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**Weekly Letter - 17 September 2023**

**Matthew 18.21-35**

**Forgiveness**

One of the numerous gifts Jesus Christ has given you is this. He hopes on bringing all of us back, time after time, to the truths about life that we are all anxious not to see!!

So often people say, "forgiveness is a lovely idea", and particularly young people say that forgiveness is Christianity's greatest and most attractive truth. But almost in the same breath the same people will say, "but how can you forgive someone who acted in such a depraved way?"

This parable is stunningly clear, forgiveness works if you also forgive from your heart. This truth is repeated in the Lord's Prayer, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who are against us!

So, may I end this short reflection with a question to you? Is it the case that this parable and the Lord's Prayer state that forgiveness is only offered on these terms – 'Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had or on you? Matthew 18.33. Or is forgiveness always given, irrespective of your willingness to forgive others?

***Stephen***

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Dr Robert Pope  
Bible Readings; Romans 14.1-12: Matthew 18.21-35.

**Cycle of Prayer in the Region** – we will pray for Christ Well

**Prayers for every household** – we will pray for Manselton Road, even nos. 2-74

**Tea and Chat in Christ Well** – Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> – 2-4 pm – Creative writing.

**Advance Notices**

**Quarterly Church Meeting** – Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> September – 7 pm in the Lounge.

## **Celebration of Harvest – Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> October**

Envelopes for donations to Christian Aid will be available, and donations of tins and dry goods will be given to St. Johns's Food Bank.

### **Outstretched embrace**

(Exodus 14.19-31: Genesis 50.15-21: Psalm 103:1-7) 8.13: Romans 14.1-12: Matthew 18.21-35)

Sinners, Debtors, Wrongdoers-  
people of God in all our broken humanity –  
we seek God's truth and justice,  
we long for God's compassion.

We face immovable barriers,  
stumbling blocks and uncertainties in our lives,  
left unsure of our next steps  
and what direction to travel onward on our journey.

We face damaged relationships,  
guilt, jealousy and hurt between peoples,  
hungry for reconciliation  
and to mend the brokenness between and within.

With barriers beyond and brokenness within  
we seek God's strength and guidance.  
God's love stretches from farthest east to farthest west,  
two outstretched arms open to embrace the world.

May we feel the touch of this embrace,  
showing us the way of love, truth and justice.

Matthew Prevett

(URC Prayer Handbook 2023)

