

Forgiveness and Mercy

by Erlo Stegen

True forgiveness means letting go of the grudge and forgiving the person completely, without limit or condition.

Duration: 57:04

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 12:24, Matthew 18:21, Matthew 18:23-35

Topics: "Forgiveness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of forgiveness and how it is a characteristic of the kingdom of God. He uses the parable of a king settling accounts with his servants to illustrate this point. The king shows great compassion and forgives a servant who owes him a large debt. However, this servant then refuses to forgive a fellow servant who owes him a much smaller debt. The preacher highlights the hypocrisy of holding onto grudges and emphasizes the need to forgive others as God has forgiven us.

Transcript

Let's read out of Matthew, chapter 12. We read from verse, is it 24? Sorry, it's Matthew 18, verse 21. Verse 22, Jesus said to him, I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And then when he began to settle accounts, one was brought before him who owed him ten thousand talents. But he was not able to pay his master.

But as he was not able to pay his master, he commanded that he be sold with his wife and children, and that all that he had in his payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all. Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and he laid hands on him, took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what you owe. 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 servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and they came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, 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 very angry, delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

So my Heavenly Father also will do to you, if each of you from his heart does not forgive his brother his trespasses. May we have been sitting for a long time, we can stand up and pray together. Lord, creator of heaven and earth, you who died for us on Golgotha, may you send your Holy Spirit, that he might bring life to your word, that it might change our lives.

So that all might be new. Amen. Now Peter was a very rough man, who just did things out of the spur of the moment.

And he was often the first person that would get up and do something. And here he comes to the Lord Jesus and said, Lord, how much or how often should I forgive my brother? Seven times. And then he said, no Peter, not seven times.

And he spoke a hard word and he said, seventy times seven. In other words, four hundred and ninety times. There was a young boy that was very intelligent.

And he heard certain preachers speaking about this. And then he said, must I always forgive right to the end? But God's word says, no, seven times seventy. In other words, four hundred and ninety times.

And then the young boy said, well, in other words, there is an end. And at the end of four hundred and ninety times, then that's the end. There's no more forgiving and then I will have a grudge against that person.

And then the young boy said, well, I'm going to take a writing pad and then I'm going to start noting down every time I forgive him. First time, second time and third time. And every time I write it down.

And the preacher wasn't a fool. He said, well, look, young boy, let me tell you something. When you start forgiving that person quite a lot of times, then you get used to it.

And the more you forgive him, the more you will get used to forgiving him. And then he says, well, when you get to four hundred and ninety, well, then you will be so used to it, you'll just carry on forgiving that man. And then the Lord said, well, there's a parable of a certain king who wanted to settle his accounts with his servants.

Now we can maybe liken the kingdom of God to his church, which he rules here on earth. His servants, that are we. And the king is Christ himself, Jesus.

And then the Lord Jesus said, look, I will use this parable as an example to you. And he said, well, I liken the kingdom of heaven to a king who wanted to settle his accounts with his servants, with his people. Now we must note that at all times Jesus notes and he writes down everything that we do.

Even if you got angry, or you had a crutch, or you were stiff necked, but the Lord on judgment day will open up his books where everything is written. And all will be written and you will be given according to your works that you done here on earth. And the first servant came.

He owed the king a great deal. And he owed the king 10,000 talents. Now I'll explain to you how much worth this was, these 10,000 talents, because we don't understand it.

But I'll tell you what it means in range and sense. And so the servant came. And the king said, because of your great debt, you couldn't pay.

Now in the olden times it was done this way. And the Lord said to him, well, the king said, well, we'll sell you and we'll sell your wife. And also your children.

And all your, what you have, what you owe will be sold so that we can pay this debt. The servant, when he heard this, he fell down before the king. And he honored the king.

He says, oh, be patient with me. I will pay all my debt. And the king had compassion.

And when the king saw the servant and his broken heart, he felt sorry for him. And he says, I will forgive all your debt. Nothing will be left.

And the servant was in a different world. He was a different man when he heard that all his debt, everything was put aside. Friends, to be forgiven isn't something small.

It is something great. And when he forgives us your sin, he washes it away. He cleanses it with his blood, which comes from God and not man.

And the servant was full of joy when he felt this burden being lifted from him. And this servant humbled himself and threw himself prostrate before the king. Listen, you who want your sins to be forgiven.

You have to come and humble yourself before the Lord. And so he threw himself down before the king. And so with you, you have to come to the Lord.

You have to throw yourself before Him. Humble yourself and cry that He might forgive you your sins. And he said, O my king, just O God, just be patient with me.

I will pay everything. And the king had great compassion on this man. What can you say about that compassion of our Lord? And he said, O my king, just O God, just be patient with me.

I will pay everything. And when the Lord saw the great crowd, he had great compassion on them. He had great feeling for them.

In Greek it says, even his intestines inside were turned upside down. In other words, there was something in him from inside that he felt for these people. And he said, even if they are red, I'll wash them and they will become as white as snow.

Close to Mshali, down at the coast, there was a certain farmer from France. He was French speaking and was a farmer from Mauritius. He was farming there also.

