

"So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." (Matthew 18:35)

I. Forgiveness

- a. This parable is a continuation of the Lord's teaching on *if your brother sins against you*. (vv.15-20)
- b. When we live in an atmosphere of humility and honesty, we must take some risks and expect some dangers.
- c. Unless humility and honesty result in forgiveness, relationships cannot be restored and strengthened. This parable teaches that love and forgiveness have no limits.
- d. Where there is love, there can be no limits or dimensions. (Eph 3:17-19)
- e. The Rabbis taught to forgive three times. Peter thought he was showing great love when he offered to forgive seven times. Jesus said, *seventy times seven* (490). Who could keep count?
- f. Christian love is not blind. The forgiveness Christ requires is outlined in verses 15-20.
- g. If someone is guilty of repeated sin, that person could find strength and power to conquer the sin through the prayer, love and strength found in the congregation.
- h. This parable *is not* about salvation. This parable deals with forgiveness between believers, not between lost sinners and God.
- i. The simplest meaning of the *seventy times seven* is "don't give up on anyone."

II. The Forgiving Master and the Unforgiving Servant

- a. Matthew's gospel does not mention *repentance*, but Luke's does.
- b. Ten thousand talents is an astronomical sum. Today it would be equivalent to hundreds of millions of dollars. In Jesus' opinion, every human being has amassed an unpayable debt (sin) to God. (v.24)
- c. Sinners are bankrupt debtors. *Since he could not pay*. (v.25)
- d. The servant showed repentance for *his* debt: his falling down, his reverence, and his plea. (v.26)
- e. No sooner than leaving the presence of the master, the servant mistreated a fellow servant who owed him a smaller debt as compared to what was owned to the master. (Luke 7:47)
- f. Our guilt before God is endlessly greater than any other person's guilt can be before us.
- g. Shouldn't we remember our relationship with God when we deal with people? (Psalm 103:2-3)
- h. Can Christians, who have experienced God's overwhelming forgiveness, be so hard-hearted?
- i. Notice the other servants (congregation) report the mistreatment of the fellow servant to the master. (v.31) Humility and honesty are pillars to unity in our relationships.

III. Apply the Scriptures

- a. Wherever there is *human repentance* there will always be, constant and *divine forgiveness*.
- b. In church life, if a believer is truly repentant from their heart, the church family has a responsibility to forgive *from the heart*. Forgiveness must be at the heart of every disciples' core belief.
- c. Jesus can require infinite forgiveness of us because God has given infinite forgiveness to us.
- d. Forgiveness is the responsibility of every believer in the church. There is no wiggle room here.
- e. *From your heart* (v.35) does not bear witness to the words: "I will forgive but I will never forget"; "I will love him, but I don't have to like him."
- f. 2 Timothy 2:42 reminds us to be ready in an out of season. There are seasons of great hurt and pain in every life. Will you allow a season of forgiveness to rise above the hurtful season?