



# MASTER Teacher

FOR USE WITH COLLEGE AND CAREER AND ADULT CHRISTIAN LIFE



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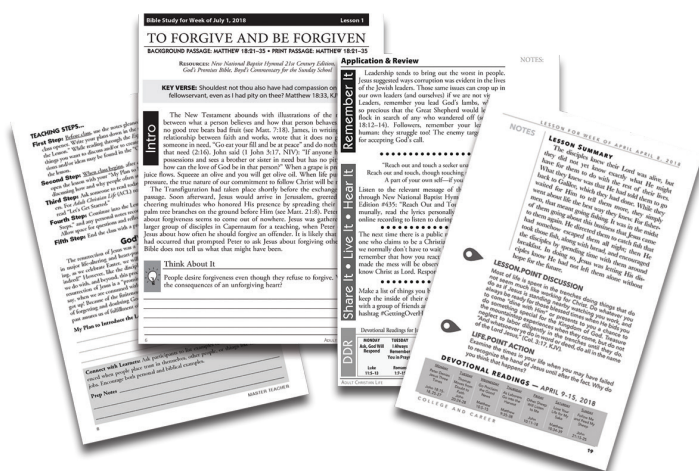
## Updated Curriculum!

### Master Teacher

- It includes ideas and suggestions to equip teachers to develop a plan for individual lessons within the quarter.
- Teachers are given biblical and theological focal points for each lesson and additional resources to help make the lessons come to life.
- It follows a five-point lesson plan sequence that is reinforced by a relevant contemporary point (God's Word in Life) that highlights the meaning of each lesson.
- Thought-provoking questions and biblical and theological details are sprinkled throughout each lesson to aid instructors as they digest the text and its exposition for teaching others.
- The book also includes ample space for note-taking as each point of the lesson Scripture is broken down for a thorough explanation.

### Adult Christian Life

- The lesson Scriptures are divided into two or three passages that pertain to the outline or thought that is being emphasized in each one.
- The lesson information, formerly called "Exposition," is now called "KNOW IT." This section provides information about what the biblical text means, broken down into related sections.
- It is followed by several sections to help engage the student:
  - REMEMBER IT:** This section was formerly called "Summary." It provides a review of the lesson.



- 2. HEAR IT:** This means repeating the point of the lesson over again. Emphasis is the goal here.
  - 3. LIVE IT:** This is the application of the biblical text. It tells how to put the lesson into action.
  - 4. SHARE IT:** This means to use the lesson point to evangelize others.
- There is more room for taking notes and completing activities.
  - The book includes special articles that are intended to help the student to better understand the overall theme of the quarter.

### College and Career

- Biblical text is divided into sections for easier study and analysis.
- The book includes additional imagery.
- The lessons have been reformatted for college and early-career-minded individuals to help them get the most out of their study.
- The biblical text is supported by references to both historical and contemporary life situations.
- Life Point and Lesson Point questions and comments make the book an important curriculum resource to support learning by generating discussion.

# SEEKING GOD'S GUIDANCE

## Suggested Opening Exercises

1. Usual Signal for Beginning
2. Prayer (Closing with the Lord's Prayer)
3. Singing (Songs to Be Selected)
4. Scripture Reading:  
Psalm 1:1–6 (KJV)

**Director:** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

**School:** But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

**Director:** And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

**School:** The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

**Director:** Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

**All:** For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

### Recitation in Concert:

#### Joshua 1:6–8 (KJV)

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

## Closing Work

### 1. Singing

#### 2. Sentences: James 4:6–10 (KJV)

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

### 3. Dismissal with Prayer

# TO FORGIVE AND BE FORGIVEN

Background Passage: Matthew 18:21–35

Lesson Passage: Matthew 18:21–35

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## UNIFYING TOPIC:

Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

## LESSON TEXT

- I. The Importance of Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21–22)
- II. The Imposition of Not Forgiving (Matthew 18:23–35)

## THE MAIN THOUGHT

“Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?”  
(Matthew 18:33, KJV)

## UNIFYING PRINCIPLE

People desire forgiveness even though they refuse to forgive. What are consequences of an unforgiving heart? The parable of the unforgiving servant teaches us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

## LESSON AIM

To understand the importance of having strong convictions about the capacity to bear a forgiving heart as a principle of life

## LIFE AIM

To show that it is essential for one’s spiritual wellbeing that forgiveness is expressed in deed and not merely talk

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## BEFORE YOU TEACH

### *Consider ...*

Focus for *College and Career* — Spiritual maturity is something that may lack in many young adults and career-oriented persons. They may learn—often the hard way—that as one seeks to travel up the corporate ladder, the road to success requires a forgiving heart.

