

HOW TO FORGIVE AND FORGET

Matthew 18, 21-35

October 26, 2008 Sunday pm

INTRODUCTION

- A. C.S. Lewis writes, “Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.”
- B. Forgiveness is the subject of Jesus’ parable called “The Unmerciful Servant”

I. WHAT DOES THIS PARABLE MEAN?

- A. Peter’s question is what prompted this parable-v.21.
 - 1. Jesus’ answer should not be taken literally-v.22.
 - 2. To illustrate his point, Jesus told this parable.
- B. This parable deals with forgiveness and unforgiveness.
 - 1. First, we see a king willing to forgive an enormous debt—23-27.
 - 2. Second, we see a servant who is unwilling to forgive others—28-30.
 - 3. Third, we see a king who changes his mind—31-34.
- C. What lessons can we learn from this parable?
 - 1. Jesus states the main lesson for us—v.35.
 - 2. What other lessons can we see?
 - a. We are all debtors to God.
 - b. We cannot pay for our own sin debt.
 - c. Jesus, like this king, paid our sin debt for us-27.
 - d. The forgiven should forgive others.

II. HOW CAN WE FORGIVE OTHERS?

- A. Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, was confronted one day with the memory of a betrayal she had experienced years before, but she acted as if she had never heard of the incident. A friend asked her, “Don’t you remember what that person did?” Clara said, “No, I distinctly remember forgetting it.”
- B. How can we do this?

- 1. First, we must remember God’s forgiveness of us.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

C. S. Lewis “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”

- 2. Second, we must ask God to help us forgive and forget.
 - a. Forgetting something doesn’t mean we are unable to remember it.
 - b. Rather it means refusing to bring it up, just like Clara Barton refused.
 - c. Can it be done? Joseph did it.

Genesis 41:51 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."

CONCLUSION

- A. We’re all in need of forgiveness.
- B. Likewise, we all need to forgive others.

Matthew 6:14-15 ¹⁴ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.