

Matthew 18:23-35 A Forgiving God Requiring a Forgiving People

Introduction: Jesus has made it clear that God wants us to forgive others. In this text He shows that God has set the example by forgiving us.

I. The story of a king and his servants, verses 23-34.

- A. The way God deals with His servants is illustrated by the way a certain king dealt with his servants, verse 23a.
 - 1. God does not deal in every detail as the king did.
 - 2. But He does deal very much as the king did.
- B. The king set about to have his servants who were indebted to him pay up their accounts, verse 23b.
- C. One servant owed him 10,000 talents, verse 24 (about \$15,000,000).
- D. Because he was unable to pay, the king ordered him and all of his to be sold and the revenue be applied to the debt, verse 25.
- E. The servant pled for mercy and asked for more time, verse 26.
- F. The king did far more; he forgave the whole debt, verse 27.
- G. The servant, in turn, encountered one in debt to him by 100 pence, verse 28a (about \$15.00).
- H. Because the man could not pay he had him imprisoned, verse 29-30.
- I. Whereupon the king was very angry with him, verses 31-34.
 - 1. The king reinstated the debt.
 - 2. He delivered him to the tormentors (torturers).

II. The point of the story, verse 35.

- A. Just as the servant owed a huge debt, even so we owe God a huge sin-debt.
 - 1. We have accumulated a lifetime of sin.
 - 2. We are unable to pay for one single sin.
- B. Just as that servant was in danger of going into slavery, even so we were in danger of going into the fires of hell.
- C. Just as that king forgave that servant that huge debt, even so God freely forgave us every sin.
- D. Just as that servant was then duty bound to be forgiving toward others, even so we are duty bound to be forgiving toward others.
- E. Just as that servant showed a lack of gratitude toward the king, even so we who are saved sometimes show a lack of gratitude toward God by being unforgiving toward others.
 - 1. We gladly accepted God's forgiveness of our \$15,000,000 sin-debt.
 - 2. But we find it hard to forgive our brother his \$15 sin-debt (or 15 cent).
- F. Just as that king was highly displeased at his servant for being unforgiving, even so God is highly displeased at His servant who is unforgiving.
 - 1. We are not to interpret this story to mean that God lays our sin-debt back upon us so that we lose our salvation. (The Bible teaches clearly that once we are saved we are always saved, John 5:24; I Peter 1:5.)
 - 2. But we are to understand that God will deal severely with us in chastisement, Hebrews 12:6.

Conclusion:

- 1. The key message to the unsaved: God stands ready to forgive you no matter how great your sins, but you will go to hell if you seek not His forgiveness.
- 2. To be saved:
 - a. Be careful to forgive others who sin against you.
 - b. Be aware that you will bring the chastisement of God upon you if you don't.

*Oh merciful Father in heaven above.
Look down on me with infinite love.
My debt of sin through Christ erase.
Lord, save my soul with matchless grace.*

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