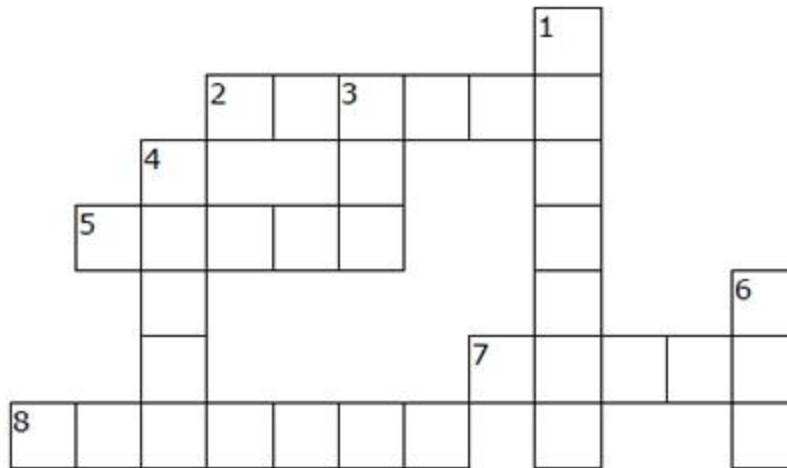


**"Help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me."**

# Keep On Forgiving

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?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 18:21-22



## ACROSS

- 2. A statement given in reply to a question
- 5. The number that is equal to six plus one
- 7. The Son of God
- 8. To pardon someone for doing something wrong

## DOWN

- 1. A male with the same parents as someone else
- 3. To break God's law
- 4. A fisherman who became one of Jesus' disciples
- 6. To seek an answer to a question

SEVEN	ASK	PETER	JESUS
BROTHER	FORGIVE	ANSWER	SIN



# Keep On Forgiving

Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" Matthew 18:21 (NLT)

Based on Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)



H S L B N L O R D L L P K L P  
B V I S I E X K L X W H S E W  
D S U P T B N G O I I B N L F  
F E Y Q I Z G C R T I M E S O  
R V C C M E Y G E V U L O C R  
X E M I E D S M A N Y Y I H G  
W N A H S U D N S M A Z C B I  
R Z I U S J K W C X R S Q H V  
C Z L E A X W W L P H O K Y E  
V S J I W H O C S M B P I E P  
C O O Y J D A J Y L H I Z W D  
Q F H P E T E R E V O F M D S  
S I N S P S P Y F E W U H Z V  
D N L W R B Q F I K Z D Q D W  
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MANY  
SEVEN  
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SINS  
TIMES  
BROTHER

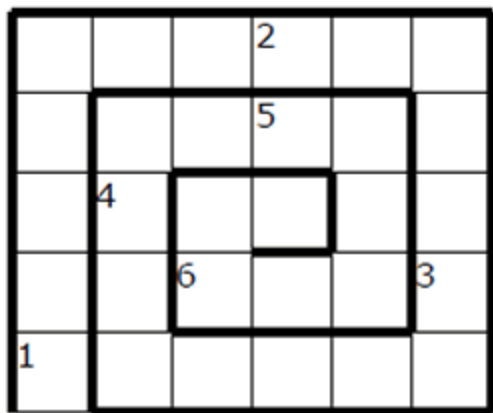
PETER  
JESUS  
LORD

FORGIVE  
TIMES  
HOW

# Keep On Forgiving

Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" Matthew 18:21 (NLT)

Look at the numbered clues, determine the correct word, and write that word in the spiral puzzle. Each numbered square will begin a new word.



1. A male who has the same parents as another person
2. The number equal to  $4 + 3$
3. To excuse someone for an offense
4. To break God's law
5. One of Jesus' disciples
6. To seek an answer to a question

ASK  
PETER

SEVEN  
SIN

BROTHER  
FORGIVE