

Wednesday, September 16, 2020
THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

Matthew 18:21-35 (NKJV)

Tonight, we discuss the importance of forgiveness toward others. Let's learn some things from this parable. Peter asked Jesus about limits on forgiveness. *"How many times must I forgive someone for wrongs they have done to me?"* The rabbis of Jesus' day taught the people that God only required their followers to forgive a person three times and then they could be treated as a heathen. So, Peter's offer of seven times seems very magnanimous. But, what does Jesus say about how many times we forgive?

Seventy times seven: in numerology, this would equate to an infinite number of times.

What does this tell us about our own relationship with God? What does this tell us about the grace in which we grow? Jesus is saying to us: "This is what the kingdom of heaven is like..." How many are in the kingdom? There is grace to grow.

Jesus teaches us that forgiveness for others comes from the well of our own forgiveness.

We are not trying to "work up" the ability to forgive. It comes from the abundance of our own forgiveness by God. In the parable, the king forgave the servant the amount equal to 10,000 talents.

The talent in this parable was worth about 6,000 denarii, so that one debt is 600,000 times as large as the other. More significantly, 10,000 (a myriad) was the highest Greek numeral, and a talent the largest unit of currency, so that 10,000 talents was the largest easily described debt (for comparison, the combined annual tribute of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea around this time was only 600 talents, and one denarius was a day's wages, so that 10,000 talents would be about 200,000 years' wages).

What does this amount tell us about the distance that is between God and us as sinners? The king knew that there was no way the servant could repay the debt – his destiny was decided. Without the intervention of the

king, his fate was sealed. The king forgave the servant out of what? *Compassion*. What does this tell us about God? He was willing not just to have compassion, but to take a loss for you. Don't forget: it cost Jesus His life to make this happen. The story tells us that the forgiven servant had another servant who owed him 100 denari. This is no insignificant debt. It equated to 100 days wages – a large debt for a working man. Why didn't the forgiven servant forgive his fellow servant? That's the question that begs to be answered.

The debt was too great to forgive.

The servant doesn't deserve to be forgiven.

Debts should be paid. I need satisfaction.

Nothing we are owed by someone else – no matter how great will equal how we have been forgiven by God. We owe Him everything! Forgiveness is not dispensed according to merit but because of compassion. We are not the judge. Therefore, we must release the repayment process to Him. Failure to forgive is hypocrisy and will be judged by the king who forgave me. The use of the phrase “delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him” is fearful. This literally means that the unforgiving servant was examined under duress/torture until ALL he owed the king was repaid. Why was one reason the king forgave him in the first place? He could never repay the debt!!!

What if the person who owes me never asks for forgiveness?

The issue is not being asked to be forgiven. The servant that was forgiven by the king didn't ask the king to forgive the debt. He owed the debt. You don't ask the king to forgive what you owe him and bear the loss himself. But, this king did! He set the precedent for forgiveness of debtors. And, through that precedent, He set the precedent for us to release the same compassionate grace to others. This is the way of the kingdom of heaven!

Today's Scriptures:

- [Matthew 18:21-35 \(NKJV\)](#)