Focus for *Adult Christian Life* — Older adults may require the reminder that the capacity to forgive is an act of discipleship. Practicing forgiveness is a habitual part of one’s daily life.

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## Supplementary Study Materials

For further reference, see today’s lesson from *Boyd’s Commentary, New National Baptist Hymnal, 21st Century Edition, #315 (NNBH #365)*, and *God’s Promises Bible*.

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## TEACHING STEPS...

**First Step:** Before class, use the notes gleaned from *God’s Word in Life* to prepare a class opener. Write your plans down in the section labeled “My Plan to Introduce the Lesson.” While reading through the Exposition, use the provided space to note things you want to discuss and/or to create a personal lesson plan. Suggested questions and/or ideas may be found in the “Connect with Learners” boxes throughout the lesson.

**Second Step:** When class begins, after completing Suggested Opening Exercises, open the lesson with your “My Plan to Introduce the Lesson” content. Consider discussing why people often struggle with forgiving others, even while knowing how much God has forgiven them.

**Third Step:** Ask someone to read today’s Bible passage. Then, read respective openers. For Adult Christian Life (ACL) read the “Intro.” For College and Career (CC) read “Let’s Get Started.”

**Fourth Step:** Continue into the Lesson. Use “Connect with Learners,” “Lesson Steps,” and any personal notes recorded in “Notes” sections to guide your teaching. Allow space for questions and reflection.

**Fifth Step:** End the class with a preview of the coming class. Close with prayer.

## God’s Word in Life

It is easy to overlook the misdeeds of others when an offense does not directly affect us. However, when something does directly affect us, it’s not long before we experience the challenge of forgiveness. Consider how increasingly difficult it becomes to forgive if an act is done repeatedly, or if an offense is of great magnitude. For example, if a person is constantly slandering you, those lies harm not only your reputation but the offender’s reputation as well. As a result, the likelihood of forgiveness is slim—especially the likelihood of an expedient forgiveness! However, the Bible is clear about the importance of forgiving as a requirement for the Christian believer. We know that because God forgives us countless times, we are not to count the number of times we ought to forgive our family, friends, and fellow sisters and brothers. A forgiving heart is always open to forgiving. †

**My Plan to Introduce the Lesson:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Connect with Learners:** We often desire expedient and complete forgiveness from others when we have done something wrong but, when we are offended, fail to offer what we expect. Ask participants to list reasons why that may happen.

**Prep Notes** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Introduction

Would you say you are person with a forgiving heart? That it really does not matter what is done to you or who does it? And that you model what it means to appreciate others for who they are—without reservation or hesitation? We all have our faults. But sometimes we tend to forget how much Jesus has looked beyond our faults. As a result, He encourages us to do the same of others. In Matthew 18, Jesus warns His apostles of the need to forgive their fellow sister and brother, since this is something God so readily and habitually does for them. We might consider this text an equivalent of the Golden Rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” It points to personal reflection and remorse regarding others, illustrating—through Jesus’ parable of the unforgiving servant—the depths of humanity’s hypocrisy in its willingness to accept forgiveness, but not to give it.

### I. The Importance of Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21–22)

In the preceding pericope, Jesus had just completed a teaching regarding God-honorable church discipline. He gave His listeners what appeared to be a “three-step plan of approach” which intended to honor the integrity of the offender, the offended, and the church as a whole without neglecting the seriousness of the offense (see Matt. 18:15–20). In closing this teaching, Jesus reminded His listeners of the authority given of God to the Church in interpreting the law of God’s Kingdom on earth (see vv. 18–20). Verses 18–20 may be considered sister verses to Matthew 16:19, where Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom.

Theologians express that the major difference between the two passages is the designation of authority. While Peter may be seen as the sole key holder in 16:19, the Church itself is given the authority in 18:18–20, thus making the passage about binding and loosing parallel to John 20:23: “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (NRSV). This is significant to point out because it leads to the essence of our current passage and pericope, while also showing that verses 21–22 double as a pronouncement and introduction.

The word “brother” (v. 21, KJV) means “fellow believer.” Following the preceding teaching about church discipline, Peter asks Jesus how often he ought to forgive a fellow believer. “Till seven times?” asked Peter. Jesus’ response to Peter, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven,” was not meant to give Peter and other listeners a number by which to keep track and know when to stop forgiving, but to pronounce what Christian forgiveness in community ought to look like. The power of forgiveness can never be justly or fully measured, especially numerically. To count the number of times one extends forgiveness to another is to not truly extend forgiveness, as

#### KJV

##### ••• Matthew 18:21–22 •••

THEN came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

#### NRSV

##### ••• Matthew 18:21–22 •••

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?”

