

Forgiveness

by Edgar Reich

The sermon teaches that forgiveness is essential for spiritual well-being and must be practiced towards others as God has forgiven us.

Duration: 28:11

Scripture: Matthew 18:21

Topics: "Forgiveness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of forgiveness, both from God and from others. The speaker emphasizes that God's forgiveness is limitless, using the example of forgiving 70 times seven, or 490 times. The speaker also highlights the importance of repentance and surrendering to Jesus Christ for forgiveness. The sermon includes a parable about a servant who is forgiven a large debt by his master but refuses to show the same compassion to a fellow servant who owes him a smaller debt. This parable serves as a reminder that we should forgive others just as God has forgiven us.

Transcript

Thank you so much for reading God's word. In verses 21 and 22, then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how often should I forgive? And what's the answer? How much is that in number? Forever, right? You know, that's a picture of God. You see, this is a parable about God.

In verse 35 it says, So my Heavenly Father will do to you, but He will do to you on both sides. On forgiveness and mercy, He will forgive you unlimited time. That's not, that's not a license to sin.

But if you fall short of the glory of God, He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. If you confess and you determine in your heart that you would turn around. Dear sister, there's a seat right up front here.

So if God can forgive 70 times 7, which is 490 times. And some brother said to me yesterday morning, well, I'm at that on an annual basis. But God will help you.

God, the Lord Jesus Christ, if you surrender to Him, He will help you through these times of temptations and God will forgive you. But today's note is primarily about us forgiving others. And so now comes this parable that God gives us.

What is a parable? Parable. Anyone? Parable. An earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

Earthly story with a heavenly meaning. OK, so it talks about an actual situation on Earth. And then there is great wisdom in that, that Christ gives us in that story.

So here now we have the start of this parable where Jesus refers to the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king. So we know that this king is God. Because it is a parable with a heavenly meaning.

And he refers us to the kingdom of heaven. Who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents.

So someone owed 10,000 talents. Now one talent is 91 pounds. One talent.

So 10,000 is 10,000 times 91 pounds. It doesn't say to us what was owed here by way of commodity. Was it gold, silver, grain, bread? We don't know.

But it says 10,000 talents. But if it was gold, beloved, this man owed 23 billion dollars. So this person owed an incredible amount of debt that he would never, never, never, never be able to repay.

And so that is a picture of us, you see. And when we sin and fall short of the glory of God, it says the wages of sin is death. And so we do not have enough money to repay that debt.

We never have enough to make good through works. And you see all of the other faith, they use works. And they say you can work yourself out of this situation.

But I know I could not repay a 23 billion dollar debt. So there is a way through Christ. And then it says, but as he was not able to pay his master, God commanded that he be sold with his wife and children and all that he had, that payment be made.

The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, Master, have patience with me and I will pay you all. And so this is a picture of repentance where we repent and fall down before God and we ask him, forgive me, Lord, forgive me. I will try and repay, but I probably can't.

But that servant went out and he was forgiven. He was forgiven his debt through Christ Jesus. If we accept Christ Jesus into our lives, then the Son of God will pay that 23 billion dollar debt that we have.

As we ask him for forgiveness for our sins, as we repent, as we call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Scripture says we can be saved. So beloved, this is the way out of our dilemma of a 23 billion dollar debt. And so this is so very wonderful, the Scripture, because it shows us that by repenting and falling on our knees, there's a future, there's a hope for us.

We can go on with this incredible debt. But now look at what happened to this person. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants.

Now someone else owed this man some money and who owed him a hundred denarii. And he laid hands on him and took him by the throat saying, pay me what you owe. Now, the hundred denarii were a hundred days wages, a hundred days wages.

So it was a small debt that you could repay and make payments on. But look at what this evil servant did. So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him saying, have patience with me and I will pay you all.

And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servant saw that what had been done, they were very grieved and came and told their master, they told God about the situation. Then his master God, after he had called him, said to him, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry and delivered him to the torturers. So God may deliver you to torturers. Torturers are representative of an evil spirit.

When you look at the original text on that, it is a representation of evil spirits. So what happens is that bitterness sets in. The person that has hurt you, you cannot sleep at night.

How will I get back at that person? What will I do to hurt that person? And how can I, how can I hurt them the way they have hurt me? And this bitterness sets in. You have sleepless nights. We know from history that there are people who go out and pay money to others to kill that other person that has hurt them.

That is evil. Bitterness comes into your life if you don't forgive. So the primary purpose of forgiveness is your own sanity, beloved.

It's for yourself. It's for your good. It's wonderful if you do that.

But it is so very hard because we have been hurt so deeply. And so it says, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due him. So my heavenly father also will do it to you if each of you from his heart does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

Now the first passage we read from Matthew chapter 6 verses 14 and 15. Would you consider that to be a command from God? Would you re-read that verse? Isn't that the heart of God that you should forgive? Isn't that his heart? So if you don't forgive, what actually happens is that you grieve the Holy Spirit. You grieve God.

