



*Live the Dream
Joseph: A Life Shaped by God*

Matthew 18:21-35

May 1, 2011

"I Forgive You!"

*"Forgiveness is the **key** that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hate. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness." -Corrie Ten Boom*

Two subjects: the extent of God's forgiveness and the cost of our unforgiveness!

I. The Extent of God's forgiveness! (Matt 18:21-25)

A. Peter's question was: "Does forgiveness have a limit?"

B. Is God's forgiveness limited? No! If you have come to God seeking forgiveness, and if you understand the nature and extent of sin, then you understand that His forgiveness of your sins must be without limit. (Isaiah 59:12)

C. A talent represented twenty years wages. Example: you make \$50,000 per year. 50,000 times 20 equals \$1 million. 1 talent is 1 million dollars. This man owed 10,000 talents. 1 million times 10,000 equals \$10 billion. It represented an amount he could never repay not even in several lifetimes.

D. Who is the king in this parable? He is the Lord.

E. Who is the servant with the debt he can never repay? He is you and me.

F. What is forgiveness? "It is a decision to release a person from the obligation that resulted when that person injured you."—James MacDonald

"The truest and surest demonstration that you understand the gospel is that you want to extend the grace and mercy and forgiveness of God to others."—James MacDonald

"He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven."—Thomas Fuller

II. The Cost of unforgiveness. (Matt 18:26-35)

A. The main toll that unforgiveness brings are shattered relationships.

B. Jesus said to love your enemy, to pray for those who persecute you, and to turn the other cheek.

C. Reasons why we feel justified in not forgiving:

1. The hurt is too big! The bigger the hurt, the more reason to let it go.

2. Waiting for a sign of repentance! Jesus didn't wait!

3. I can't forget! You won't forget until you forgive.

4. If I forgive them, they will just go on doing it to others. Vengeance is the Lord's. (Romans 12:17-21)

D. Forgiveness is the antidote for bitterness.

E. A person who is unwilling to forgive is a very poor witness. (Matt 18:31)

F. Unforgiveness is sin.

1. It shatters the relationship with the person you are unwilling to forgive.

2. It affects the lives of those who observe your life and turns them away from God.

3. It affects your relationship with God! Unconfessed sin results in severed fellowship with God. (Psalm 66:18)

4. Unforgiveness in a Christian invites God's discipline. (Matt 18:32-35)

"A person whose life is a continuous pattern of unforgiveness is not truly saved." -James MacDonald

5. Unforgiveness destroys you. Unforgiveness is destructive to the emotional health of a person.

G. Forgiveness does not mean that you don't remember...it just means that you treat the person as though it never happened.

"Each unforgiven injury rankling in the heart is like a leech sucking the life-blood. Mere human determination to have done with it will not cast the evil thing away. You must bathe your whole being in God's pardoning mercy; and those venomous creatures (resentment and bitterness) will instantly let go their hold." -William Arnot