

THE NECESSITY OF FORGIVENESS Matthew 18:21-35

To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable,
because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.

- C.S. Lewis

1) The necessity of being forgiven by the king

-The debt

-The servant forgiven

2) The necessity of forgiving fellow servants

-The reasonable response

-The warning

3) Questions about Forgiveness

-What is forgiveness?

-Who should initiate forgiveness?

-Can you forgive someone who does not repent?

I. Getting to Know You

1. Who has been your closest friend in life and how did you meet?

II. Into the Bible

2. Walter talked about guarding against sin that “creeps in” and gains a foothold. Read Jeremiah 17:9-10 and Mark 7:14-23. Why is it that we need to be constantly vigilant over our lives? What is the natural tendency for us as human beings to move toward?

3. In the parable that Jesus gives us in Matthew 18, God is presented as the gracious king who forgives an overwhelming debt. While we can't fully conceive of the majesty of God, His word gives us glimpses of His greatness. Read Psalm 147:1-6 and Job 38:1-11. What are some of God's attributes in these passages that overlap with the parable given in Matthew 18? What are some additional attributes of His that we see in these passages?

III. Application

4. We know that for Christians, forgiveness is not an “optional” thing.

What are some practical barriers to forgiveness? What actions or attitudes keep us from forgiving according to the model that Christ has provided for us? Is there someone that you are withholding forgiveness from?

5. What does forgiveness look like when someone is unrepentant, or when they don’t understand how they have caused an offence? How can we prepare our hearts to restore and reconcile, even prior to being approached for forgiveness?

IV. For Families

6. How are we modeling forgiveness within the context of our family?

Have our children or grandchildren ever seen us ask for forgiveness from our spouse, our friends, or even from them? Talk about what constitutes a biblical apology (recognition of the sin, sorrow for the sin, request for forgiveness, etc.). This would also be a great time to talk about what restoration looks like when someone confesses & is forgiven of their sin.