

The Duty of Forgiving Those Who Sin Against Us Matthew 18:15-35

by R.A. Torrey

God demands that we forgive others as He has forgiven us, and we must show our acceptance of forgiveness by forgiving others.

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 18:15-35, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, James 2:13

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Mercy"

Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the critical duty of forgiving those who sin against us, as outlined in Matthew 18:15-35. He explains the steps to take when addressing an offending brother, highlighting the importance of private confrontation before escalating the matter to the church. Torrey illustrates the boundless nature of forgiveness through the parable of the unmerciful servant, stressing that our own forgiveness from God is contingent upon our willingness to forgive others. He warns that failing to show mercy can lead to severe consequences, as God expects us to reflect His grace in our interactions. Ultimately, the sermon calls believers to embody the spirit of forgiveness, mirroring God's compassion and mercy in their lives.

Transcript

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. How to Deal with an Offending Brother, vv. 15-20 What are Christ's directions as to the first step to take if a brother sin against us? Should we talk to others about the fault? Why will probably be the result in such a case? Suppose we are quite sure that he will not hear, does that alter our duty in the matter? When alone have we a right to conclude that he will not hear? Should we give him up if he will not hear us? What should we do? What is the purpose of taking some one with us?

Suppose he refuse to hear them, should we give him up then? What should we do? Should we tell it to the church before we have taken the earlier steps? Would there be many long cherished feuds between Christians if they followed these directions of Christ? Is it obligatory upon every professed disciple to follow them? If we do not, what are we doing? Not until when, however, should he be to us "as the Gentile and the publican"? What is the purpose of treating him as such? (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20).

What power did our Lord say His disciples should have (v. 18)? What does it mean to "bind" and "loose"? (Matt. 16:19; Acts 15:28, 29.) How should the disciples receive wisdom to declare what should not be

done and what could be done? (John 20:22, 23.) In how far have the disciples of Jesus Christ this power today? (1 John 2:27.) What further power did He promise His disciples (v. 19)? What does the "you" mean? What does it mean "to agree as touching anything"? (Acts 1:14; 2:1; 4:24.)

Do men ever think they have this promise to rest upon when they are not in reality fulfilling the plainly stated conditions? What will be the result when the conditions are fulfilled? What shall be done? Why is it then that so often the things that two ask are not done? Who alone can bring us into real unity in our praying? (Eph. 4:3.) Why is it that the prayer is heard when there is real agreement touching the thing asked (v. 20)? What does He do in the midst? Suppose in widely separated parts of the world many groups of two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, how can He be in the midst of all at the same time?

Is He always in the midst where two or three professed Christians are gathered together? 2. Seeking Forgiveness for Self, vv. 21-27 To what question on Peter's part did our Lord's words give rise? What was the rule of the teachers of that day as to how often we should forgive? Did that rule satisfy Peter? Had he yet reached the Christian standard of forgiveness? What is the Christian standard? (Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:32; 5:1.) What was our Lord's answer? What does "forgive" mean?

What verses illustrate this meaning? (Is. 38:17; 43:25; 44:22; Jer. 31:34; Micah 7:19; Ps. 103:12.) Can we be said to forgive a wrong when we treasure it in our mind? What does our Lord mean by saying "seventy times seven"? Is there anything that the offender must do before we are under obligations to forgive? (Luke 17:3, 4.) Before he repents and confesses, have we a right to hate him or ignore him? (Matt. 18:15) What ought we to do to every enemy, repentant and unrepentant? (Matt 5:44; Eph. 5:1; Ro. 5:8.)

How does our Lord seek to impress upon the disciples the duty of boundless forgiveness? Of whom is the king in the parable a picture? Who are the servants? What is the king represented as doing with his servants? When does God reckon with us? (John 16:8, 9; Matt. 25:19.) Is this the final reckoning in v. 23? What is God's purpose in these earlier reckonings with us? How great a debtor was brought into His presence? How much is a thousand talents? What is our Lord's purpose to teach in stating so enormous a sum?

Who is so guilty before God? (Ps. 130:3; 38:4; 40:12; Ezra 9:6.) Did the debtor come of his own accord before the judge? What is taught by that? Was the debtor able to pay? Are we able to pay our debt to God? When then did the king command? What does the picture set forth? What did the debtor then do? What does that represent? What promise did the debtor make? Could he fulfill it? Why did he make it? Does the awakened sinner ever fancy that he can pay his debt to God? Can he?

