



Sept. 13, 2020 Mt. 18: 21-35 & Sir. 27:30-28:7

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### ENTERING THE SCENE:

Henri Nouwen teaches us that: Forgiving does not mean forgetting. When we forgive a person, the memory of the wound might stay with us for a long time, even throughout our lives. Sometimes we carry the memory in our bodies as a visible sign. But forgiveness changes the way we remember. It converts the curse into a blessing. When we forgive our parents for their divorce, our children for their lack of attention, our friends for their unfaithfulness in crisis, our doctors for their ill advice, we no longer have to experience ourselves as the victims of events we had no control over. Forgiveness allows us to claim our own power and not let these events destroy us;

it enables them to become events that deepen the wisdom of our hearts. Forgiveness indeed heals memories.” Have we ever experienced this form of freedom?

### Mt. 18:21-35

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**. 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. 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. 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**."

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Do you find it easier to forgive than to accept forgiveness? If so, why?

**PRAYER:** Lord, somehow it seems easier to forgive than to accept being forgiven. I suspect that is because I often find it easier to give than to receive as well. Being forgiven and gracefully accepting a gift seems to put me in the inferior position and I would much rather be on top at all times. Help me to truly recognize that only you are on "top" and that even my next breath is a gift from you. Help me to receive your forgiveness, and your gifts, with grace so I might be grace filled for others. Amen.