And then war broke out in that place and they chased away all the white men. The white people. And then he left there and he came here to Mshali.

And this man was a hard working farmer. He bought a little farm and he worked on it. He made some money, but that he put away.

He didn't go out and buy coke and went to the tuck shop and buy something to eat. No. He saved the money up.

With that money, he bought another piece of land. At the end of the day, this man became very, very rich. And he had wonderful flowers.

Beautiful flowers. And then during that time, when I used to get visitors here, maybe a magistrate, whoever it was, a VIP person, I would say, come, I want to show you beautiful flowers and I will take them to this man. I would say, come, I want to show you beautiful flowers and I will take them to this man.

Now, you know the custom of the white man. You can't just rock up at his place. You've got to make an appointment.

Phone up and tell him, listen, I'm going to come. I'm going to visit you. I'm going to bring so and so, because they can be very stingy.

I know people, if you don't say that you're coming, they won't even give you food to eat. I experienced that where I visited a certain family and we set a table and then visitors came unannounced and they had to sit on the sideline watching while we're eating. So I tried to phone this man and I tried again and I couldn't get a hold of him.

And then I said, look, friends, let's just go and pay him a visit. So we went there. And so I just went and came to his place and I found him standing in front of his house.

So when I stopped, I quickly just ran to him, to Mr. Deshamoy. And I said, sir, please just forgive me. I tried to get a hold of you, but I wanted just to bring some people.

What? Oh, don't mind. Don't mind, Mr. Stiggin. I'm always happy when people come, when they come to me.

If I'm not happy when they come, then I'm happy when they go. But there's always happiness when I see people. So he welcomed us very well.

One day there was a big meeting. And then one day these farmers in that area had a meeting and they wanted either tea or coffee. They wanted to plant those plantations.

And so the farmers had a meeting and then it was said, well, that and that company, they will come and help us. And this Mr. Deshamoy stood up and said, well, people, if those people come, I won't accept them because those very people once treated him badly. And he says, well, I've forgiven them, but I haven't forgotten.

He said that company didn't want to help them, but wanted to plant that as well. And he said, no. He says, I forgive, but I can't forget what they've done.

And that isn't a godly forgiveness. When God forgives, he forgets. And not only that he forgets, but throws it into the deepest depths of the ocean.

And then God will never remember that thing anymore. Even if you would say, but God, you know, he did this and he did that. God says, I don't know.

I don't remember that. And God means what he says. To be forgiven as something wonderful.

It means a burden has been lifted. And this servant, he should have been sold his wife, his children. At the end of the day, he would have been a slave, but he was forgiven everything.

And the Lord saw, the King saw the brokenness of this man. And then he said, well, I'll forgive you everything because of his heart. And so with you, if you come to Christ, your heart's got to be broken and you've got to see the wrong you did.

How can you ask for forgiveness if you don't know what you've done? And he said, well, not that only that I will be forgiven, but I will pay everything, all of my debt. I will settle it. And he was forgiven 10,000 talents.

But when he left the King, he met up with another man. And then this man who was forgiven 10,000 talents came to this other man who owed him 100 denarii. Now, one talent was worth a thousand denarii.

A denarii was that worth of money a person was paid wages for a day. Now, this man, one man owed the other who was forgiven 10,000. He owed him 100 denarii.

Now, 100 denarii, one talent is a thousand denarii. In other words, this man who was forgiven 10,000 talents, that was actually worth 10 million denarii. And so this man who was forgiven so much, met this other man who owed him so little and he grabbed him by the throat and said, well, you must pay your debt.

And this didn't go well down with the other servants when they saw how he treated this person who owed him so little. So the servants ran to the King and they told the King, the whole story about this man who was forgiven 10 million and now he grabs hold of this man who only owed him 100. And the King said, you bring that man again.

And he said, what is this that I hear of you? 10 million. And he says, you who owed me 10 million, you can't even forgive a person who owes you only 100. And then the Lord, the King then said, look, I am recalling all your debt again.

You owe me 10 million. He was forgiven, but his whole debt, his whole burden was placed on him once again. And the King said, you put him into jail.

And he said, you put him into prison till he pays the last farthing. And how can you pay something off when you are in jail? It's impossible. In other words, for all eternity, this man would have been in jail.

Now this, everybody should be wide awake because this is directed at you personally. Now you can say, well, what does this all mean? When you got converted, you can ask for forgiveness and all your sins were forgiven. And you were happy, full of joy.

Now along your way, after some time, you meet up with somebody, maybe somebody who said something about you, said something, made comments about your life. And now you've heard that and you have a crutch in your heart concerning that. Now it hurts you and you are grieved and you've got a crutch in your heart and you have forgotten what those sins that Christ forgave you right in the beginning, when you came to Him, they were as the sand on the seashore.

That was the amount of your sins. Now here is somebody that says something, makes comments and it hurts you. And you can't forgive that person.

You can't forget it. God says, I am the Lord Jehovah, your God. Don't serve any other gods.

