

I. Intro

A. Recap (**Matt. 18:6-20**)

1. **God Is Aggressive Toward Offense (Matt. 18:6-9)**

a. Protector of Little Ones (**v.6**)

⁶ *“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (Matt. 18:6)*

b. Offense Is Inevitable, But Not Excusable (**v.7**)

c. Jesus Invites To Confront Offenses Like He Does (**v.8-9**)

2. **God Is Relentless Toward Offense (Matt. 18:10-12)**

a. His Care and Concern is For “Little Ones”/ “Lost One” (**v.10-12**)

¹¹ *For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.* ¹² *“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? (Matt. 18:11-12)*

3. **God Invites Believers to Partner In Forgiveness Ministry (Matt. 18:15-20)**

a. Enlist every measure and resource at your disposal (**v. 15-17**)

b. Whatever is decided concerning an offense on earth (under the leading of Jesus Christ), all of heaven joins in. (**v.18**)

¹⁸ *“Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.* ¹⁹ *“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.”* ²⁰ *For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” (Matt. 18:18-20)*

c. Where two or three are gathered in my name... concerning confronting offenses...

II. Body

A. Disciples Are Ambassadors of Reconciliation

¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. **(2 Cor. 5:18-20)**

1. This Forgiveness ministry has never advocated the ignoring of offense, but the confrontation of offense.
2. No room for loopholes
 - a. When you're offended...
 - i. Ex.: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone..." **(Matt. 18:15)**
 - b. When someone else is offended...

²³ Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. **(Matt. 5:23-26)**

B. Forgiveness Extended Parallels Forgiveness Received

1. Give and It Will Be Given

³⁷ "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." **(Lk. 6:37-38)**

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- a. Principal often only used for money, but far more widespread.
 - i. Give release from judgement and condemnation, as you enjoy a lifestyle of release from judgement and condemnation.

2. Correlation: If you forgive, then...

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

- a. Jesus’ primary teaching on prayer is laced with a forgiveness clause.

3. Correlation: Effective Prayer is directly connected to Effective Forgiveness

²³ For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.²⁴ Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. ²⁵ “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” (Mk. 11:23-26)

- a. When you pray, believe that you receive... and if you have anything against anyone... FORGIVE! (v. 24-25)

C. A Disciple Receiving Without Releasing is Unconscionable

1. How often do I have to forgive?

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?” (Matt. 18:21)

- a. Parallel Passage (Lk. 17:1-4)

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- i. **Lk. 17:5:** “And the apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith’.

- 2. God’s standard for us demands more than what we can give in and of ourselves.

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. **(Matt. 18:21-27)**

- 3. 1 Talent = 75 lbs. (gold or silver)
 - a. 1 Talent = 6,000 denarii
 - i. 6,000 days of wages
 - ii. 20 years of wages (at 300 labor days a year/ 6 labor days a week)
 - b. 10,000 Talents = 200,000 years of labor
 - i. \$12 Billion

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.’ **(Matt. 18:28-29)**

- 4. 1 Denarii = Day’s Labor (\$200 at \$60,000/year)
 - a. 100 Denarii = \$20,000

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.” (Matt. 18:30-35)

5. The Master Infuriated By Hypocrisy (v.32)
 - a. Delivered him to the tortures to suffer at their hands.
 - b. Suffering lasted until the unforgiving servant could pay his own debt.
 - c. My Heavenly Father will do just like this to those who do not forgive their brother.

III. Conclusion

A. Forgiving Others Doesn’t (in itself) Purchase Forgiveness

1. Neither does good fruit produce a good tree.
 - a. But a good tree, produces good fruit.
 - i. If the fruit is bad... cut down and fire.
2. Forgiving Others doesn’t produce forgiveness for the disciple.
 - a. But forgiven folks, forgive.

B. John Piper: If I refuse to forgive others, will God forgive me?

The way I would put it is like this: If the forgiveness that we received at the cost of the blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is so ineffective in our hearts that we are bent on holding unforgiving grudges and bitterness against someone, we are not a good tree. We are not saved. We don’t cherish this forgiveness. We don’t trust in this forgiveness. We don’t embrace and treasure this forgiveness.

We are hypocrites. We are just mouthing. We haven’t ever felt the piercing, joyful wonder that God paid the life of his Son. I mean, how in the world could I hold a grudge against somebody when I have not been offended nearly like God has been offended? (Piper, “Ask Pastor John” – Aug. 24, 2015)