

Matthew 6:12, 14-15; 18:21-35

Introduction

I. Forgive us our debts

- A. In the Bible, there are many different words that are used for “sin” (hamartia).
- B. Verses 14-15 – Trespasses (paraptoma)
 - ✓ This word shows us that sin is an _____ of the bounds that God has set for us.
- C. Verse 12 – Debts (opheilema)
 - 1. We “owe” God an outstanding debt of _____, but we cannot pay it off!
 - 2. This is why Jesus tells us to ask that our debts be _____.
 - 3. But God doesn’t forgive the debts of just anyone who says these words.
 - 1. So then, how can we _____ that God forgives *our* debts when we ask?
 - 2. “Forgive us our debts, *as we also have forgiven our debtors.*”

II. The parable of the king and two debtors. (Matthew 18:21-35)

- A. Verse 21
 - 1. The Pharisees taught that forgiving a person _____ times was enough. This is a _____ to ask!
 - 2. We would all have an _____ hard time forgiving a person for the same offense _____ times in a row.
 - 3. How many times...
- B. Verse 22 (seventy-seven times)
 - 1. Try counting to seventy-seven! _____!!!
 - 2. Actually, seventy-seven is just a figure of speech by which Jesus means that there is _____ to the number of times that we must forgive a brother.
 - 3. Genesis 4:24 – If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold.
 - 4. But _____ can God possibly expect this from us?
- C. Verses 23-24 (Ten thousand talents)
 - 1. To earn 10,000 talents of silver would take the average worker well over _____ lifetimes.
 - 2. When Jesus says 10,000 talents, He means an amount that no person on earth could possibly _____.

3. Ten thousand talents was the largest amount of money that could possibly be expressed in the Greek language (_____).
 4. Jesus' point is that we all owe God a debt that cannot even be _____ by human minds.
 5. This leads to total and complete _____.
- D. Verses 25-26 – “Since *he could not pay*... Have patience with me, and *I will pay you everything*.”
- ✓ The servant doesn't ask the king to forgive the debt. He asks for time to pay it all back – which the king knows is _____.
- E. Verse 27
1. The forgiveness of the debt is even more incalculable than the debt itself because it arises from a _____ that is *also* beyond our human abilities to _____.
 2. Jesus' point is that when God forgives a sinner, it requires a God of _____ compassion.
- F. Verses 28-30
1. Verse 28 – A hundred denarii = three _____ wages
 2. Verse 29 (compare with verse 26) – We all agree: There is only one possible _____ thing for the first servant to do.
 3. Verse 30 – This servant is truly the _____ of the earth.
- G. Verses 31-34 – We would all say that this was the only *possible* _____ thing for the king to do.
- H. Verse 35
1. We have just _____ ourselves for our own refusal to forgive.
 2. According to Jesus “our guilt before God is _____ *greater* than any other person's guilt can be before us.” (Schniewind)

III. Matthew 18:35; 6:14-15

- A. Every one of us *must* forgive our brother if we are to have any _____ that our own sins are forgiven.
1. Only the truly penitent are forgiven, because only the truly penitent have asked with a _____ heart.
 2. The evidence of a truly penitent spirit is _____ a forgiving spirit.
 3. It is in order that we might not _____ ourselves that Jesus tells us to pray: “And forgive us our debts, *as we also have forgiven our debtors*.”

- B. We must forgive our brother from our _____ (Matthew 18:35).
1. There are *many* “Christians” today who are actually in danger of _____
_____ because they persistently and willfully *refuse* to forgive.
 2. We don’t need to muster up our strength to forgive before God will forgive us.
We just need to humble ourselves before God and with a true spirit of penitence,
seek the forgiveness of our own infinite debt. When we are living *daily* in the
experience of the boundless and measureless compassions of God – *then* we will
forgive.

Teaching our Children

Discuss the meaning of forgiveness.

- Q. How many times did the Pharisees say that a person should forgive his brother?
A. Three times.
- Q. Do you think it would be hard to forgive someone for the same thing three times in a row?
- Q. How many times did Peter suggest that we should forgive someone who hurts us?
A. *Seven* times!!!! (Discuss how impossible this would seem)
- Q. How many times did Jesus say that we should forgive someone who hurts us?
A. Seventy-seven times!!
(Seventy-seven seems *totally impossible*. But Jesus is actually teaching us that we should be
willing to forgive a person who hurts us *zillions* of times!)
- Q. How could we ever be able to forgive as many times as Jesus tells us to forgive?
A. Read and teach your children the parable of the two debtors in Matthew 18:23-25. (If you
desire, you can use some of the notes in this handout.)
- Q. Can anyone else’s sin against us ever be greater than our own sin against God?
A. Not even close. Not even if a person committed the same sin against us a zillion times in a
row.
(This is not just a surprising and amazing point. This is overpoweringly convicting. Parent,
make sure that you are overwhelmed at your own guilt before you try to teach your children
about theirs.)
- Q. When we ask God to forgive our sins, we can know that He forgives us if we ask with a truly
humble and broken heart. How can we know if we have a truly humble and broken heart?
A. When we are *always* willing to forgive *others*, we can know that we have asked God to
forgive *us* with a truly humble and broken heart.

This is why Jesus tells us to pray:
“And forgive us our debts, *as we also have forgiven our debtors.*”