

Sunday, September 17, 2023

Scripture Reading: Matthew 18:21-35

*When you forgive, you in no way change the past —
but you sure do change the future. —Bernard Meltzer*

A group of Americans was on a short-term mission trip to the city of La Entrada in Honduras. They joined several Hondurans visiting the families of schoolchildren. These families were very poor and lacked the money to buy their children school supplies. The Americans sat in the homes of those families, heard about their struggles and made decisions about what kind of financial support they could give them.

A key member of this team was a Honduran man named Kelvin. He taught at a bilingual school and acted as translator for the Americans. On the second day of the trip, he announced that he would have to leave the team because one of his fellow Hondurans had insulted him. This created a huge problem, since the Americans really needed Kelvin's translating abilities.

His colleagues tried to mediate this conflict in English, while one of the Hondurans tried to intercede in Spanish.

Finally, Kelvin said that he would continue his work with the group. "I am a Christian," he said. "I must forgive."

What a simple but profound thought: *I am a Christian ... I must forgive.*

But, as we know, this is easier said than done. What we learn from today's reading in Matthew is that forgiveness *begins as a choice and then becomes a process*. First, we choose to forgive and then the work begins. It is a longer process for some than it is for others, and the process is also affected by the nature of the grievance.

But, when we are able to trust God's role in the process, we will come to the point when we can let go of the power of the grievance to control us, and turn that all over to God. When that happens, forgiveness is complete, and we are free.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Thank you, heavenly father, for forgiving me, for you know, of course, how undeserving I was — and am. No need to tell you this. But still, you forgive me. Help me to keep this detail in mind when someone wrongs me. Help me to forgive as I am forgiven. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Blessings,
Jesus & Pastor Ben Meltzer*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 18:12–19:10

Monday: Ezekiel 4-7

Tuesday: Ezekiel 8-11

Wednesday: Ezekiel 12-14

Thursday: Ezekiel 15-18

Friday: Ezekiel 19-21

Saturday: Psalms 106-108

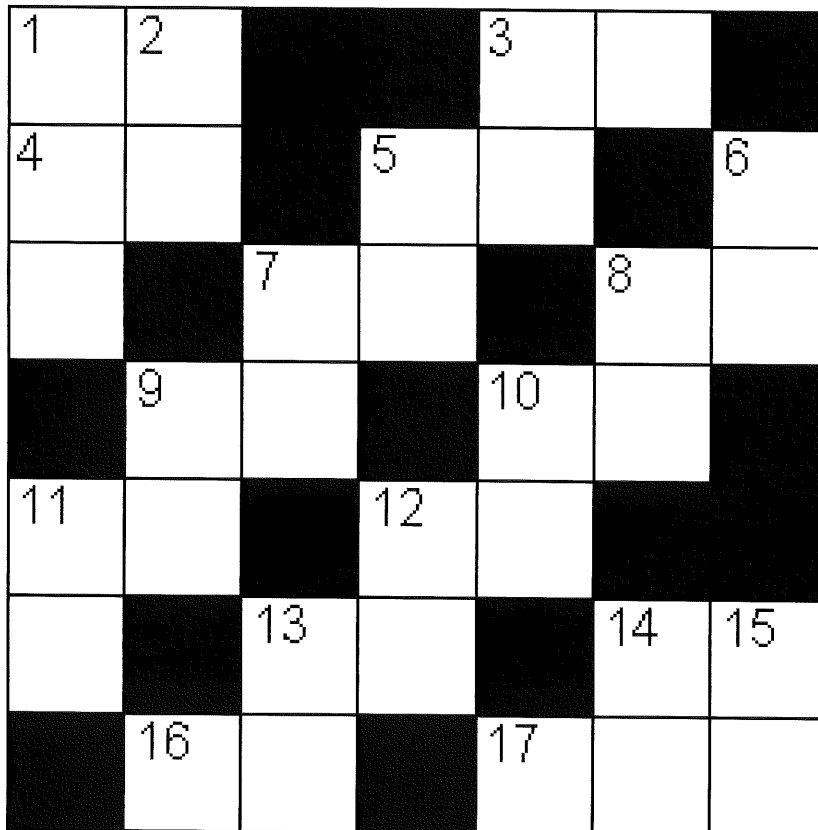
VERSE TO REMEMBER

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. ... As far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

—Psalm 103:10-12

TIMES TABLES

DIRECTIONS: Complete this math puzzle just as you would complete any crossword. All the clues involve basic multiplication problems. If you're a whiz at your times tables, you should be able to complete this puzzle in five minutes or less! Try it!



Across

1. 1×11

3. 7×3

4. 4×5

5. 7×2

7. 8×9

8. 11×5

9. 6×10

10. 5×6

11. 11×3

12. 7×6

13. 9×6

14. 7×12

16. 6×11

17. 11×10

Down

1. 11×11

2. 2×5

3. 2×12

5. 2×6

6. 3×5

7. 10×7

8. 10×5

9. 9×7

10. 8×4

11. 7×5

12. 4×11

13. 8×7

14. 9×9

15. 5×8

AMAZING (and random) FACTS!

- ❖ Boring, Oregon, is a sister city of Dull, Scotland, and Bland, Australia.
- ❖ German chocolate cake was invented in Texas.