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Fall 2024  
Navigating Family Conflict

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** The Forgiven Forgive

**To be used with Session 6:** Joseph and His Brothers: Family Reconciliation

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:21-25

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the Bible study “Joseph and His Brothers: Family Reconciliation,” this sermon builds upon today’s Bible study by studying a parable of Jesus in which forgiveness was the theme. Joseph offered forgiveness to his brothers and restoration was had. The heavenly Father offers forgiveness and calls His people to forgive others who have wronged them.

**Introduction:** Has anyone here ever experienced the person in front of you at the drive-thru paying for your order? It may have been a cup of coffee or a burger and fries. When you got to the window with cash in hand, you were told the bill was already paid. As you drove to work or home you could not help but be in a great mood. We will learn from today’s message that someone had more than a cup of coffee given to them; they were forgiven a debt they could not have paid. But, instead of being optimistic about the situation, they went into a fit of rage. Jesus points out that this is the exact opposite of how we are to behave when we have been forgiven.

## 1. We need forgiveness.

- a. **The debt we owe (Matt. 18:24).** In dealing with context, we must start at the beginning of the parable. Peter asked Jesus of question of how often he should forgive someone. Peter proposed seven times which represents completeness or fulness. Jesus’s answer was seventy times seven, which was far more than Peter could have imagined.

As Jesus began His story, we are introduced to a servant who owed 10,000 talents to the king. In order to place this in proper perspective, we need to understand one talent equaled 6,000 days of work. The point that Jesus was trying to make was that this was a debt that was impossible to pay back.

In understanding the impossibility of paying this, the servant fell facedown before the king and begged for patience (v. 26). The servant was going to try to pay the king back. It does not seem that he fully grasped the magnitude of what was taking place.

- b. **The debt has been paid (Matt. 18:27).** The king did understand the magnitude of what was taking place. He had compassion and forgave the servant’s loan. We should

**Lifeway**

examine two words to better understand what is being taught. First, the word *compassion* means shown or expressed mercy. If someone is merciful, but they do not show it, are they truly merciful and compassionate? The king was truly compassionate because his compassion led to an expression of mercy. Second, we learn from the word *forgave*. This was a completed act. The servant did not have to do anything else; his debt had been forgiven.

## 2. The forgiven share forgiveness

- a. **The debt we are owed (Matt. 18:28).** Having others hurt us is never fun. It may be something from our childhood, or it may even be something from yesterday. Either way, it hurts. We feel like they owe us because it hurts.

As we continue to walk through this parable together, we learn that the one who was forgiven 10,000 talents was owed 100 denarii. A denarius was a day's wage. Yes, this is a large sum to owe someone, but it was not insurmountable. If given the time, the one who owed this amount could pay it back. Yet, the one who had been forgiven so much wanted nothing to do with forgiving this small debt. If anyone should have been quick to forgive, it should have been the one who had been forgiven so much. The amazing thing is that the same can be said of us who know and follow Jesus. Yes, we have been hurt by others' sin. But we have been forgiven by Jesus and we should be the first to forgive others.

- b. **The example we have (Matt. 18:32-35).** A simple way to define mercy is someone not getting what they deserve. As the parable starts to conclude, the king hears of the servant that had been forgiven much not forgiving a fellow servant a significantly smaller amount. The king then asks his servant, "Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant?" As a follower of Jesus, we have been forgiven a debt that we could never repay. When someone sins against us and we experience hurt, we should be quick to show mercy as we have received great mercy.

Jesus concluded the parable by indicating that forgiveness needs to come from the heart. The forgiveness needs to be authentic and not contrived. Once again, our heavenly Father is the example in that followers of Jesus have full and total forgiveness. The total forgiveness, found on in Jesus, leads to repentance. As we repent and walk with Him, we should be the first to forgive others.

**Conclusion:** We can apply this text in at least two ways. First, if you are here today and feel like you have a debt you cannot pay, then know that forgiveness can be found in Christ. The second application is for those of us who know Jesus and have been forgiven. We should be the first to forgive those who have hurt us because we have been forgiven so much. Let's not let pride stop us from sharing the mercy with others.

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