

FORGIVEN FORGIVERS FORTIFY CHRIST'S FLOCK

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Series Theme: *Jesus reveals a Father who is worthy of your trust.*

Christians bind themselves to Jesus' heart so they too model purity to seek and strengthen Christ's Flock.

Introduction: *Who is the greatest...? (18.1)*

...a wrong question from the wrong kingdom *Mat 17.24-18.1*

ONE: Christians delight in being dependents so they'll bind their hearts to Jesus' and won't scandalize the sheep.
Mat 17.2-14

Children in the ancient world

- No real status/importance
- Subject to their elders' authority
- Not taken serious except as a responsibility
- To be looked after, not to be looked up to
- For the Jews, given God's covenant they were seen as a blessing and were loved as such and seen more as fellow creatures

TWO: Christians are forgiven forgivers who are forbearing in seeking and sustaining the weak and broken. ***Mat 17.15-35***

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QUESTIONS FOR INTERACTION AND STUDY

1. In what foundational way(s) are leaders in the church to be different from leaders in the world?
2. Think about how you tend to begin and end each day: ***what thoughts and attitudes are normal for you?***
3. What can you add to your habits so that you will remind yourself that the essence of Christian believing is acknowledging ongoing dependency on Christ to live with right purpose, right choices and right behaviors?
4. Read **Ephesians 4.30-5.3.**
 - What relationships do you see with Matthew 18?
 - How is Eph 4.32-5.2 foundational to our motivation to be forgiving and forbearing?
 - How do Eph 5.3ff. show that Paul shares Jesus' concern (Matthew 18.5-9) that the forgiven not become scandalizers who hinder faith and excuse failures to follow?
5. In what ways is stirring our love for Christ and his honor the strongest armor a Christian can put on? How does this relate to the discussion of seeking true greatness in Mat 18.1ff?