Because God says, vengeance is mine, says the Lord. I will repay. Don't you repay, okay? Don't do anything about it.

Go the other way. Forgive. You forgive so that bitterness will not have a foothold in you.

That bitterness will not be used by Satan through a back door. And recently on my travels I had the privilege of being with a person where the wife had shot herself. She had put a gun to her mouth, pulled the trigger.

And this brother was so angry, was so angry at his wife for having done that. And then, of course, he got blamed by the whole families, you know, that he was at fault. And so he was so angry at the family.

And then he was so angry at himself because he also was guilt ridden because he felt somehow he should have done something. And so his little daughter was also affected by this. And she could not understand that mom would leave her.

And mom had taken her own life that way. And mom hated her. And that became an opening to Satan and that bitterness in that little girl.

And she became demon possessed. And so, beloved, that is an entry point for Satan. If you do not forgive, it will affect your life.

You will not be full of joy. The joy of the Lord is your strength. Amen.

Okay? And if there's bitterness in you, you don't have room for joy. You're going to be a bitter person. You're going to walk through the church and be bitter.

Okay? So don't be bitter. Forgive. And so as this brother realized that he had to forgive himself.

And forgiving yourself is one of the hardest things, by the way. It was also with me because I had left my family. I had left my daughters.

And I could not forgive myself. And then one day a pastor came whom God sent. And he said, you're just a proud man.

And I said, what do you mean I'm proud? I feel so badly about myself. And he said, no, no, no. He said, do you believe that God has forgiven you? And I thought about it and I said, yes, God has forgiven me.

Praise God. God has forgiven me. Praise God.

And then he said to me, now by not forgiving yourself, aren't you making yourself greater than God? So if God forgives you, can you not forgive yourself? You have repented. You have returned to the Father. So forgive yourself.

And so I forgave myself, and that was an important step in my life, to return to joy in the Lord. Amen. That I would forgive myself and that I would forgive the person that had misused me.

And so likewise, if you then don't forgive, then the Holy Spirit, God, is grief, because his heart is forgiveness. Number two, if you don't forgive, God leaves you to yourself. Okay? Because you become all alone in your bitterness and your grief.

You can't hack it. You can't sleep at night. You get heart attacks.

You get all kinds of problems in your life. And so when God leaves you to yourself, then bitterness, loneliness comes, and you're open to Satan attacking you, because that is the backdoor for Satan. Now the way that Satan attacks you, he might not attack you directly in that area, but each one of us seems to have what's called a besetting sin.

So there's a certain sin that bothers us. Now when that happens and you become lonely, it drives you back to what? To your besetting sin. Okay? Because that is what made you comfortable in the past, and so you're driven back to that.

You're driven back to that. And Satan uses that, and then Satan will come afterwards and accuse you. How could you sin? You're a Christian.

How could you do these kinds of things? You're not really a Christian at all. And these are satanic lies for him to destroy you, because he is a destroyer. He doesn't want you to live.

He doesn't want you to have a life in Christ that's full of joy and full of his glory, full of his love. He tries to attack you greatly through your weakness. So drinking comes into play.

Drugs come into play. Sex comes into play. The internet comes into play.

TV comes into play. Sports comes into play. You go back to the old buddies that you knew that accepted you because these Christians are too tough to deal with, okay? And to be honest with you, after I first became a Christian, I said, Lord, Lord, this church you sent me to, these Christians are so sour.

And they're so judgmental. And they're so overburdening. I thought you told me that there's somewhere love in them.

I thought that somehow they are love and be rejoicing in the Lord. What's the matter with them, Lord? And then I said, I like my own business buddies far better than them. So I tried to return to that, but the Holy Spirit drew me in the right direction.

And then I realized that it had to start with me, that I had to start to love. It has to start with me. Don't look at anyone else.

Just start with yourself. Now, the third point is we are forcing God to be our enemy if we don't follow his instructions and his heart. We are forcing him to turn against us.

And as we lose that protection from God, as we lose that help from God, we will suffer even more. You see, we are in rebellion against God when we don't forgive. But you say, you don't know how terrible, how terrible what happened to me.

Well, I told you I was misused. I told you about Maria. Maria lost her husband and her little son.

After she became a Christian, she said, I'm going to do the word of God. And one day she was seen going on a bus and she had a parcel with her. And she went on that bus to that prison where that man was in white who had pulled that gun and shot a little boy and robbed her of her little son and robbed her of her husband.

And she went there to tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ and that there is a future and there is a hope. And then she came back and the people in town said, what are you doing, Maria? What have you got in this parcel? And she would take sandwiches and little presents to this man. By the way, when you have truly forgiven someone, you will do that.

You will, you will. Praise God. And so don't make God your enemy because you are in rebellion against his word.

You see, we're saying to God, God, move over. I know better how to deal with this hurt. But he says, no, no, no.

Follow my word. Doesn't make sense to you. But if you forgive, I will restore to you the joy of your salvation.

