

Forgiveness: Matthew 18:21-35

Introduction:

This morning we want us to focus on this passage of scripture, because what is being taught here is of vital importance to every relationship that we have. There can be no lasting relationships without forgiveness, and forbearance. Your marriage will not make it without forgiveness. Parent-child relationships cannot exist without this. And most importantly we would never have a relationship with the Lord if it were not for forgiveness. So let's consider some vital truths about forgiveness.

I. To forgive someone means that we are agreeing to live with the pain or the loss that their sin has caused us without requiring them to pay for it.

That is why it is likened to debt in the Bible. If I borrow money from you, and you agree to forgive the loan, it means that you are agreeing to live with the loss, without requiring me to repay it. You are letting me off the hook. When God forgave us of our sins, it means that he was willing to suffer the loss caused by our sins without requiring us to pay for it. It cost Him His precious Son on the cross, to forgive us of our sins. He was willing to endure the pain, and the loss that our sin caused, so that we could go free.

It is not denying the pain that was caused by the sin. It is not saying, "oh that's fine it didn't hurt me" It is acknowledging the pain, taking inventory of the pain, and agreeing to live with the pain, without making the other person pay for it.

II. Our forgiveness of each other should be unlimited.

Peter thought that he was being generous. Jewish custom required that you forgive your brother three times for the same offense, and then you were not obligated to forgive him anymore, but could require whatever penalty was lawful. Seven times was over twice that. But notice Jesus answer. I don't think Jesus was suggesting a literal 490 times but rather that it should be an unlimited amount of times.

III. We have the tendency to be unforgiving towards others even though God has been so forgiving

towards us.

That is the point of this parable. Notice several things about this parable

A. *This man was helpless to pay his debt*

We were helpless to pay the debt of sin that we owed to God. Even if we had given all that we had, it would not have satisfied the debt

B. *This man had a humble attitude*

He just didn't say I am sorry I can't pay, but rather fell down. When we are asking forgiveness, we need to ask with a humble attitude, realizing that our sin has caused pain and loss to the person from whom we need the forgiveness.

C. *Compassion motivated his master to forgive him. v. 27*

That is what motivates forgiveness. Love and compassion. When we are unforgiving it is because we lack compassion (Eph 4:32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

D. *This man would not forgive his fellow servant of a much lesser amount vs. 28-30*

Any wrong that anyone has done to us is very small compared to the wrong that we have done towards God.

1. **“Ten thousand talents” = a talent was worth more than 15 years wages of a laborer. “This represents an incomprehensible amount of money. The talent was the largest denomination of currency, and “ten thousand” in common parlance signified an infinite number”.¹**
2. **“an hundred pence:” “About 3 months’ wages. This was not a negligible amount by normal standards, but it was a pittance in comparison to what the servant had been forgiven”.²**

E. *This man's lack of forgiveness caused grief among the*

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

²John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

other servants. V.31

There are churches today that are full of sorrow and grief because there are unresolved issues that have not been forgiven. There are families who are filled with sorrow because of members of those families harbor bitterness toward one another. It is not just an issue between the two people involved, but lack of forgiveness causes grief for the people who love those involved.

F. This Man was called into account because of his lack of for

F. This man's refusal to forgive caused him to be in bondage and torment. v.34

There are many people who are in torment, not because they have not been forgiven, but because they will not forgive. Another word for lack of forgiveness is prolonged wrath. Listen to what happens when we don't forgive from the heart. ***(Eph 4:26-27) Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: {27} Neither give place to the devil.***

Failing to forgive, gives place to Satan, to bring torment into our lives.