

Pursuing Peace by Forgiving Others. Mt. 18:21-35

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I. Introduction.

- A. Our peacemaking is founded upon God's peacemaking in the gospel. Rom. 5:1
 - 1. Conflict is unavoidable and dangerous, but conflict also gives us opportunity to glorify God. Rom. 12:18 1 Cor. 10:31 2 Cor. 5:9
 - 2. First, get the log out of your own eye. Mt. 7:1-5 5:23-24
 - 3. Then pursue peace by gently restoring others. Mt. 7:5 18:15-20
 - a. Does this violate the right to privacy? 1 Tim. 1:19-20 Eph. 5:11
 - b. Do these techniques ever fail? Pr. 3:5-6 Rom. 12:18
- B. The importance of forgiveness.

II. You have been forgiven much. Mt. 18:23-27

- A. You owed a great debt which you could not repay. Mt. 18:23-25 Rom. 3:23 6:23
 - 1. Do you see your sin the way Jesus does? Rom. 3:10-20 Isa. 64:6 59:2
 - 2. You must take your sin and guilt seriously before God will forgive you. 1 Jo. 1:8,10
- B. God graciously forgave your debt when you asked Him. Mt. 18:25-27 1 Jo. 1:8-2:2 Ps. 32:1-5 Isa. 55:6-7 Rom. 3:23-24 6:23
 - 1. When the slave humbled himself, the king had compassion and forgave him.
 - 2. In the same way God freely and graciously forgave you. 1 Jo. 1:9 2:1-2 Rom. 3:23-24 6:23 Titus 3:4-5
 - 3. The forgiveness you received is better than that which is described in the parable.
 - a. Jesus paid your debt in full. 2 Co. 8:9 5:21 1 Pe. 3:18 Ro. 3:24-26 1 Jo. 2:2
 - b. He also enriches you with His righteousness. 2 Cor. 5:21 8:9 Phil. 3:9
- C. The key to becoming a gracious forgiving person is to meditate daily on God's gracious forgiveness to you. Luke 7:47 Ps. 86:5 Eph. 4:31-32 Col. 3:12-14 Ro. 5:1 Ps. 103:10,12 130:3-4 Isa. 1:18 38:17 Ex. 34:6-7 Jer. 31:34 Micah 7:18-20 John 1:29
- D. Have you experienced God's forgiveness? Isa. 55:6-7 1 Jo. 1:8-2:2 Phil. 3:9

III. Forgive others as God has forgiven you. Matthew 18:21-22,28-35

- A. Forgiveness can be very hard. Matthew 18:21,28
 - 1. One hundred denarii represents one third of a year's wage -- \$17,000 to us.
 - 2. It is significant that the debt owed by the second slave wasn't a paltry amount.
 - 3. Yet the debt owed by the second slave is nothing compared to the debt of the first slave which had been forgiven.
- B. Forgiveness is not optional for forgiven people. Mt. 6:12,14-15 18:21-22,28-35
 - 1. The One who has forgiven your great debt asks you to forgive others for His sake. Mt. 18:21-22 6:12,14-15 Mark 11:25 Luke 17:3
 - 2. God does not allow you to carry on a grudge. Eph. 4:26-27,31-32
 - 3. Refusing to forgive shows that you have disconnected yourself from the gospel. Mt. 18:28-35 Luke 7:47
 - 4. Is Jesus saying that you can lose your salvation? Mt. 18:32-35 Js. 2:13
- C. Our forgiving should resemble God's forgiveness. Eph. 4:31-32
 - 1. Forgiveness is freely granted to the one who asks. 1 John 1:9
 - 2. Forgiveness cancels a debt -- declared and decisive. Mt. 18:27
 - 3. Forgiveness is from the heart. Mt. 18:35

4. Forgiveness restores relationships– reconciliation. Rom. 5:10-11 2 Co. 5:18-20
5. Forgiveness does good to the offender. Mt. 5:44ff Ro. 12:19-21 II Co. 2:7-8 8:9

D. Misunderstandings about forgiveness.

1. Forgiving is not merely forgetting. Jer. 31:34 Isa. 43:25 1 Co. 13:5
2. Forgiveness is not lightly excusing sin. Col. 1:20
3. Forgiveness is not easy.

**E. Make the promises of forgiveness (from *The Peacemaker*). Mt. 6:12 I Co. 13:5
Jer. 31:34 Eph. 4:31-32 Col. 3:13**

1. I will not think about this incident.
2. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you. 1 Co. 13:5
3. I will not talk to others about this incident.
4. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or to hinder our personal relationship. Eph. 4:31-32

F. The gospel empowers forgiveness. Eph. 4:31-32 Col. 3:12-14 1 Tim. 1:15-16

G. Questions about forgiveness.

1. How can I know that he is really repentant? 2 Co. 7:10-11 Mt. 18:21f 1 Co. 13:7
2. What if I don't feel like forgiving? Phil. 4:13
3. What should I do if someone's apology is lame (falls short)? Pr. 19:11 1 Pet. 4:8
4. Can I forgive someone while still keeping my distance from them?
5. Does forgiveness always eliminate all consequences? Num. 14:20-23
2 Sam. 12:10-14 Gal. 6:6-7
6. What if the offender keeps doing the same thing? Mt. 18:21-22,15-20
7. What if I have trouble forgiving myself? 1 Jo. 1:8-2:2 1 Co. 6:9-11 1 Ti. 1:15-16

H. What if those who have wronged you won't seek your forgiveness? Luke 17:3

1. You should have always have a heart attitude of forgiveness. Eph. 4:31-32
Luke 23:34 Acts 7:59-60 Mark 11:25 Rom. 12:18-21 1 Pet. 2:22-23
2. Transactional forgiveness leading to full reconciliation can only take place when the guilty party seeks forgiveness. Lu. 17:3-4 Mt. 18:21-22 1 Jo. 1:8-10

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Joseph exemplifies these principles as he forgives his brothers. Gen. 45:11 50:15-21
- B. We who have been forgiven by God's grace are empowered to forgive.
- C. Have you experienced the forgiveness of your 10,000 talent debt?

Discussion questions

1. How much have you been forgiven?
2. Why did God forgive you?
3. Why must you forgive others?
4. In what ways should your forgiveness of each other resemble God's forgiveness of you?
5. What are the promises of forgiveness?
6. Should you forgive someone if you aren't sure that he is repentant?
7. When might the forgiven person still have to face consequences?
8. What would you say to someone who says that she can't forgive herself?
9. What should you do if the guilty person won't ask you for forgiveness?
10. What is the difference between attitudinal forgiveness and transactional forgiveness?
11. How does Joseph exemplify biblical principles of forgiveness?