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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for September 13, 2026

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 18:21-35](#) [**Summary:** *Forgiveness Isn't Easy*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies needed.

ASK (a.k.a. [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- I have a question for you: When you go outside and run around and yell and play, do you think you breathe faster or do you breathe slower than you are breathing right now? (faster)
- And what would happen if you tried to do all that running around and yelling and playing while trying to HOLD your breath? Do you think that would work very well? (No, not really)
- And why is that? (Because we need air!)
- Right! The more we move around, the more air we need.
- Is there anything you have to do to receive that air? (Well...you have to breathe it in)
- That's right! You have to "remember" to breathe – which I think we've all done a good job of doing so far.
- What would happen, do you think, if you forgot to breathe more while you were running around? (Get sick or light-headed; maybe overheat)
- What I hear you telling me is that not very good things would happen if you forgot to breathe more when running around, right?

TELL (a.k.a. [The Freeway](#))

- Having to remember to receive more of one thing (air) so that we can do more of another thing (run) is something we hear about in today's scripture story, too.
- The story Jesus told in today's scripture reading was about someone who owed a lot, a lot, a *lot* of money to the king, but couldn't pay that money to the king when the king asked for it.

- The king, though, forgave the man what he owed.
- What that means is that the king said, “It’s ok that you can’t give me back my money. In fact, let’s forget about it. You don’t have to *ever* pay me back.”
- That was pretty nice of the king, don’t you think?
- Now, later on, that same man (who was just forgiven) talked to someone who owed *him* just a *little* bit of money.
- You might think that after having been forgiven for the same thing, the man would want to share this gift of forgiveness by forgiving the other person.
- So, what do you think happened? Did the man forgive the person who owed him money?
- No, he didn’t. Not at all. The man did not offer any forgiveness to the other person and the king was very angry about it once he found out about it.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Today’s story ends badly, but it did NOT have to end that way.
- If only the man had remembered the forgiveness that had been given to him, then he could’ve shared that same forgiveness with the second person.
- Remember when we were talking about how you have to remember to breathe more if you want to run / move more?
- What would happen if we didn’t breathe more while running around?
- That’s right – not good things!
- In today’s story, Jesus is telling his disciples and us to keep remembering the forgiveness that God is giving to us, so that we remember that we have forgiveness to share with others.
- Forgiveness is one of the most powerful, important, and healing gifts we can ever give.
- And, forgiveness is a gift that God keeps giving to *us* – to you and to me so that we can keep sharing it with others.
- If we remember that God is forgiving us, then it will be easier for us to share that forgiveness with those around us.
- That’s the good news for today. Let’s pray.
- This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,
Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...
Thank you for Jesus...

...who teaches us about...
...who teaches us about...

...how you forgive us...
...how you forgive us...

...so that we can forgive each other.
...so that we can forgive each other.

Thank you and amen