

## ***A Different Kingdom***

### **Humility, Reconciliation, Forgiveness Matthew 18:1—19:15**

*“In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.”* Matthew 18:14

1. Read Matthew 18:1–14 and 19:13–15. What kind of answer might the disciples have expected to the question, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (18:1)”
2. In those days children had no status, no power, no greatness, and no voice, yet Jesus says that “the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (19:14). What qualities found in children do you think Jesus wants us to imitate when he says we must become like them (18:3)?
3. How do you interpret Jesus’ meaning in verses 7–9?
4. Read Matthew 18:10–14. List several adjectives that describe the shepherd. How does Jesus’ picture of the shepherd encourage you as you consider your own wandering heart, or the hearts of your children or others you love?
5. Read Matthew 18:15–20. What is the situation in the first sentence of verse 15? Describe the model Jesus gives for handling such a situation. (verses 15–17)
6. Consider this passage in light of Jesus’ parable of the sheep. What is the purpose of approaching a believer who has sinned? (James 5:19–20)
7. How should you prepare before setting out to speak to a brother or sister who has sinned? (Matthew 7:3–5; Galatians 6:1–2; James 1:5)
8. What promise does Jesus make in verse 20? Why do you think this promise is situated between Jesus’ teachings about reconciliation and forgiveness?

9. Read Matthew 18:21–35. What was at the heart of Peter’s question in verse 21? How does Jesus’ answer impact your understanding of relationships?
  
10. The first servant owes the master a fantastic amount of money. The servant’s plea for a chance to pay it all back is absurd. How does the master’s action in verse 27 exceed the servant’s unrealistic request? How does this unlooked-for action reflect God’s treatment of you in Christ? (Colossians 2:13–14)
  
11. The sum owed by the second servant is nothing in comparison to what the first servant owed. What does the difference in these two debts tell us about God’s forgiveness of us, and our forgiveness of others?
  
12. How does Jesus sum up the application of this parable? (verse 35)
  
13. Read Matthew 19:1–12. How does Jesus specifically respond to the Pharisees’ question on divorce?
  
14. In this week’s passage Jesus teaches a lot about how his followers are to relate to one another. Take a moment to pray about a relationship in which you might need to forgive someone, to ask forgiveness of someone, to pursue someone who has wandered —or all of the above.