

Mercy, Forgiveness

Unforgiving Servant, Creditor and Debtors, Barren Fig Tree

Introduction

1. Jesus died on the cross in order to make salvation available to all men.
2. Because He shed his blood we can have the forgiveness of our sins.
3. However, in the gospel we are taught not only how to have the forgiveness of our sins, but that we must, in turn, forgive others as well.
4. To help us understand this, Jesus gives three parables.

Discussion

I. The Unforgiving Servant: Matt. 18:21-35.

A. The greater debt: Matt. 18:22-27

1. The debt that any one man owes God because of sin is great indeed.
2. 10,000 talents ~ \$50 mil.
3. Such is the severity of our sins.

B. The lesser debt: Matt. 18:28-30

1. This debt represents one man's sins toward another.
2. \$20 compared to \$50 mil.
3. Relative to our sins against God, our brother's sins against us are few indeed.

C. Forgive as you have been forgiven: Matt. 18:31-35

1. When the master heard of his lack of compassion he became angry.
2. *"Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant" (vs. 33).*
3. If we want God to be forgiving of us, we must learn to be like Him and learn to forgive others.
4. *"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12, 14).*

II. Creditor and Debtors: Luke 7:41-48

A. Two Debtors: Luke 7:41-42

1. Two men, owe different amounts.
2. The more we owe, the more we need to be forgiven.
3. Jesus is here contrasting the Pharisee with the sinner.
4. The sinner had the greater debt (in her mind).

B. The Greater Appreciation: 7:43-47

1. Because the woman was more aware of her debt, she showed greater appreciation than the Pharisee.
2. The Pharisee was self-righteous, therefore, in his mind, he had the lesser debt.
3. How we show appreciation is determined by our understanding how great our debt is.

C. Putting self in perspective

1. People who do not realize the severity of their sins do not appreciate what Christ is offering.
2. Those who have the humility to acknowledge the severity of their sins will love God more because of His great compassion.

III. The Barren Fig Tree: Luke 13:6-9

A. The barren tree: Vs. 6-7

1. The tree is in the field, but had not fruit.
2. There are some in the kingdom which do not bear any fruit.
3. Like the tree, they are in danger of being torn out and burned.

B. Waiting for change: Vs. 8

1. Through Christ, we are given the gift of patience.
2. We have but a few moments to turn to God and start bearing fruit.
3. 2 Pet. 3:9: God is longsuffering toward us.

C. Limited Patience: Vs. 9

1. God's patience will not last forever.
2. 2 Pet. 3:10: The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.
3. We only have a limited amount time to start bearing fruit.
4. Let us take advantage of the time that we have.

Conclusion

1. Without forgiveness we cannot have salvation.
2. In order to be forgiven, we must learn how to be forgiving.

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