

Reboot 2017: New Life for Real People

Forgiveness and Second Chances

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. Sounds reasonable, doesn't it? But isn't there a different rule for Christians? It was Jesus himself who said we're supposed to forgive one another "seventy times seven" times. But doesn't that kind of forgiveness invite abuse? How can Christians protect themselves – or are we supposed to be the doormats of the world? This week we'll look at what forgiveness and second chances really mean.

Matthew 18:21-35
Forgiveness in Action
Acts 15:36–40 and 2 Timothy 4:11

Paul's Temptation: Once bitten, twice shy.

1. Paul held Mark _____.
2. Paul gave Mark _____.
3. Paul allowed Mark to _____.

When you've been had: Be _____
_____.

Build a bridge and get over it.

7 X 70

Mark's Temptation: Leave well enough alone.

1. Mark _____
See Matthew 6:23–24
2. Mark _____.
3. Mark took the time to _____.

When you've messed up: _____.

Build a bridge and get over it.

7 X 70

Digging Deeper and Going Further

Read Matthew 18:21–25. When Peter asked about forgiveness, Jesus responded with a command and a parable. This isn't one of the most famous or most beloved parables, but it is one of the most important. Forgiveness is not an option.

1. What do you think Jesus meant when he told Peter he had to forgive seven times seventy times? (or seventy-seven times – the numbers can be translated either way).

2. Do you think the parable is about forgiveness or mercy? Is there a difference?

3. Read Acts 15:36–40; Colossians 4:10; and 2 Timothy 4:11. From these passages, we can reconstruct Mark's rise and fall from Paul's perspective. Mark abandoned Paul and Barnabas during the first mission trip. At some point, he returned to Paul while Paul was in a Roman prison. He was apparently sent to work in the Colossian church. And Paul asked that he return to be with him in Rome. Why do you think Paul gave Mark another chance? Is this an example of mercy or forgiveness?

4. Who do you need to give another chance to? What will you do to build your bridge to them and get over it?

5. From whom do you need to get another chance? What will you need to do to reach out in humility and build a bridge so you can get over it?
