



2016: Week 11

Sunday, March 13th 2016

“Radical Forgiveness”

Colossians 3:12–13

“¹² So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”

On Sunday, Johnnie preached from Matthew 18. In this passage, Peter asked Jesus if there was a limit on the number of times he was to forgive another person. Jesus’ answer probably came as a surprise to Peter. Essentially Jesus replied, “There’s no limit. Forgive every time.”

1. READ Matthew 18:21–35

Jesus was calling Peter to embrace a radical concept: forgiving a person every time they sinned against him. To illustrate this point, Jesus used a parable to convey the critical components of compassion and mercy in forgiveness.

- Have you ever been forgiven of a pretty serious offense like the first servant in the story? How did receiving such mercy impact you?
- Have you ever forgiven someone else of a really big offense? If so, why did you forgive them?
- Why is it so hard to forgive a person who has hurt you?

2. In the last verse of this account, Jesus concluded, “My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart” (see also **Matthew 6:14–15**). Refusing to forgive another person will negatively impact your relationship with God. If you are a believer, however, your refusal to forgive another person will not disqualify you from being one of God’s own sons or daughters. Nothing can remove you from God’s family when you become part of His household by faith. However, even as a believer in God’s family, your closeness and fellowship with the Lord will be impacted by *your decisions* to trust Him, submit to Him, and commit all facets of your life to Him. In this passage, Jesus affirms that your ability or inability to forgive another person will have a direct impact on your fellowship with God.

- **Your ability or inability to forgive another person impacts your fellowship with God.** Does this change the way you view forgiveness?
- Johnnie taught that God not only expects us to forgive others, but He also gives us the ability to forgive others. Submitting to the Holy Spirit and God’s Word provides the ability to *decide* to love others (outwardly) and to have a tender heart (inwardly). How can you improve this part of your life?

FAMILY PRAYER: If you have responded to God’s plan of salvation through Christ, thank the Lord for His eternal forgiveness of your sins. Also ask the Lord to work on your heart so that you will be better at forgiving other people. Pray that you will have more compassion and mercy towards others. Praise God for the incredible compassion and mercy He has shown towards you.