



The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant - Matthew 18:21-35

Intro:

Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” **22** Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. **23** Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. **25** But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. **26** The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ **27** Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. **28** “But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ **29** So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ **30** And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. **31** So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. **32** Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. **33** Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ **34** And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. **35** “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

Vs. 21, What’s the MAXIMUM obligation = what’s the MINIMUM I actually have to do?!

What’s the threshold of my obligation to have to give grace and forgiveness?

When can I hold a grudge?

When can I return action for action?

When can I enact revenge?

Peter drops a “Remez” dating back to Cain & Abel.

Backdrop...Cain compared to Lamech (Genesis 4:1-24)

Cain is judged and given grace issuing a retribution for death of 7 fold. (Get. 4:11-15)

Peter tries to compare himself to Abel...Jesus indicates he’s acting more like Lamech!

Lamech issues himself an exaggerated retribution of 77 fold! (Genesis 23-24)

Jesus pics up on Peter’s “remez” and answers him in kind with an “ironic comedy”

Irony:

10,000 talents = 650,000 pounds of silver = 250,000 years worth of work!!!
Judea and Samaria only paid 800 talents total tax debt/year to Rome.

Vs. 26. There was no way the man could have EVER repaid the debt.

vs. 28. 100 denari = 1/1,000,000 of his original debt
The wicked servant actually enacted a ridiculous/ungodly judgement much like Lamech

James 2:13 “For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

Vs. 34 Un-forgiveness leads to judgment and torture

Personal Application

Vs. 35 Forgiveness is not optional. If we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us.

Matthew 6:14-15 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Ephesians 4:32 “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

Colossians 3:15 “Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

How do I forgive?

Cultivate an attitude of humility, gratitude and forgiveness by daily remembering that you’ve been forgiven and unplayable debt!!