

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

For those of you who are parents this morning...

- you know what a great responsibility that it is...
- it is a great challenge...whether they are 2 or 12 or 22
- YOUR GOAL-- To grow up loving the Lord JC

One of the most difficult things to teach our kids is to say 3 WORDS - I Forgive you!!!!

- When big brother hits little brother....
- when your son takes your daughters candy and eats it -she is not quick to forgive
- EG/I** clearly remember many times with my kids when didn't want to-→I won't (they look at you stubbornly - "Look at what he did to me")

We know that that's true not just for children is it—but for all of us present here today isn't it?

- When someone hurts us...we want to hold on to that hurt....nurse...
- much like our children.... We oftentimes don't want to forgive....
- it is easier to hold a grudge than to forgive the person who has offended you...

This inability to forgive one another→ When we look around the world we see that this is something has affected us greatly...

- so many people who live with bitterness and anger towards others
- so many marriages and families have been divided and ruined
- so many lives destroyed...

This morning's passage speaks specifically about this topic—forgiveness... ..

- central to the Bible...
- really...the message of the Bible - story of God's forgiveness and grace.

Here in our passage....Jesus teaches how essential it is for the X to forgive...he does it by telling a story.... (common)

- "The parable of the unforgiving servant"

### **OUR THEME--"From Forgiven to Forgiving"**

THREE things: 1) Context 2)The story 3)The application

#### **1) CONTEXT**

- Matt. 18 is of course the well-known passage to us...
- the one that we turn to when there is trouble in the church... sin ...
- how are we to respond when someone is sinning →sins against us...
- (steps)

These are the steps that we need to follow so that we can resolve problems in the church

- "the church is a place for sinners"
- as a church we know how to RESOLVE those problems (different than the world)

→ Peter, evidently, was thinking about what Jesus said a little more...he had a question...

- READ 21....
- we can imagine what he was thinking... 7X is a lot....
- it is said that the Jews → 3X only...
- so 7X - WOW! (he was expecting a commendation from Jesus)

→ But Jesus had a surprising response didn't He → Not 7 but **70 x 7**

- 490 X** (now this clearly is not a magic number in itself....)

What Jesus was teaching was that the a Christian is one who forgives once or twice...

- -be willing to forgive & keep on forgiving
- that is the hard part isn't it?

490 times → Who could possibly forgive that many times?

- The obvious answer is -NO ONE.

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So this is the context... In order to explain what Jesus means ...He tells a story - a parable....

- a parable of an unforgiving servant

We all like stories don't we.....? (that is why Jesus used a lot of them)

- this would have been a story that the people of that time would have understood.
- this was the social structure that they were used to...

→Now this particular servant (that Jesus uses as an example) dealt with a lot of money...(buy and sell) (today it would be like a regional manager of a big company perhaps)

But one day the king began to settle accounts...

--began to find out who had done what with his money...  
-- it came to light that this servant owed money to the king...  
(it doesn't say exactly what the servant did with that money)  
This was not just a small amount of money...10,000 talents of gold...  
--today—100,000's \$\$  
(this number was the largest denomination of currency that they had)  
--more than anyone could pay back...  
So the king called the servant into his presence and asked for the \$...(made sense right?)  
-- What it does say is that - he didn't have it...couldn't pay  
→THAT was the bottom line  
So the king commanded that everything he had be sold  
-he and family be sold as slaves...  
--standard practice...  
--recoup what he could...  
→When the servant heard the verdict of the king he did the only logical thing...  
--he fell on his face...and begged... (explain)  
--"Have patience with me and I will pay you all"!!!!  
What was the response of the king to such an unworthy servant?...spent untold \$  
--vs 27 - he was moved with COMPASSION...  
--he was willing to forgive—give a second chance...  
--it says he released him and forgave the debt.

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→But was the servant's response???? - A LOVE for his king, GRATITUDE for his family...  
--that was not the case....

Is says....he went out and found someone who owed him 100 denarie (small amount)  
--(1/100,00<sup>th</sup>)

When this debtor begged and pleaded with him did he show mercy??? NO...  
--interesting.... using the exact words (29b)  
--he would not...went and threw him into prison....  
--he wanted every last cent from him.....

