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Pastor Scott Wendal • swendal@vfbt.org

Love is the Path to Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35

"The thief [Satan] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." **John 10:10.**

What are the things that can cause you to become angry?

Put a check by any of these that tempt you to become angry:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An Unwillingness to Forgive | <input type="checkbox"/> Favoritism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt Pride | <input type="checkbox"/> Sinful Living |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult or Irritating People | <input type="checkbox"/> Not getting your way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focusing on Past Hurts | <input type="checkbox"/> Misunderstandings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Highly Critical Attitude | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrong Response to Adversity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wrong Response to Correction | <input type="checkbox"/> Petty Jealousy |

Johns Hopkins Medicine reports: _____ lowers the risk of heart attack, improves cholesterol, reduces pain, lowers blood pressure, and anxiety.

Forgiveness is so very important to your spiritual health. It is one of the keys to your daily joy. It is the key to unity in any family, church, or work setting. Love is the key or the pathway to forgiveness with your family, friends, and co-workers.

How Important is Forgiveness?

- It is the _____ of a man.

"...it is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression."
Proverbs 19:11

- It is _____ that you are a real Christian.

"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." **Matthew 6:14-15**

- It is a _____ of God.

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
Ephesians 4:32

This parable is a response to Peter's question – "How often shall I forgive my brother that sins against me? Seven times? v. 21. The Lord's response, v. 22 – "Not 7 times, but 70 X 7 = 490. The idea is that the number is so large you would lose count.

As a Christian, if you don't forgive someone else:

- 1) You cannot know the forgiveness of God in terms of the fellowship and joy that ought to be there between you and the Lord.
- 2) You will experience God's chastening, Hebrews 12.

Today, do you have any bitterness, any resentment, or any anger in your heart? If you're a Christian and refuse to forgive, you'll still go to heaven, but right now you are missing the fullness of joy.

Identifying the Characters and Events

1. "A Certain King" = _____, v. 23

The main character is a certain king, v. 23.

2. His Servants = _____ or tax collectors, v. 23

Because of the large amount of money the servants giving account have some leadership role. The king calls in his subjects for an accounting.

3. The Debt = _____, v. 24

Ultimately, there is the final accounting in heaven for:

Unbelievers - "The Great White Throne Judgment" Rev. 20:11-15. Christians - "The Judgment Seat of Christ" I Cor. 3:10-15.

God calls all of us to give an account for how we live our lives. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and calls us to correct it. You became aware of your need to be forgiven and you turn to Christ.

How BIG is this debt? v. 24

1 denarius = 1 day's wage 6,000 denarii = 1 talent

10,000 talents = 200,000 years' wages

4. The Penalty = Sell his _____ and belongings, v. 25

God is merciful to every man. Every person has their lifetime to repent and turn to Christ. But there is a day of accounting.

"And it is appointed unto men, once to die, but after this the judgment." **Hebrews 9:27**

5. The Repentant Servant = _____, v. 26

He fell down and worshipped. He was broken. He couldn't pay the debt. He was going to lose his freedom. He admits his sin and pleads for mercy. He even says, "I will pay thee all."

6. The Forgiven Debt = _____, v. 27

The king is moved with compassion and love. He frees him and forgives the debt. This is GRACE! On the cross Jesus cried out, "it is finished! The debt is paid in full!"

7. Collection of Small Debt = _____, v. 28-29

How soon did he forget his Lord's compassion? The "forgiven one" "went out and found" - the idea is that he was looking for this fellow.

8. Fellowservants = Other _____, v. 28-29

This refers to "another one who has also been forgiven, another in the family." The fellowservants are the people who are a part of the family of God.

This man is a true Christian. It is a sad fact that some Christians have trouble forgiving other Christians. Every time you see that person, your blood pressure goes up. You're holding on to bitterness and you don't even realize it. That's a grudge. You keep replaying that disagreement from years ago.

The Christian with the small debt gives the same speech in v. 29 as the forgiven servant gives in v. 26. 8 hours X \$15 an hour. 100 pence equals 1 denarius - \$120!

V. 30 - no compassion; no forgiveness; no patience.

Compared with our sins against God, our sins against each other are petty disagreements. But the other debts we incur with people are easily payable. But the point is when we have received forgiveness so complete, how can we be so petty as not to forgive another?

One of the most important habits is _____ how to forgive.

V. 31 – They took the problem to the king. Take that offense to God. When you see a sinning brother or sister, take it to the Lord.

V. 32a – God calls this unforgiving man “a wicked servant.” What is wickedness? Sin. Do Christians sin? Could God say to a Christian, “You’re acting in a sinful manner.” Yes, God can do that!

v. 32b-33 - The first forgiveness has to be real and that’s the reason for the need of the second forgiveness.

9. Tormentors = _____, conviction, and no joy, v. 34

V. 34a – the Lord is wroth. Sin makes God angry. And if He wasn’t angry, then there’s something wrong with His holy nature.

V. 34b - “to the tormentors” – this is not hell. Hebrews 12 says that God spans His kids. The torments are for those who will not forgive.

What does that look like today? Broken friendships, cold marriages, estranged relationships with your kids, with your parents, with your siblings, your friends, and your coworkers.

When we forgive others, our fellowship is restored with other Christians. God gives us our joy back. Until then we will feel the torment, the friction, and the anger of unforgiveness. But when we forgive, God gives us peace and joy.

V. 35 – When we forgive, we are acting like God.

Once you realize how much you have been forgiven by God, YES, you can forgive others. Their small sins against you amount to no more than peanuts.

_____ others today!