

Jesus Tells Peter How Many Times to Forgive
About 5 minutes, from Matt 18; John 18

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

Peter

Voice (of Jesus)

King

Rich slave

Prompter Shout a brief line, and Echoes repeat it.

Echoes Children and all adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script

Peter How will I ever forget that shameful night when I denied Jesus?
Now he has risen from the dead.
How I yearn for him to forgive me!

Prompter & Echoes Peter is miserable!

Peter What made me realize how despicably I had behaved?
Not a scolding by a judge. Not a sermon. Not Scripture.
It was not even words. It was a bird! A stupid bird! A rooster!

Prompter & Echoes Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Peter Jesus warned me that I would deny him before the rooster crowed,
and I did. So I have given up hope.
I return to my fishing boat and take the other disciples
out on the Sea of Galilee.

Prompter & Echoes Hopeless!

Peter We fish all night and catch nothing.
We row back to shore, and there is Jesus, waiting!
I fear what he will say to me. But there is no rebuke;
he does not shame me, even though I'd denied him!

Prompter & Echoes Three times!

Peter Jesus simply asks if I love him—three times!
After each time he tells me the same thing.

Prompter & Echoes Feed my sheep.

Peter Oh, how those blessed words of assurance echo in my soul!

Prompter & Echoes Wonderful forgiveness!

Peter Once I asked Jesus how often shall my brother sin against me
and I forgive him. "Up to seven times?"

Voice Not up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Prompter & Echoes 490 times!

Peter Jesus then explained this with a parable.

Voice The kingdom of heaven is like a king
who wished to settle accounts with his slaves,
some of whom were very wealthy.

King Slave, you have grown rich in my service.
Now, my accountant says you owe me a huge sum of money.
Pay me. Now!

Rich slave But I do not have the money to repay you, master.

King Very well. You will be sold, along with your wife,
children, and all that you own, to make repayment.

Rich slave Mercy! Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.

Prompter & Echoes Have mercy!

King Well, I do feel a bit of compassion. I forgive your debt. Go in peace.

Voice But that slave goes out and finds a fellow slave
who owes him a much smaller amount of money,
and he seizes the poor man and begins to choke him.

Rich slave Pay back what you owe.

Prompter & Echoes Pay me!

Peter The poor debtor falls at the feet of the rich slave
and beseeches him for mercy.
He begs the man to have patience,
and promises to repay his debt.

Rich slave Get up off the ground and pay me now!

Voice The wealthy slave has the poor slave thrown into prison
until he pays back all that he owed.
The poor man's fellow slaves hear what happened;
they are grieved, and report it to the king.

King Now, this makes me angry. Captain, summon that wicked slave!

Peter That slave looks pleased with himself, as he comes before the king.

King You wicked hypocrite!
I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.
Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave,
in the same way that I had mercy on you?

Voice The king hands him over to be tortured until he pays all that he owes.
My heavenly Father will also do the same to you,
if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.

Peter Oh, what an admonition to forgive!

Prompter & Echoes A stern warning!