

The Unforgiving Servant



Matthew 18:21-35

The Unforgiving Servant

- During Jesus ministry He often employed the use of parables.
- A Parable is the use of everyday objects, people, and situations made in the form of a story or lesson to convey a spiritual truth.
- Jesus spoke in Parables for two reasons:

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Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

~ Matthew 13:11

Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

~ Matthew 13:13

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- On this occasion Peter comes to Jesus asking how many times may a brother be forgiven who has sinned against him? **(Matthew 18:21)**
- The typical Jewish belief was Three.
- Peter, in his generosity, asks if he should forgive up to seven times **(Matthew 18:21)**

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- Jesus response squashes and quells all questions of placing a numerical value on mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

~ Matthew 18:22

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- If one were to multiply **7x70** the number would be **490**.
- Does Jesus really expect us to count with every person we know up to **490 times** that we forgive them?
- We would lose track, lose count, it is almost literally impossible to do this.

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- Instead Jesus is essentially foregoing a numerical value and telling Peter:

“You forgive every time somebody needs to be forgiven.”

In order to further illustrate this point Jesus begins a parable that will make it abundantly clear to even Christians today exactly what he means.

A Forgiving King



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- We are told in this parable that a certain king decided to settle his accounts with his servants (**Matthew 18:23**)
- As he was doing so a man was brought to him who owed him **10,000 talents** (**Matthew 18:24**).
- Let us explore the great weight of this debt.

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- The average man living in Palestine who worked for a living received a wage of one denarius per day. Equivalent to **17 cents per day**.
- We see this truth in another of the Lord's parables

Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

~ Matthew 20:2

Silver Roman Denarius



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- A Denarius was made of silver, but was considered the penny of the Roman currency.
- Denarius is where the British currency Pence was derived from...
- And it is also where our modern penny comes from.

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- This man who made a denarius a day owes the king **10,000 talents of silver**.
- A Talent was a unit of measurement and is commonly accepted to have been **75 lbs**.
- This man literally owed the king **750 million pounds of silver**:

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- If we break this down by today's standards and currency we find some shocking results.
- As of **Friday, May 15, 2015** the price of **1oz of silver** is **\$18.54**.
- This is according to jmbullion.com



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OUNCE**

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- There are **16oz in one pound.**
- Therefore 16 1oz bars or 1lb of silver today would cost you **\$296.64.**
- Now if a single talent of silver is 75lbs, the cost of a talent of silver today would be **\$22,248.**

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- Now this man owed the King **10,000 talents of silver.**
- This means that at the current rate of \$22,248 multiplied by ten thousand that he was in debt to the tune of:

\$222,480,000

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- The average household income in this country, as of **2014**, according to CNN Money, is **\$53,891**.
- If a person were to contribute every penny of that household income, taking nothing for food, clothing, or housing, it would take **4,128 years** to pay off that debt.

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- The average lifespan according to a 2012 study in this country is roughly 80 years.
- This means that it would take approximately **51 generations or lifetimes** to pay off this debt.
- During Christ's time the numbers were even more harsh.

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- The cost of 75 talents of silver during Christ's time was only **\$10,000,000**.
- However if a denarius was approximately 17 cents a day it would take **200,000 years** to pay off that debt.
- If we generously concede that the average lifespan is **65 years** then it will take **3,077 generation or lifetimes** to pay this off.

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- What we literally have is a debt that absolutely 100% cannot be paid.
- This man, therefore, could not pay his debt, and as a result he and his entire family were going to be sold into slavery **(Matthew 18:25)**.
- He fell down at the feet of the king and begged for mercy **(Matthew 18:26)**

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- The king was moved with compassion for the man and forgave him of the entire debt
(Matthew 18:27)
- Of course we know the king in this parable to be Christ and that we represent the servant with a debt that cannot be paid and slavery represents our eternal separation from the king in Hell.

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- What this teaches us is that sin is more than just something we do and then simply ask forgiveness for.
- Each time we sin we go in debt to God since we have all done it (**Romans 3:23**), and it separates us from our good standing with God (**Isaiah 59:1-2**); we therefore cannot pay it back of ourselves and will be lost because of it (**Romans 6:23a**)

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- Jesus is our king who shows compassion on those who cannot repay a debt.
- In the gospel accounts alone he is said to be compassionate no less than 14 times.
- His compassion upon us is essential to his mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

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- Compassion is the one of the key elements in the parable of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:33**), and in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (**Luke 15:20**)
- This is because Jesus shed his blood to atone for our debt

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You were **not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold**, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, **but with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb **without blemish and without spot**.

~ 1 Peter 1:18-19

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- Only perfect blood can remove the stains of sin.
- Perfect Scarlet Blood can make a soul 100% clean and spotless.
- Nobody can do that but Christ, sin is a debt that we cannot work off, it is an payable debt, and we either have to lose our souls to pay it, or the king must pardon us.

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If we confess our **sins**, He is faithful and just to **forgive** us *our sins* and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

~ 1 John 1:9

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*For I will be merciful to their
unrighteousness, and their sins and their
lawless deeds I will **remember no more.**"*

~ **Hebrews 8:12** (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

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- We take for granted, sometimes, what it costs to forgive us of the great debt we owe.
- We forget what the horrible penalty is if we have to pay for our sins ourselves.
- This is why Jesus says:

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If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

~ **Matthew 5:29-30**

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- The cost of sin is beyond measure
- The payment and sacrifice for sin cost God and His Son all that they had.
- The punishment of Hell so great that Jesus says no matter what it costs you, avoid sin!

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But the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

~ **Romans 6:23b**

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For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins ... Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

~ Hebrews 10:26,29

An Unforgiving Servant



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- After being forgiven by the king, the servant left and found a man who owed him 100 denarii (**Matthew 18:29**).
- This is **100 days wages** that he was owed.
- At 17 cents a day this is a total sum of **\$17.00**.

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- He grabbed him by the throat and demanded that he pay him all that he was owed (**Matthew 18:29**)
- As the servant did before the king, this man fell at the servants feet and begged for the same mercy, compassion, pardon, and forgiveness. The servant had the man imprisoned since he could not pay his debt (**Matthew 18:29-30**).

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- Knowing how he had received forgiveness his fellow servants went and told the king what he had done **(18:31)**
- The of course was outraged and angry. After all the king had forgiven a debt that could never be paid in 3,000 lifetimes and this servant would not forgive another over \$17.00.

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Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

~ Matthew 18:32-35

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- When God has forgiven us of sin against Him, any offense made by another human being compared to us is infinitely miniscule compared to what our offense cost God to forgive.
- The lesson to Peter and each one of us is this, we should be willing to show the same, mercy, grace, compassion, forgiveness, and kindness to all, because God showed it toward us.

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Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

~ Ephesians 4:31-32

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- Today our king has paid the debt that we collected in sin.
- His blood was spilled in compassion and love for each and every one of us to pay for those sins.
- He paid a debt he did not owe, and because of Him we are free.

This Morning Let Christ

Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

~ Psalm 136:26



PAID IN FULL

Remove the Debt of Your Sin Forever...