22 Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.”

1 Corinthians 13:6 reminds us that love does not keep a record of wrongdoings.

Peter's question to Jesus in verse 21, then, seems off-center and lacking focus for what forgiveness truly entails, though we can imagine Peter must have assumed the seven times was more than generous. After all, according to rabbinical tradition, an offense was required to be forgiven three times. Jesus' reply to Peter, however, implied that forgiveness should be unlimited: stop the counting and be prepared to forgive as many times as needed. Jesus pronounces mercy over tradition. Verses 21–22 also act as an introduction to what is next (the parable in verses 23–35).

Though it still illustrates forgiveness, Newman and Stine also point out that “this parable does not deal with the theme of repeated forgiveness, but rather with the magnitude of divine forgiveness and how it must be applied within the believing community” (B. M. Newman & P. C. Stine, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew* [New York: United Bible Societies, 1988], 576). To give is admirable; to forgive from the heart unlocks the heart of God so that God's mercy extends far beyond our greatest sin. Jesus told the following parable to help Peter and his fellow apostles understand this heavenly truth.

Through a short earthly story illustrating a servant's inability to forgive a debt, even after having been forgiven a much larger debt of his own, Jesus provided His listeners an inside look of humankind's capacity for hypocrisy, as well as our inability to recognize and appreciate what has been done for us. In the end, Jesus warns His disciples of the severe punishment that can befall those who fail to realize and appreciate the abundance of God's mercy that is shown to them.

## II. The Imposition of Not Forgiving (Matthew 18:23–35)

In verses 23–27, there are two things to note. First, the amount the servant owed, ten thousand talents, was enormous. A “talent” in the Old Testament was a unit of measurement that was used to weigh precious metals like

**Connect with Learners:** Invite participants to discuss how they can forgive even those who have not asked for forgiveness. How is this possible, and how can this type of forgiveness be life-transformative?

**Prep Notes** \_\_\_\_\_

## ••• Matthew 18:23–35 •••

**23** Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

**24** And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

**25** But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

**26** The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

**27** Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

**28** But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

**29** And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

**30** And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

**31** So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

**32** Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

**33** Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

**34** And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

**35** So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

## ••• Matthew 18:23–35 •••

**23** “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

**24** When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him;

**25** 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.

**26** So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’

**27** And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.

**28** 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.’

**29** Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’

**30** But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

**31** 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.

**32** Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

**33** Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’

**34** And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.

**35** So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”



silver and gold. In the New Testament, a “talent” was a value for money or coins, similar to a dollar bill being a value for money in our present time. The talent, however, represented a “rather large sum of money” according to scholars. Scholars equate a single talent in the parables to be worth more than fifteen years’ wages of labor. Such an amount being given in the parable helps to emphasize the magnitude of divine forgiveness.

Second, note that the king forgave the servant simply because the servant showed humility and asked for mercy. There is no indication that payment arrangements were made and a contract signed before the servant was forgiven, or that a warning, bidding the servant to never act in this way again, had to be given. The servant asked. The king responded by canceling the debt and letting him go (v. 27). This is significant because it stresses that the size of the debt (or sin) truly does not matter when it comes to God’s absolute forgiveness and rendering of mercy. We ask. God responds.

However, what is also stressed in this parable is the response of the servant when he had the opportunity to extend the very mercy and forgiveness given him. The original Greek term, *denaria* (v. 28), was a Roman silver coin in New Testament time. It was the principle coin of the Roman Empire and was worth about a day’s wage for a laborer. A hundred denarii, then, would be about three month’s pay. Though a fair amount to owe for a debt, it was a much smaller amount than the servant’s debt which was equal to fifteen years’ wages. Notice, also, the amount owed is in silver, a much lesser valued substance than gold—which the first servant owed and was forgiven of. But none of this seemed to have mattered to the servant.

Although the fellow servant begged for mercy, using the same words the servant had previously used with the king, the servant had the man thrown in prison until the debt was paid (v. 30). When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went to

**Lesson Steps:** \_\_\_\_\_

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tell their master (v. 31). When the master heard what the servant had done—how the servant had not shown the same mercy given him—the master had the servant sent to jail and tortured until the servant was able to pay the debt. Jesus concluded with, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart” (v. 35, NIV). Simply said, God shows His love for us through His mercy and forgiveness; we show God our love for Him by responding to others in the same way.

