

FORGIVING FROM THE HEART

(08/27/2023; Wednesday Gathering; Matthew 18:21-35; Steve Thiel; Christ Proclamation Church)

Sermon Theme: God loved us so much that He sent the Lord Jesus Christ to die in our place so that our sins could be forgiven, and we could be reconciled to God. In the same way, we must extend forgiveness to others so that we might live in unity and harmony with one another.

I. Context of the Parable – Read Matthew 18:21-22

- A. Read Matthew 16:18. Jesus declares that He will build His church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. How does that passage along with Matthew 18:15-20 set the context for the parable and demonstrate what a strong and healthy church looks like?
- B. Read Matthew 18:21-22. How do these verses in particular impact the context of the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant? How would you interpret Jesus' statement to Peter in verse 22?

II. Content of the Parable – Read Matthew 18:23-35

- A. As you read the parable, who are the main characters? What is the great problem and the one idea that Jesus is trying to communicate? How is that evident from the climax of the story?
- B. What are your thoughts regarding the interaction between the servant who owed 10,000 talents and the king who forgave his debt? Are you surprised by the servant's plea for mercy over an insurmountable debt or the king's decision to be merciful? What's your response?
- C. How do we know this parable points to the infinite debt we owe to God because of our sin and His incredible mercy? How is God's forgiveness of sinners more shocking than this parable?
- D. How does the forgiven servant treat a fellow servant who pleads for mercy in the exact same way over a much smaller debt in verses 28-30? Why is his behavior so shocking?
- E. What is the significance of verse 31 and the role of the fellow servants? How does this verse inform the priority and importance of forgiveness and reconciled relationships in the church?
- F. What is the main point of the parable? According to Jesus, what is the penalty for one who does not forgive others? Why does the unforgiving servant rightly deserve this sentence?

III. Application of the Parable

- A. As you think about the king in the parable and God's forgiveness of believers (Ps. 103:8-12), how does that inform your understanding and orientation towards forgiving others?
- B. What are some indicators that you are withholding forgiveness? Why might a person harbor bitterness or withhold forgiveness? Is an apology required before forgiveness can take place?
- C. How does the on-going understanding of the gospel result in a people who wholeheartedly forgive? How does the lack of forgiveness highlight a heart that desperately needs the gospel?