Of course news of this came to the king...when he heard what this unforgiving servant did...CALLED FOR HIM (the king had very direct words)  
--READ 32-34....  
--this servant who been forgiven much - refused to forgive others...  
--he received a just judgement from the king  
-he delivered him to the torturers till he could pay all that was due....

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This is where Jesus ends his story.....the moral of it is very clear isn't it...????  
--Jesus leaves no doubt with what he says in vs 35-- READ

**So first of all the application of this story is this→ Like this servant, God forgives us of an incredible debt...**

BY NATURE....even though God has given us a life to live for his glory...  
--He has given us health and strength....a life to live...  
- blessed us with so much.....

Like this servant, we too do not do what we ought to do...  
--we don't use what we have been given for his glory do we....  
--by nature...we don't naturally love God....

Worse yet... we sin against God, →we offend HIM (we are very good at it)  
--we sin and keep on sinning.... Offend....

We offend those around us as well→ even the ones we love the most (very good at it)  
-- we are unfaithful servants.....

But through JC - we don't need to stay there do we....

**BECAUSE... like in our story..... we too have been forgiven MUCH...**

--Jesus said - *I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance*  
--**I Timothy 1: 15** - *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance - JC came into the world TO SAVE SINNERS*

This is the good news of the gospel.... There is bad news and good news....  
--if we understand the bad.... If we understand our need for forgiveness...

--unworthy, sinful people....NEED CHRIST

--he is the only one who can save YOU from the condition you are in

When you go to JC, repent of your sin....put your faith in Him→ WHAT A WONDERFUL THING!!!!

--how sweet it is to receive that forgiveness...

**EG/** Pilgrims progress

I pray that that is the case for all of you....today...

--that you know the joy of being forgiven by Christ....

--*"Purge me and I shall be clean...Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow"*

**BUT... Brothers & Sisters Christ forgives us so that we can do something—so that we can forgive those who sin against us (this is where the rubber hits the road)**

Those that have truly been forgiven need to reflect that in their life....

--the error of the servant was that he didn't understand what the king had done for him...

-- as Jesus makes very clear...no child of His can or will make that same mistake....

*Those who have been forgiven much, WILL love much*

--those who love Jesus Christ....are called to forgive those around them...

Even though you may be a Christian here today you know how difficult that is....

--like we said at the beginning...children....

--I remember what that person has done to ME!!!!

--we don't want to let it go....hold on to it....

I think that we think in a similar way to Peter often times....don't we....

--when a person the 1<sup>st</sup> time....

--the 2<sup>nd</sup> - OK

--but the 3<sup>rd</sup> - a little tiring doesn't it?

(if we are honest that Jewish tradition maybe doesn't sound so bad)

But Christ here is calling you to LEARN how to FORGIVE....HOW DO WE DO THAT?

--very simply - by remembering what Christ has forgiven us of...

--100

Christ is calling us to forgive and be merciful to those around us...

→ even when the other person doesn't recognize his own fault

→ even when that person hurts our reputation through their actions...

→ even when the person sins against you again and again

→ even when sometimes we don't want to forgive in our heart....

**That is when we need to do 2 THINGS:**

**1) REMEMBER what God has done for YOU....how many countless times...**

**2) PRAY - for humility and grace**

1) When you think of Stephen....

--willingly giving his life....

-- his attitude "Lord - do not charge them with this sin"

2) When we think of our Saviour on the cross....

--first words that Luke records..."Forgive them father for they know not what they do..."

**It is said that we are the most like Christ when we learn to forgive....**

--this begins right at home....

**EG/ Marriages/Children/Church**

When we are able to forgive...from our heart...

--There is tremendous blessings for ourselves and those around us isn't there?

We are able to be free from that bitterness, anger, resentment, and hatred....

--forgive those things →that Satan does not want us to forgive and forget

--by the grace of God we're able to be freed of difficult that have happened to us...

**EG/ ...Corrie Ten Boom, Richard W.**

God working in us → Showing in action....what a truly FORGIVEN person looks like

--we'll be free to live lives .... as Christ would have us to live....

--WE ARE TROPHIES OF GOD'S GRACE....

Let's live like that as God's people -

THOSE who are forgiven...TO→THOSE who are forgiving....

Welcome and announcements - you will need to introduce yourself