

## A. SERMON POINTS

1) A Short Story: On Forgiveness

2) Matthew 18:21-35 (ESV)

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

3) Questions to ask the text:

- a) Why is it so important that we forgive one another?
- b) What does it mean to forgive one another?
- c) How is it possible to always forgive one another?

4) An unforgiving heart is an unforgiven heart

5) We are never more like God than when we forgive. We are never less like God than when we refuse to forgive.

6) 3 reasons we may not forgive others

- a) Because we have a bad definition
- b) Because the coin of the Gospel hasn't dropped
- c) Because we don't have the Holy Spirit

7) 3 steps to forgiving others

- a) Have "pity"
- b) Cancel the debt
- c) Release the enemy

## B. GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1) When you read this parable what are the feelings that come over you? And why?
- 2) What happens to the servant when the King discovers his inability to forgive others? So how serious is this for Christians and the church?
- 3) When we forgive others it can be instantaneous. It need not be a process for a Christian, although it may be. Explain some of the tension between obedience and the Spirit's work, but also a continuing effort on our part. Doesn't that same tension exist in our own salvation? We are saved, and we are being saved? Maybe look at the steps and discuss the ways in which it is done, and the way in which it continues.
  - a) Identify with the enemy
  - b) Absorb the cost
  - c) Release the enemy
- 4) Why is it expected that a Christian would always forgive? How is that possible?
- 5) Prayer and praise