

Forgiven and Forgiving Disciples

Matt 18:21-35 'Parable of Unmerciful Servant'.

Reflections

Share your reflections from Noel's message on Sunday.

How has this parable informed your understanding of forgiveness?

Did you feel any nudges from God? What were they? How can you be praying for each other as you seek to obey?

The Prequel

Read Matthew 18:15-21.

How does this passage inform our understanding Peter's question and of the parable?

Does this passage enrich our understanding of what forgiveness really is? How?

The Feature

Read Matthew 18:21-27.

Peter asks if forgiving seven times is the limit for a repeat offender. This suggestion was actually higher than the rabbinic teaching of the day and so Peter has caught a whiff that forgiveness in the kingdom of God is a high value.

What value on forgiveness does Jesus' response indicate?

Although Jesus is not really speaking about the quantities of forgiveness but the qualities of forgiveness, **as a matter of interest where is your usual threshold before revenge takes place of forgiveness?**

If you do the math on what the servant owed, you quickly realise that he was never going to repay the debt. **What did this mean for him? What were his options? How does this compare to the predicament we find ourselves in with regards to our sin's debt?**

The king was asked for patience but instead cancelled the debt. This depicts the "seventy times seven" principle beautifully. **Brainstorm briefly what these actions meant for the King.**

What did the king's actions mean for the servant?

What does this part of the parable indicate about our own story?

The Sequel

Read Matthew 18:28-35.

What is significant about the response of the second servant in v29?

Both servants found themselves in the same predicament and pleaded the same case.

What is really significant about this part of the parable is that the second servant's debt is realistically able to be repaid. The amount is significantly smaller than the amount which the first servant was forgiven.

If this is the case why do you think the first servant was so harsh and unmerciful?

This parable tells us that forgiveness is costly and the first servant felt that reality when faced with the opportunity to forgive as he had been forgiven.

Why is forgiveness so costly?

Have you had moments where forgiveness was withheld because of its cost?

Have you been able to forgive despite the cost? What helped you do this?

Note how the servant was freed when he was forgiven, but his unforgiveness saw him bound and imprisoned...**how does our unforgiveness bind us?**

Does the king's response contradict Jesus' earlier statement about forgiving seventy seven times?

In what ways should the mercy/forgiveness you have received impact your life?

In what ways do you need to pass on the mercy you have received?