## Conclusion

Newman and Stine observe that “the similarity of verse 26 to verse 29 and of verse 30 to verse 34, as the contrast between the debts mentioned in verses 24 and 28, affirms the absolute necessity of human forgiveness in light of divine forgiveness” (B. M. Newman & P. C. Stine, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew* [New York: United Bible Societies, 1988], 576). In other words, this lesson teaches us that a forgiving heart towards our sisters and brothers in Christ is an apt response to God’s forgiveness. As a result, the value of one’s forgiveness can never be accurately or justly calculated; we are taught to look not at the value of the debt forgiven, but at the mercy which is bestowed upon us by Christ Jesus, our Lord. What a blessing to have a merciful, loving, and forgiving God, whose daily reaction to our actions is to love us still.

**Connect with Learners:** Encourage participants to discuss ways they can practice having a forgiving heart in daily life.

**Prep Notes** \_\_\_\_\_

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## HOME DAILY DEVOTIONAL READINGS

July 2–8, 2018

<p><b>MONDAY</b></p> <p>Visual Reminder of the Commandments</p> <p>Numbers 15:37–41</p>	<p><b>TUESDAY</b></p> <p>Jesus Fulfills the Law and Prophets</p> <p>Matthew 5:17–20</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY</b></p> <p>Craving Attention While Cheating Widows</p> <p>Luke 20:45–47</p>	<p><b>THURSDAY</b></p> <p>Doing Is More Important Than Speaking</p> <p>Matthew 23:5–12</p>	<p><b>FRIDAY</b></p> <p>Keeping People Away from the Kingdom</p> <p>Matthew 23:13–15</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b></p> <p>Blind Guides Confuse Meaning of Oaths</p> <p>Matthew 23:16–22</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY</b></p> <p>Jesus Critical of Scribes and Pharisees</p> <p>Matthew 23:1–4, 23–26</p>
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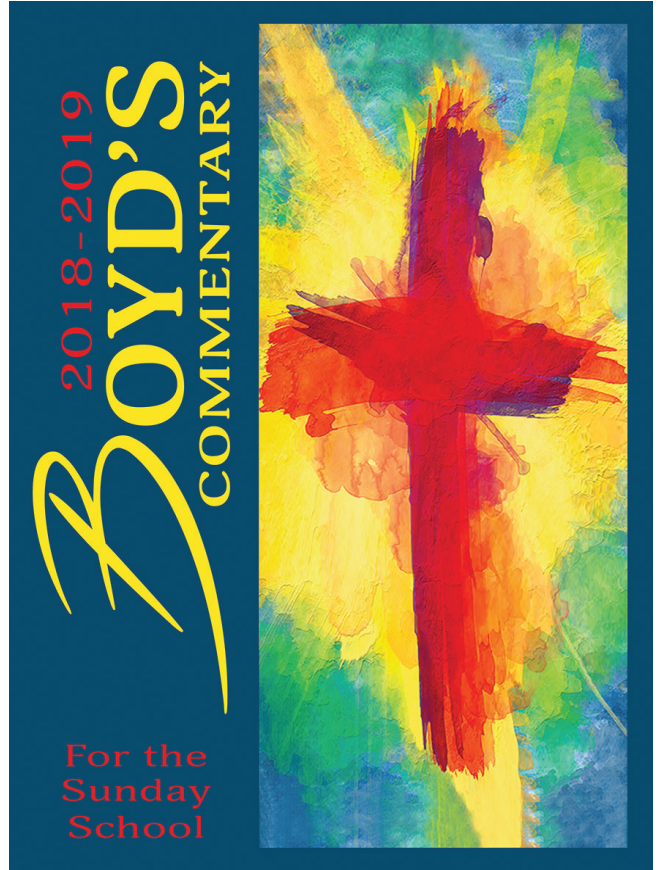
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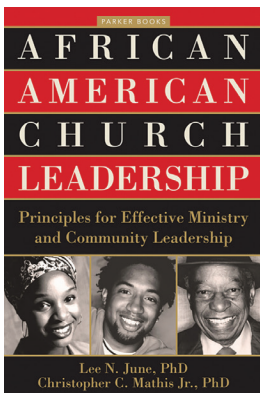
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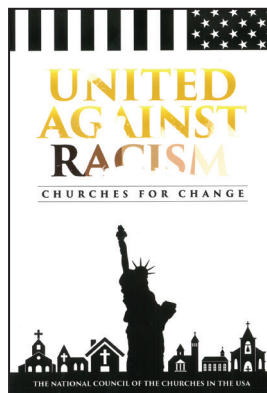
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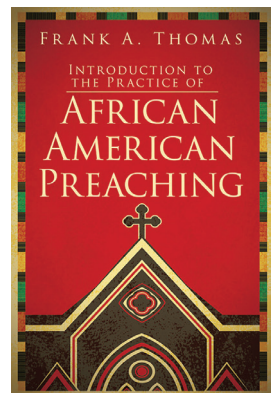
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