And it says, love Him with all your heart, with all your strength within and with all your soul. Now then along your way, maybe you start serving other gods. You love other things more than you love God.

And those are the millions that you owe God. We can mention so many different things, swearing, gossiping and so many other things that we do. And then you forget all this.

Now you think of all those things that God has forgiven you and here comes this man, he says something, he does maybe something to you and you keep it. It hurts you. You keep it in your heart.

You can't get rid of it. You can't put it aside. And you hold this thing against that man.

In the meantime, you've forgotten what God has done for you. And now then there's somebody who comes along, he says something, he does something to you and you can't forget. You can't forgive what this person has done and said about you.

Not that he was hurting you. No, he did something against you. There's a difference between a kiss and a kick.

A kick is completely different from a kiss. Where you say, well, he doesn't treat me well now. He's actually, in actual fact, he's kicking me.

Now the Lord says, no, you forgive that person. Forgive it. And Peter says, Lord, what, seven times? The Lord says, no, Peter, 70 times seven.

And now he grabbed him by the throat and he told him he must pay. Now, it could be that you don't grab somebody literally by the throat, but your sharp, razor words, they're the ones that grab the whole of that person. They throttle that person.

Because you can kill a person with a gun. You can kill a person with sticks. But there is such a thing that you can kill him with the words you speak.

Now, in the Lord's prayer, it says that forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that have sinned against us. God will forgive you the way you forgive others. And so maybe somebody comes and wants to ask for forgiveness.

You just turn around and you don't want anything to do with that person. You don't even speak to him. He doesn't want to hear anything of what he says to you.

Now you remember, God says, the way you forgive others, that's the way I will forgive you. Now, you've been forgiven much. Now somebody comes and he owes you something.

He's done something to you and you don't want to forgive him. And then God says, and these are hard, hard, difficult words. He says, well all that I have forgiven you, all those trespasses that you have done, I'm once again, I'm going to bring them upon your life.

And your Christianity, your life of faith will come to an end. I'm forgiven. I'm saved forever.

But the moment you don't forgive, your salvation is gone and all your guilt is back upon you unless he's a liar. But if you say something else, you're the liar. So these are sharp, hard words which the Lord Jesus has spoken.

That's if he's not the liar because he says, I will bring all those things again upon you which I have forgiven you. And so, test your life. See if there's something in your life where you've got maybe unforgiveness and maybe where you've been holding a grudge because if you don't forgive, God will bring all these things onto you once again and then you will end up in hell and there you will spend eternity.

You'll never be able to pay it again. Isabel Kuhn wrote many books. Many people were blessed by her.

She and her husband were missionaries in China. And so both learnt the Chinese language and they could converse and preach in it. And then one day, Isabel Kuhn's husband invited a certain missionary.

He was invited. Oh, he was invited. Sorry, he was invited by this certain man.

By a certain missionary to preach in his congregation. And when he had finished preaching, the preacher, the minister of that congregation came to him and said, brother, your whole sermon didn't mean a thing to me. I must agree.

You're a master of the language. You spoke very well, very, very well. Your Chinese is fantastic.

But I didn't get anything out of it. Where is the fire that was burning in your heart at the beginning? Where is that power that was there? Your sermon were empty words to me. Now there is such a thing that it goes with time.

You lose that which you had where you maybe were forgiven and now you don't forgive anymore. So they went home. What this missionary said to this couple actually bowled them over.

And they said, but Lord, what is it? Oh, it's a baby. I want you to forgive me. And I asked for forgiveness.

Because in many instances, many, many times, I criticized the way you did and how things were done. And that was what I did about you. And then the man, the same, says, oh, my wife, I've got the same mistakes.

I've done the same things. And they repented of their criticizing the way they spoke. And then God, once again, he could work.

I did never realize, I didn't know, that behind the back criticism is such a serious sin. It's deadly. It kills you.

If you criticize a person behind his back, it kills you. You are dead. You are dead.

D-E-A-D. Finish. Now, to criticize a person is a sin above every other sin.

To speak about somebody behind his back, instead of going to that person. No, that you will never do. And speak to him personally.

No, but you go behind his back. Do you hear that, Christian? So, do you hear that, Christian? Mother, you people that are married, to criticize somebody, you kill that person. Each other.

You kill each other. To criticize your husband, you needn't even go far. Heart is full of criticism against your husband.

Or vice versa. Or somebody else. That kills.

Person dies. In your faith, you are dead. You are just right for hell.

So, from now, from this instance, you forgive the other person. Because God will forgive you the way you forgive somebody else. So, when you leave the church, this is the time we say, but Lord, from now, from this instance, I'm going to forgive that person.

Let's bow our head and pray. Work, O Lord, that the seed that you have sown might end up in fertile ground, deep ground, where the seed will grow and bear lots of fruit. And Lord, because it would be very bad if this seed falls on hard ground, where the birds of the air come and eat it up.

Now we ask you, Lord, that your grace might be with us all. And also your love. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

And especially upon the family of Commissioner Ngiti. And all those that are here. Amen.

Amen.

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