

# The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

Matthew 18:21-35

What if your friend lied to you and you found out about it?  
What if your friend told someone else your secret?  
What if that friend made fun of you or hurt you in some way?  
How would you feel toward them?  
Would it be easy to forgive them?  
What if your friend kept sinning against you? Should you still keep forgiving them?

In our parable today, Peter asked Jesus a similar question. Jesus told Peter the parable of the unforgiving servant. In this parable Jesus demonstrates how the Lord reveals a most forgiving heart in contrast to the hardness of human nature.



## Prayer

Dear Father in Heaven, Bless our study of Your Word today and help us to apply the lessons we will learn through our study. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your only Son, Jesus, to pay for our sins, even though we do not deserve Your mercy and forgiveness. Because of the love and forgiveness You showed to us, let that motivate us to forgive and love others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## The Story - Matthew 18:21-38

Matthew 18:21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

{22} Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

{23} "Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. {24} "And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. {25} "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

{26} "The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' {27} "Then the

master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

{28} "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'

{29} "So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

{30} "And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. {31} "So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

{32} "Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant!



I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. {33} 'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' {34} "And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until

he should pay all that was due to him. {35} "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

## **Outer Aim - Jesus told a parable about the forgiveness of sins.**

### **What the Story Tells Us - Go over these discussion questions.**

1. How many times did Peter think he should forgive his brother?
2. What was Jesus' response to Peter?
3. What was Jesus really saying by this response?
4. In the parable, who represents the king?
5. What did the king do for the servant who owed him a debt?
6. What has God done for each of us?
7. Did we earn this forgiveness?
8. When this servant found a fellow servant who owed him a debt, the servant was not merciful or forgiving. Did this show that he was appreciative of the king's mercy in canceling his debt?
9. When the king found out about how the servant treated his fellow servant, what did the king do?
10. The king asked the wicked servant, "Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?" What is the correct answer.
11. Why should we be willing and eager to forgive?
12. Who should we be willing and eager to forgive?

## **Inner Aim - We are to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven us.**

**What God's Word Tells Us** - Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word that completes the sentence. One letter in each word has been given to you. Take these given letters and write them below to begin the passage that Jesus spoke on the cross.

1. The master F \_\_\_\_\_ the servant his debt.
2. The servant owed his master 10,000 \_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. \_\_\_ T \_\_\_ asked Jesus the question about forgiveness.
4. God wants us to forgive our brother from the H \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. Peter thought we should forgive our neighbor \_\_ E \_\_\_\_\_ times.
6. The second servant owed a debt of a hundred \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ .
7. The wicked servant was \_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ .
8. The king in the parable represents \_\_ O \_\_ .
9. The king sent the wicked servant into \_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ .
10. When we are unforgiving it \_\_\_ G \_\_\_\_\_ God.
11. God has forgiven our \_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ .
12. Forgiveness should be a daily part of our \_\_\_ V \_\_\_\_\_ .
13. We should forgive even our \_\_\_ E \_\_\_\_\_ .

UNFORGIVING  
 ENEMIES  
 GOD  
 SINS  
 FORGAVE  
 HEART  
 LIVES  
 PRISON  
 TALENTS  
 PETER  
 ANGERS  
 DENARII  
 SEVEN

" \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ them; for they do not know that they do."  
 Luke 23:34

## Passages

Matthew 5:44 - But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

John 20:23 - "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

The Fifth Petition © Sydow Catechism 2000

"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."  
 What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look on our sins or deny our prayer because of them. We are not worthy of things for which we are asking, neither have we deserved them. However, we ask that our Father would by His grace give us what we ask; even though we sin often every day and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. We, too, will from our hearts gladly forgive and do good to all those who sin against us.

**Your Turn** - Draw the following picture below. A man carrying a huge burden on his back. the bag says "SINS AGAINST GOD". The man, however, is staring at a very small bag that he is holding in front of his face. This bag is labeled "MY BROTHER'S SINS AGAINST ME."

Tell how this picture demonstrates the truths of this lesson.

**Hymn** - TLH #458 v. 1, 6, 9

Our Father, Thou in heav'n above,  
Who biddest us to dwell in love,  
As brethren of one family,  
To cry in ev'ry need to Thee,  
Teach us no thoughtless words to say,  
But from our inmost heart to pray.

Forgive our sins, Lord, we implore,  
Remove from us their burden sore,  
As we their trespasses forgive  
Who by offenses us do grieve.  
Thus let us dwell in charity  
And serve our brother willingly.

Amen, that is, So shall it be.  
Confirm our faith and hope in Thee  
That we may doubt not, but believe  
What here we ask we shall receive.  
Thus in Thy name and at Thy word  
We say: Amen. Oh, hear us, Lord!

**Prayer** - The Lord's Prayer