

Forgiving must Cost You Something

Set the Stage

- Whether we look at the world or Christians the truth is we all struggle with something... It's the idea of forgiveness.
- Our world is filled with so much anger and hate. (Locally and nationally)
 - People are so concerned with justice today that forgiveness really seems to be a big problem. The world is starting to become offended at the idea of forgiveness.
 - Cancel culture** does not forgive.
 - It cancels or calls for justice at once.
 - It is all about justice without forgiveness.
- Man's greatest need in our world today is forgiveness.**
 - You need **to be** forgiven and you need **to extend** that same forgiveness.
- One of the greatest ways to know God better, is to understand forgiveness and to give it to others.

Taking it Further

- Parables are short fictional stories intended to communicate a truth about God and how His kingdom works. (Jesus used them often)
- The key to understanding a parable is:
 1. Identifying the situation/context that prompted the parable.
 2. Identify who each character represents.

Read Matthew 18:21-35

1. The context

- Jesus just talked about how to handle situations among believers that have been wronged.

- Peter just asked how many times are we to forgive someone... up to 7 times? 490?

2. The characters

- King (God)
 - First Servant (Christian or you)
 - Second Servant (someone who offends us)
- This parable is all about **forgiveness failure**.
- This is the typical human story.

In order to understand the cost of forgiving, first, we need to fully grasp...

1. The Extreme Debt that was Owed

A. What was forgiven. (21-25)

- Jesus uses the image of financial debt to help us understand the true nature of sin and forgiveness.
- The “talent” was the highest sum of currency in that day.
 - Equal to one year’s salary.
- If Jesus were telling this story today he would have said millions.
 - Estimated today to be \$400 million plus.
 - Average salary in US is \$63,000.
 - 6,349 years to pay it back.
 - Then it was 10,000 years to pay back.
- Why did Jesus use such an outrageous number?*
 - Jesus wanted to emphasize a debt that was impossible to pay back.
 - A debt really beyond our comprehension.
- As a christian, you have been forgiven an extreme debt that you could have never paid.
 - You were forgiven not cancelled.

-If you are not a Christian you have a debt that cannot be paid. That is the whole reason for Jesus Christ coming. (**Rom. 6:23, Eph. 2:8-9**)

B. Why it was forgiven. (26-27)

- The servant asked for patience or forgiveness
 - He could have never paid the debt back.
- The king had pity and compassion.
 - Compassion is love in action.
 - He offered him complete and total forgiveness.
- In salvation, we are forgiven by grace through faith.
 - Why grace?* We could never pay back or do enough good works to earn salvation.

Jesus reveals to us the extreme debt that we owe. A debt we could never pay back, yet, now we see...

2. The Extraordinary Forgiveness that was Offered.

A. The cost of forgiveness. (27)

- Forgiveness is not free. Someone has to incur the cost to forgive.
- The king had to incur the total cost.
 - It was an extreme amount of money.
- God had to incur an incomprehensible cost to forgive you.
 - It cost God His one and only son. It cost Him his life.
- The cost to forgive us was extreme.**
 - We want limits:
 - 3 strikes
 - 7 times max

-Jesus is revealing there is **not a limit on the amount of times** we are to forgive nor is there **a limit on the cost to forgive**.

B. The conflicting ways of forgiveness. (28-30)

-Different ways of forgiving based on the cost involved.

-(Tim Keller & other's give names to them)

1. No Grace (Don't forgive at all)

-This is what the servant turned around and did.

-I will not forgive. There is no way. They must pay for what they have done.

-Justice over forgiveness

-Not forgiving is a form of retaliation.

-(**This is forgiveness failure**)

2. Little Grace (Forgiving with stipulations)

-I will forgive only if they say sorry, and do this and do that. The person has to earn forgiveness.

-(**This is forgiveness failure**)

-*What would be the problem with this type of forgiveness?*

-This gives the victim power over their offender.

-When you forgive like this you are requiring something that God does not require.

3. Cheap Grace (Forgiving with no justice.)

-Forgive and forget. I've heard it all my life.

-I will not approach the situation to seek justice, reform, or reconciliation. Totally avoid it.

