



Sunday, 10th May
Staying friends!

Hi everyone,

We do hope you are all OK and enjoying the sunshine this weekend.

On Friday it was VE Day and so today we thank God that although it's difficult times for everyone at the moment, we still live in a country at peace. We remember all those families around the world who live with conflict and war and we think about what we can do to make the world a friendlier, happier place.

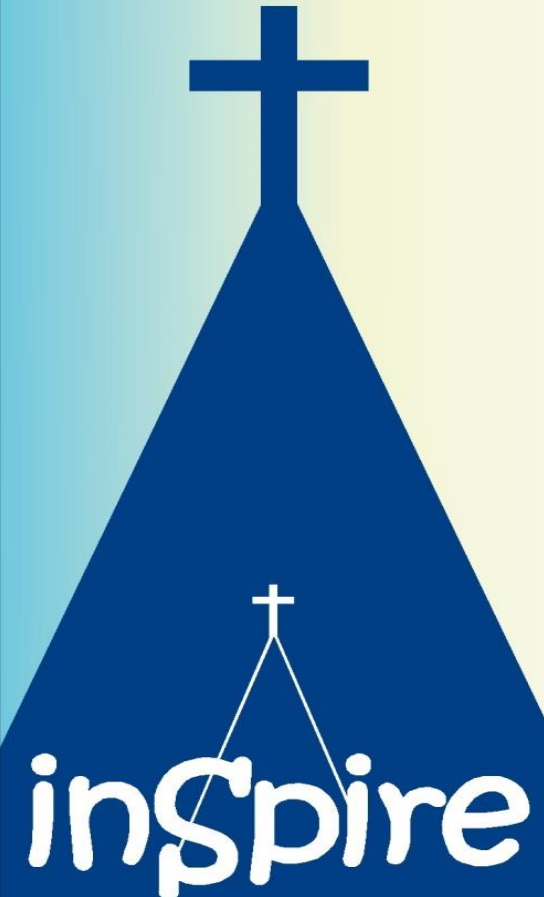
There are times in our life when we don't always get on with our friends and family. We might squabble and fall out over something.

What sort of things do you tend to squabble about? Think about them. Are they really that important? If sowhy? Sometimes it might be that we feel very hurt by what someone else has said to us or done to us.

Peter asked Jesus a question. "How many times do I have to forgive my brother who has upset me? Seven times?"

Do you know what Jesus replied? He said, "No , Peter. Not 7 times but 70 x 7!"

Do the maths!! That's a lot of times! That's a lot of forgiving!



Then Jesus told a story about a king and his servant. It went a little like this.....

There was once a king whose servant owed him a lot of money. The king wanted his money back and called the servant before him. The servant fell on his knees and pleaded with the king, “Please give me some more time. I will repay you. I just need more time. Please your majesty.”

The king was a kind and forgiving man and realised his servant would never be able to pay back the money in full. So he said to him, “I have given the matter a lot of thought and I have decided to cancel your debt altogether. Now go home in peace and do not worry!”

The servant was amazed and overjoyed. A huge weight had been lifted from his mind. He went home to tell his family the good news. On the way he met a man who owed him some money.

Can you believe what he did next?

He grabbed the man and shouted at him, “You owe me some money! Pay it to me now! Pay it back do you hearor else!!”

Do you think this was fair? What do you think he should have done? What do you think happened next?

You can look at this story again to find out..... It is from Matthew 18 v 21-35. Older children might like the story from another country you can find at the end.

Jesus said we should forgive each other. It isn't always easy but when we do forgive others, we are sharing his love with other people and helping to spread peace in our world.

Get crafty

Make something to keep at home to remind you to forgive other people.....even if it is 7 x 70 times!

Doves are used in the Bible as a sign of peace and rainbows are a sign of hope and keeping promises.



You can always put some numbers on yours if you want like 7x70!

How about we sing a song?

This is a lovey catchy tune, called 70x7 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VDYn8L-c0w

Of course, there is the beautiful hymn, **Make me a channel of your peace**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihhvm6eLWZI> you can sing along to this with the words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2svZhZT6Pro> this version is sung by a children's choir

Let's have a little chat time with God. Mum or Dad will guide you with this.....

Get yourself comfortable and in your head, tell God about times when people have not been kind to you. Tell him how you feel about it. Think about how difficult it is to forgive them. Ask God to help you with this.

Now tell God about times when you haven't been kind to other people. Think about how they would have felt. Say sorry to God for not being more loving and caring.

Dear God,

Thank you that you that you forgive us completely when we are unkind or selfish.

When people hurt us, help us not to hold grudges and instead, ask for your strength to forgive. Amen

And let's remember people around the world who are sick or sad or lonely or frightened. Let's ask God to hold them in his loving arms and give them hope and peace. Amen

And let's say the Lord's Prayer together....

You might like to watch this animated cartoon of the story <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ED3fzkS-bhA>

God won't throw us into prison as the King in the story did to the servant but he will be upset if we can't forgive others from our hearts. Remember God loves us so much, he is always ready to forgive us when we hurt him and others.

Here's a lovely story from another culture that older children might like to read:

Once upon a time there was a rich man who lived in the deserts of the Middle East. You could tell how rich he was because of what he owned and especially how many camels belonged to him. In fact he was so rich that he owned not 2, not 4, not 8, not 16... but 17 camels.

He had led a peaceful and prosperous life and so when he was very old and near to death he wrote his will, explaining how he intended to leave his wealth to his only son, his grandson and to his one nephew. The terms of the will were these: one half of his riches should go to his own son; one third should go to his grandchild and one ninth of his wealth should go to his nephew.

This seemed fair. Soon after this the rich man died. Now when it came time to dividing up the camels according to the will, the three beneficiaries ran into a problem!

(demonstrate the following with your visual aid)

- If half the camels were given to the son, then he should get eight-and-a-half camels, which would mean killing a camel!
- If a third of the camels were given to the grandson, that would mean again killing a camel so he could get five and two thirds!
- And when it came to the nephew, there was no way he could get his share unless another camel was killed.

The three of them became frustrated and soon got very angry with each other. They shouted and quarrelled and argued and even threatened to go to war over the camels. Secretly they began stockpiling their weapons and plotting their battle campaigns.

Nearby there lived a very poor man. You could tell he was very poor because he only had one camel. Although he was so poor and seemed to have no influence, he still felt he should do something to help. He wanted to stop war breaking out. He wanted to be a peacemaker. But what could he do?

He decided to offer his one and only camel into the rich man's inheritance to help sort out the problem. It was a huge sacrifice. The inheritance now consisted of 18 camels.

(demonstrate the following by adding a camel and then re-doing the maths as below!)

The three sat down and did the sums.

- Half of 18 would go to the son, so he took 9 camels.
- One third of 18 would go to the grandson so he took 6 camels.

- And one ninth of 18 would go to the nephew, so he took two camels. After each had taken his allotted number, to their great surprise there was one camel left over!
- The poor man received his camel back! He had made peace by his willingness to give up all he had and it had made all the difference and he had not lost out in the end!

I wonder what you think this story is saying to us about making peace? And about Jesus who is described as the Prince of Peace?

Have a lovely rest of the day and we look forward to seeing youhopefully soon!

With love and blessings

Hilary, Helen, Jonathan, Lynda, Alison. Helen and Rosemary