

Forgiveness. Why is it so important that we forgive others? From the story of the ungrateful servant in Matthew 18 to seeing the reason behind God’s forgiveness of our sins in Numbers 14 forgiveness is a thread that is woven throughout the tapestry of the Bible.

Wouldn’t it be nice if it could be a one and done thing; if we only had to forgive someone one time? Matthew 18:21-22 tells us that we are expected to forgive others multiple times. We expect God to forgive us multiple times, why should we think that we should be held to a lesser standard? People are fallible. They will fail. They will do things that make us angry, or hurt, things that disappoint us. We need to remember that we do those same things. We fail as well. Romans 3: 10 tells us, “No one is righteous—not even one.” This shows us that we should expect fallibility in people. If we weren’t going to have to forgive repeatedly, then Jesus wouldn’t have addressed the issue.

It isn’t easy though. What thing worthwhile ever is? So what is the key to forgiveness? Numbers 14:19-20 talks about God’s great love being the reason behind his repeated forgiveness. Love is a gift, a fruit of the Spirit. As a matter of fact, it is the very first thing listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Like any good fruit though it needs tending and care. Our faith needs to be expressed in love. We have been called to live in freedom, but we are also told to use that freedom to serve one another in love. (Galatians 5:13)

As we serve Christ we must remember to clear up any issues we may have with others. We are to be reconciled to our brother (or sister) before offering our gifts. (Matthew 5:22-24) It doesn’t say this in order to keep us from offering our gifts, but as a gentle admonishment to make things right. As you read this, is there someone who comes to mind? You know what to do. Now if you will excuse me, I think I have someone I should be talking to.