-(This is forgiveness failure)

-*What would be the problem with this type of forgiveness?*

-Dangerous because it can allow bad or harmful behavior to continue.

4. Costly Grace (Forgiving completely no matter the cost)

-I will forgive because God has forgiven me and called me to forgive no matter the cost.

-I will work to bring correction and restitution to the relationship. Speak the truth in love.

-*Why is this important to do?*

-In costly grace, forgiveness and justice can both be found.

-(This is forgiveness Success)

After learning about The Extreme Debt that was Owed and then The Extraordinary Forgiveness that was offered, the parable now hits home. Jesus is revealing the...

3. The Example of Forgiveness that we must Show.

A. Forgiveness must be given. (28-35)

-The parable could have ended here but Jesus wanted to reveal the failure that we too often make with forgiveness.

-The servant (Christian) did not forgive like he had been forgiven. **He had a moral duty to do so.**

-He was owed only 600 pence.

-Average earned was one pence a day.

-He could have paid this back in a few years.

-He was not willing to pay what forgiveness would cost. **He was greedy and stingy with the forgiveness he had already received.**

-Notice the King's response:

1. Called him a wicked servant (32)
(Wicked Christian)
2. Angry with actions (34)
3. Threw him in jail (34)
4. Made him repay his forgiven debt. (34)

-There is a powerful statement given in Scripture multiple times:

-If we don't forgive, God won't forgive us or we are forgiven as we forgive others.

-*"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: **But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**"* (Mt. 6:14-15)

-Why does scripture say this?

-Refusing to forgive reveals a lack of appreciation for God's mercy. We actually disregard God's mercy and so God says I'll disregard my mercy in your life.

-It is not talking about having our sins forgiven in **salvation** but our sins forgiven in **relationship** with Him.
(1 John 1:9)

-Notice what happens when we fail to forgive:

-He became a prisoner. (34)

-Unforgiveness is a prison you build in your own life.

1. We put ourselves in prison by **anger and bitterness.**

2. We put ourselves in prison by **withholding things from ourselves.**

-I won't do that b/c they might like it.

-I won't go there b/c of the memories or emotion it produces.

3. We will put ourselves in prison by **building up walls.** We get hurt and put a wall up so it doesn't happen again.

-Before we realize it, we are walled up in our own prison.

B. Forgiveness must cost us something.

-*What does it mean to forgive?*

-When someone wrongs you, there is an unavoidable sense that they now owe you for the wrong.

-You feel a natural pressure to make that person pay down that debt. Only after they have suffered do we feel the debt has been paid.

-When you say "I forgive you" it does not mean the debt disappears. The 10,000 talents were still owed.

-When you forgive the cost moves from them to you.

-Forgiving is giving up completely the right to revenge or to seek repayment from the one who wronged you.

-Forgiveness releases the person from the debt they owe but also releases you from the bitterness that will grow.

-Forgiveness is a voluntary form of suffering.

-When a wrong has been done someone must pay. Either the offender or the victim. In forgiveness, you as the victim pay the debt.

-Forgiveness is always very expensive.

-It is pride-costly, emotionally-costly.

-Biblical forgiveness must cost us something.

**-Forgiveness will always cost you something or
it's not biblical forgiveness.**

Taking Your Next Step

-The key to Christian forgiveness is the cross.

-It was through the extreme cost of the life of Jesus that God is able to forgive you.

-We can correctly forgive only when we understand the amazing love of the king who became a servant in order to forgive us.

-The more we understand about our own forgiveness the more we must forgive. To not forgive is to be the servant in the parable.

1. The question is: has your debt been forgiven?

-You can receive God's forgiveness.

-You don't have to pay it, earn it, clean up, or make things right.

-It is costly grace and Jesus has already paid the high price for you.

-Has there been a time in your life when you called on Jesus Christ to forgive you?

2. The next question is: Have you forgiven that person.

-It might be a parent or a child

-It might be a friend or family member

-It may be a husband or wife.

-Coworker or a boss

-You and _____

-Take the first step.

-Go to them, pick up the phone and call

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