What provision has God Himself made for settling the old account? (20:28; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24.) What was the king's feeling in response to his debtor's anxious cry? What does that represent? How much compassion has God? (Ps. 86:15; 145:8.) How did the king's compassion show itself? Is that as much as a debtor asks? How will God's giving correspond with our asking? (Eph. 3:20.) Does God's compassion wait until we repent? (John 3:16; Ro. 5:8.) 3. Refusing Forgiveness to Others, vv. 28-35 Did the debtor really accept the pardon and realize what had been done for him?

How did he show that he did not? What does this illustrate? How great was the debt owed him? How did that compare with his own debt? What truth did Christ intend to teach by that? Did he act this way in the presence of the king? Does that teach anything? How did his debtor act? Had he seen any one else act that way? Did he remember that? Was there any possibility of his debtor actually paying? Did he do as he

had been done by? Do we? Did he do as he would wish to be done by?

Ought we to do to others as we want God to do by us? (Matt. 6:12.) Do we? Who observed his treatment of his fellow-servant? How did they feel? (Heb. 13:3; Ro. 12:15; Mark 3:5.) What did they do? What is the best thing to do with griefs and wrongs? (Ro. 12:19.) How did the king feel (v. 34)? Why is it right that we should be grieved rather than angry at sin though God is wrath at it? What did his lord first do? Will God so call us to account for our acts? (Ro. 14:12; 1 Cor. 4:5.)

How did he address him? Was his guilt greater in the former interview or in this? How is it with us: is our guilt greater because of our many sins or because of our treatment of God's grace? What argument does the king use to show him the enormity of his guilt? What similar argument might God use to show us our guiltiness? What was the king's feeling? Who, judging from this parable, ought most to fear God's wrath? How was the king's wrath displayed? What does this represent? (2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Rev. 14:10, 11.)

How long was he to be tormented? How long would that take? Is there any hope of the sinner's ever paying his debt to God in perdition? How will God deal with those who show no mercy? (Jas. 2:13.) How alone can we learn to be merciful? (Col. 3:13.) Are we to learn from this parable that God ever withdraws His pardon from one He forgives and who really accepts the forgiveness? Was this man given over to tormentors because of his debts or because of his treatment of his master's grace?

Are men damned because of their many sins, or because of their rejection of offered grace? What is the application our Lord makes of the parable? What kind of forgiveness does God demand? What is it then that God looks at? (Prov. 21:2; Luke 16:15; Rev. 2:23.) Are we to learn from this parable that men are eternally lost because they do not forgive or because they do not believe in God's forgiveness?

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. God

The Father of Jesus Christ, 19, 35; His abode--heaven, answers prayer where there is agreement as touching the thing asked, 19; reckons with men, 23; deals in justice until man approaches Him on the ground of mercy, 25; has compassion on the greatest sinner that cries for mercy, releases him, forgives the debt, 27; demands that the one thus forgiven should show that he has accepted the forgiveness by forgiving others, 32, 33; will deal without mercy with those who have despised mercy, 34, 35.

2. Christ

God's Son, 19, 25; omnipresent, in the midst of two or three gathered together in His name, 20; His skill as a teacher, 21-35.

3. Christians

(1). Their privileges:

Free and boundless forgiveness for enormous sins, 24-27; get what they ask with one accord, 19; have Jesus in the midst, 20; discern what is permissible in God's sight and what is not permissible, 18.

(2). Their duty:

To gather in Christ's name, 20; to pray unitedly, 19; to forgive even as God has forgiven them, 28, 29, 32, 33; to go show those who have wronged them the wrong in private, 15; if they hear not, to take one or two

more, 16; if they hear them not, to tell the church, 17; if they refuse to hear the church, to treat them as the Gentile and the publican, 17; to freely forgive all who ask it, to do unto others as God has done unto them, 32, 33.

4. The Unmerciful Servant

Heavily in debt to his master, 24; unable to pay, in great danger of fearful judgment, no hope on the ground of justice and law, 25; cried for mercy, promised to pay, 26; found compassion, was freely forgiven, 27; despised the forgiveness, went out from the king's presence, 28; refused to show mercy, 30; summoned before his master, his wickedness and contempt for mercy exposed, 32, 33; delivered to the tormentors, 34.

5. Forgiveness

The great and universal need of man, 24, 35; freely given for all who seek it, 27; permanently enjoyed only by those who show their acceptance of it by forgiving others, 28, 35; our forgiveness of others should be full, free, from the heart, like God's, 33, 35.

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