

70 x 7

Mat 18:21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

Mat 18:22 Jesus said to him, "**I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.**"

One day Peter asked Jesus a question and to act spiritual he proposed a possible answer to it. The Jewish custom at the time was that you were to forgive someone two or three times at the most for something but after that you could do as you please. By proposing the answer seven to Jesus, Peter seemed very spiritual to the rest of the disciples! Jesus once again shocked his disciples by answering that kingdom forgiveness was **seventy times seven!** Jesus was teaching his disciples that our forgiveness must be according to and in recognition of Divine forgiveness. God forgives on the basis of seventy times seven. Numbers are very important in the Bible and have rich meaning. The number seven in the Bible speaks of divine completeness and perfection. The number seventy is derived from 10 times 7. Ten in the Bible stands for trial and judgment. There were ten plagues that tried and judged Egypt. God gave Israel Ten Commandments to try them and judge them under the Law. Ten speaks of judgment. When seven is multiplied with ten it speaks of perfect and complete judgment! God forgives on the basis of the seventy times seven principle. What does this mean? In Jesus Christ, God and man met. Jesus was the God-man. He is 100 percent God and 100 percent man in one person. Divine perfection which seven represents combined with perfect humanity which also stands for seven. Jesus in His perfect humanity came to take our place in trial and judgment. Jesus from the judgment hall of Pilate, to the whipping post, to the cross, and then to hell was completely and perfectly tried and judged for our sins! Jesus took all our sins and sin nature within Himself and suffered the divine wrath of God in its utter fullness for us. Because of this we were forgiven for our sins. In the place of our sins, complete and perfect righteousness was given in their place! If you have believed upon Christ as your Savior and have been born again, you my friend have been forgiven seventy times seven in the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ! We are to forgive others on the basis of

this seventy times seven forgiveness of God. We have received forgiveness on its basis and we are to forgive on its basis.

Eph 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

We are to forgive in the New Covenant **as we have been forgiven**. In the Old Covenant they were to **first forgive in order to be forgiven**. Forgiveness in the Old Testament was only partial because you were only forgiven as you forgave! Because humans can only forgive in part and incompletely, then forgiveness for them under the Law was incomplete as well! However, praise God, in the New Covenant we are to forgive as we have been forgiven by God. God forgives us on the seventy times seven principle which is absolute perfect and complete forgiveness based upon the judgment placed on Jesus. This judgment erases every visage of sin and its place lavishes abundant righteousness! When someone sins against us we are to release that person to God. The word “forgive” means **to release**. We are to release people to God. **We are not called to forgive sins, just people. Only God forgives sins.** We cannot forgive sins. The price to forgive sins is too high a price for any of us to pay. It was paid by the Lord Jesus. We are called to forgive people and release them into God’s hands. We have been completely and perfectly forgiven of our sins because they were judged in Jesus.

So often we feel that if we forgive someone we are forgiving what they have done or condoning what they have done! Not so my friend! Jesus suffered and paid a price we can't image to atone for the sins we and others have committed. Punishment for the sin that was committed against you was placed upon Jesus and He paid for it! We are not called to forgive sins, because they are already forgiven by God in Jesus Christ. We are called to forgive [release] people to God.

Too often people struggle to forgive someone because they feel that forgiveness is an emotion. This is a grave mistake! Forgiveness is not an emotion, it is a decision. Again, the word forgive is a verb that means to release. Releasing is not an emotion; it is a decision of the will. This has nothing to do with emotion. Let me give you an illustration on how we are to forgive and get over the bad emotions of those who have hurt us. Imagine in your mind a bell tower. You hear the bell ringing loudly. Now you climb up the bell tower and you can see the bell swinging and each time it swings it makes such a loud clang that you must put your hands over your ears!

This swinging bell represents an offense against you. It has caused great emotional disruption and disturbance in your mind and heart. You can hardly stand it! Now, imagine grabbing onto the bell rope and tugging on it. The bell swings harder and faster and makes an even louder noise. This is like holding on to an offense and replaying it in your mind and talking about it over and over. You are tugging on the rope! Now forgiveness is a decision. Now picture yourself letting go of the rope. You have to make a decision to do it. You release the rope. What happens to the bell? Well, at first it still is swinging back and forth making a ruckus! This is the emotions! Now, if you choose not to grab back onto the rope and start pulling it again what will eventually happen to the bell? Right! It will stop swinging and stop making noise. This is what happens when we choose to forgive someone. When we release them into God's hand by an act of our will, our emotions will often not change immediately just like the bell kept swinging for awhile. It is important at this point that you not replay the offense in your mind and go around talking about it to others. This is grabbing back onto the rope again. If you will refuse to grab onto the rope again, there will be a time in which your emotions will come to rest and will come in line to the decision you made to forgive! **Forgiveness is not an emotion but a choice!**

God has forgiven you on the basis of the seventy times seven principle. It is time you forgive that person who has hurt you and release them into God's hands and for you to experience freedom and peace of mind and of heart! Do it today my friend based upon the seventy time seven forgiveness given to you!