I will restore to you love. I will restore to you heavenly things that you don't even know about. And so this is a wonderful thing.

And then the next point is that we lose our anointing if we don't forgive. You want to serve. You want to witness.

You want to do things. You can't do it unless you forgive. And we have a number of young people here, and I'm so glad.

And young people, I got to tell you, your mom and dad aren't perfect. Now, you happen to know that already. They love you to death, but sometimes they get into sin themselves.

And that's not directed against you. That's not directed against you. They are affected by sin too, okay? And so you will find that out as you go through life, that sin and Satan are reality.

They will tempt you. They will try to destroy you because Satan only tries to destroy. He is our enemy.

He's the father of lies. And so he will bring situations to us like that and bring situations to us that we can not cope with, but we have. One who is greater in me, he's greater than he that is in the world.

Praise God. And then the last, the fifth point is that we can have no authentic relationships if we don't forgive. Our relationships are affected.

I told you I was misused at the age of 10. Until the age of 52, 62, sorry, 52 years, I did not have genuine relationships. I didn't trust anyone.

You could come to me so close, and I would not let you come closer. The same happened actually in my intimate relationships with my wife. After the age of 10, I could not hug my daughters anymore, and I didn't know why.

And it was not a conscious decision. It was a subconscious decision where later on a pastor who knew about this, and God had told him, I didn't tell him. He just said, you know, what happens is that when we make this decision in our subconsciousness, then it affects every relationship later on in life.

And so I could not hug my daughters because I was afraid I might hurt them as I had gotten hurt. But my daughters didn't understand that. They thought, why doesn't Father love me? Why doesn't he hug me? And so these things happen in parents' lives too.

But we love you. We love you young people very, very much. And some of the things that are sometimes said by parents were said to them when they were young.

You're a mistake. You can't do anything right. Don't listen to that.

That's the voice of Satan. So your authentic relationships are affected. So now, how do I deal with this matter of forgiveness? What can I do to get to the point where I close this back door to Satan? The first point here is, number one, is that it's a choice, not an emotion.

Your emotion says, no, I can never forgive. But it's your conscious choice. And when you go home today, I want you to kneel next to your bed.

And you talk to your Heavenly Father in Jesus' name. And you say, Lord, I have never been able to forgive such and such and such a situation. I can't deal with it.

I don't know what's right or wrong in this. But I'm going to forgive just because you say so. Not because I feel like it.

But I'm going to forgive. And then, please set me free from this bitterness. Please help me, Lord.

Corrie ten Boom was in a concentration camp for many years. She had been there with her sister. She had helped Jewish people in Holland.

And she was found out by the Nazi Germans. And she was incarcerated. She was put into a concentration camp with her sister.

She watched her sister being misused in a concentration camp. And her sister died. But she was a Christian.

And then later on, as God gave her much wisdom and grace and love, she went on a tour of Europe to speak about her experiences and what happened to her and how God got her through this period of time. And one day, a well-dressed man came up to her with his hands stretched out. And he said to her, Miss ten Boom, I am so-and-so.

I was the captain of the guards in that concentration camp you were in. And Corrie ten Boom said, as soon as he said that, all of the hurts, all of what had happened, all of bitterness came over her, remembering what had happened, remembering how her sister died. And she said she could not raise her hand to touch this murderous hand.

She could not. And she tried. And then she cried out to God.

And she said, God, help me. And she raised her hand with all of her might. And she touched that murderous hand.

And she said forgiveness flowed from heaven through her, into her, through her, into her arm, into the arm of that man. And this man had become a Christian. And she forgave.

And so, beloved, you are set free from bitterness. You are set free from many, many different hurts if you do that, which God tells you to do. And then I have one really hard thing.

I'm not sure if I tell you that. Tell us. It's Matthew 5.44, okay, to close with.

Matthew 5.44. If someone would read that for me, please. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. So God has one further step for us, okay? And that is to love our enemies.

Start by praying for that person. Start by blessing that person in your prayer. And then perhaps one day you will be able to do a little good for that person as Maria did.

Let us close in a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for your incredible and wonderful word, Father. We thank you for your mercy, for your love, for your graciousness, because you have forgiven us a \$23 billion debt and even more than that, Father.

I thank you so much for forgiving me, an unworthy, worthless person, Father. And yet you forgave me and you made me whole in you. I thank you so much, Father.

I thank you for taking away my bitterness. I thank you so much for helping to close that back door to Satan to me, Father. And I thank you so much for the joy that you have given me, Lord.

And so I pray for my dear sisters and brothers that your Holy Spirit, that your word, that the words of life you gave us in Matthew 18 would resonate in every person here, Lord, that they would be able to forgive where they have not forgiven before, where they would close that back door to Satan, Lord, where they would draw closer to you, where they might be able to love someone, even a person that has hurt them. And so I thank you so much for that, Lord. I praise your holy name.

Be with my sisters and brothers now. Be with myself so that you might be glorified through our lives. For I ask this in Christ's name.

Amen.

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