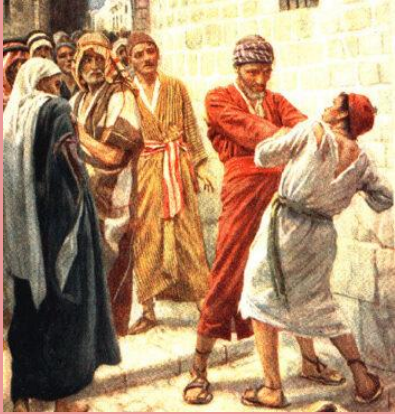


THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT



Matthew 18:23-35

Matthew 18:23-35

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. **25** Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. **26** “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’

27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. **28** “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

Matthew 18:23-35

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ **30** “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31** When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33** Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ **34** In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

What the world says about forgiveness

The world moves on,
another day another drama
But not for me, not for me,
all I think about is karma

And then the world moves
on, but one thing's for sure
Maybe I got mine, but you'll
all get yours

Taylor Swift

And nothing I say will ease
the pain

But why must I hurt for you
to feel okay?

You don't get to take all of
me (set me free)

Joshua Bassett

You look so dumb right
now

Standing outside my house

Trying to apologize

You're so ugly when you
cry

Rihanna



UNFORGIVING

not willing to **forgive people's **faults** or **wrongdoings****

→ **MERCILESS**

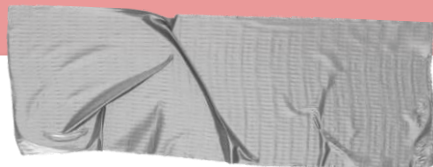
having or showing a lack of sympathy or tender feelings

→ **REVENGEFUL**

likely to seek revenge

→ **PETTY**

displaying a mean, narrow-minded attitude



FORGIVING

- Ceasing to feel resentment against (an offender)
- Granting relief from payment
- Allowing for human error or weakness

—

What does the bible say?

Let's unpack Matthew 18: 23- 25

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This parable is a
reality check for us.

What have we been forgiven of?

Who have we not forgiven?

Why is forgiveness important?

—

What have I been forgiven of?

In this parable, the servant had been forgiven of an unpayable debt



GOD'S MERCY TOWARDS US

'To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.' - C.S. Lewis

- Ephesians 2: 4-5
- Romans 6:23
- Titus 3:4-6
- [1 John 19](#)
- Romans 3: 23-24



(See Matthew 7:1-5) 10-12-2009

YES, I HAD THE PLANK REMOVED FROM MY EYE
AND NOW I CAN FINALLY TELL YOU THAT YOU
HAVE A SPECK IN YOURS THAT'S BEEN
DRIVING ME NUTS!



It's me.
Hi, I'm the problem.
It's me.

Who have I not forgiven?

In this parable, after the servant's own debt had been forgiven, he immediately went to the person who owed him money & angrily demanded repayment. Instead of being grateful for the king's mercy, he clung to what he was owed.



WHAT FORGIVENESS IS:

“Forgiveness is releasing someone from the punishment or payment of their offense”

- It is a command (Colossians 3:13)
- It is a choice, not a feeling (2 Peter 1:3)
- Letting God avenge (Romans 12:17-21)

“In the Bible, the Greek word translated “forgiveness” literally means “to let go”, as when a person does not demand payment for a debt... Forgiving others means letting go of resentment and giving up any claim to be compensated for the hurt or loss we have suffered” - [Jessica Oberreuter](#)

"Forgiveness is not an emotion... Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart."

Corrie Ten Boom, WWII Concentration Camp Survivor



WHAT FORGIVENESS IS NOT:

- Minimizing or dismissing the hurt & pain that has been caused (Ephesians 4:15)
- Immediately trusting the person who wronged you (Job 8:14-15)
- Your pain is healed instantly (Psalm 147:3)
- Automatic Reconciliation (Proverbs 12:26)
- Elimination of consequences (Deuteronomy 32:35)

**RID YOURSELVES,
THEREFORE, OF ALL
MALICE, DECEIT,
HYPOCRISY, ENVY, AND
SLANDER.**

- 1 PETER 2:1



Symptoms of an unforgiving heart:



- Enjoying when the person who wronged us is suffering (gossiping, inflicting pain back on them)
- We cannot hide our disdain (eye-rolling, icing them out)
- Avoidance (can't be around them, don't want to talk about it, denial, self-numbing)
- Lack of self-control (angry outbursts, reckless behaviour)



Symptoms of a forgiving heart:

- Speaks truth in love (exercises gentleness & chooses their words carefully)
- Is patient & peaceful (slow to anger, isn't quick to retaliate)
- Loves their enemies (chooses kindness over revenge)
- Prays for them ("Let go, and let God" - believe that God changes hearts & can redeem lives)

**BUT I TELL YOU, LOVE
YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY
FOR THOSE WHO
PERSECUTE YOU,
- MATTHEW 5:44**

Why are we called to forgive?

- When we don't forgive, we are minimizing the great cost Jesus paid dying for our sins. His grace for us is radical.
- We are not being thankful when we choose retribution & revenge. This displays a lack of trust in God's timing & justice.
- If we don't forgive others, we are missing an opportunity to be an example of how we have received mercy through the gospel
- Clinging onto bitterness hurts ourselves (Hebrews 12:15)

“We’ve got our way of dealing fairly with our enemies, and God has his. Our way involves retaliation and punishment; his way involves forgiveness. Our way involves equal justice; his way involves disproportionate grace. Our way is to make someone pay with blood; his way is to bleed. Even when Jesus hung on the cross, when God had been insulted to the highest degree imaginable, left naked, humiliated, beaten, and bruised, he said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Rachel Held Evans

“We don’t forgive because we are loving and forgiving people, we forgive because we’ve been loved and forgiven.”

Andrea Thom

Small Group Questions:

- What is one thing we need to ask God for forgiveness for in our own life?
- Is there a symptom of an unforgiving heart we have been seeing in ourselves lately?
- Is there someone or a situation in our life where we need to ask God to help us forgive?

Pray for one another that God would help us to be gracious and merciful to those who have wronged and hurt us.