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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11


Matthew 18:27-35
Lesson #16
Counting the Cost
01/12/2020

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

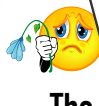
Two Lenders Matthew 18:21-35

1


Christians respond to injustice from different perspectives.




**The
vengeance
cards**



**The
victim
cards**



**The
civil rights
cards**



**The
Cross of Christ
card**

What would Jesus have us do?

2


Matthew 18:21-33

A King is owed a great debt from his slave which the slave was unable to pay.

The king was about to confiscate all that the slave had so the slave begged him for patience. The king had compassion and forgave the debt.

But when this slave faced a fellow slave who owed him a small debt, he refused to be gracious.

A Seminar on Forgiving



GR

contrary compassionate

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Insights

- 1 We will have a hard time forgiving so long as we **demand and expect justice.**
- 2 Our light shines brightest and we glorify God most not only in our demand for social justice **but more so in our gracious response to personal injustice.**
- 3 Forgiveness requires that we **share the pain of others.**
- 4 Compassion is the path to gracious forgiveness. **If we come by any other way we will not be at home there.**

4

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GR

contrary compassionate



FACE

choices costly contemplative

5

“²⁷ And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ ²⁹ So his fellow slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you.’ ³⁰ He was unwilling however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.”

6

“³¹ So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. ³² Then summoning him, his lord said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. ³³ Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?’”

- “Wicked” - a Greek term that has to do with the **expression** of a bad heart.

7

Forgiveness is a **choice**.



- Discipleship is a series of choices.
- The N.T. places an emphasis on human choices in response to the Gospel.



Insight #5

The decision to forgive
is a series of choices.

8

Forgiveness is a **responsibility** that comes with Christian faith.

It is not a passive “gift” or “temperament type” but a **decision WE must make**.

Ephesians 4

“³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving** each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

9

We can do this!

But we need to choose -
draw upon what we have in Christ
(not seek something we don't have).

1 Corinthians 10:13

“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is **common to man**; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what **you are able**, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be **able to endure it**.”

We have no basis for acting like **VICTIMS**!

10

Forgiveness is one in a series of decisions.

1. Choose to take our baptism seriously.

Romans 12:1

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”



11

Facing in the right direction makes it easier to stay on the path.

- Take our baptism seriously.
- When our goals and values are clear it is easier to make good decisions.



12

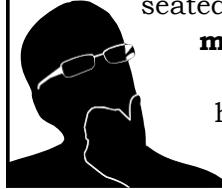
2. Choose to guard your mind (perceptions).

Romans 12:2

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Colossians 3

“¹ If then you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth. ³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”



13

There are two natures in every Christian.



The one we feed is the one that grows.

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3. Choose to be true to your “new self”.

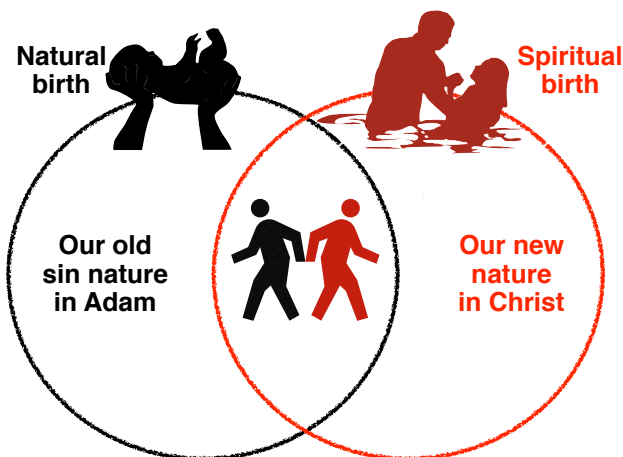
Ephesians 4

“²² that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”



15

We are creatures with two conflicting natures.



16

Some suggestions

- **Become your own counselor.** Tell yourself how to think, and how to respond.
- **Cultivate zero tolerance** for snacking on toxic lies, pain killers, emotions, & thoughts.
- Feed your mind and heart from **Scripture**.
- **Pray in the right way** - that God would remind you to be true to you new self, renew your mind, keep your guard up, and coach your response to temptations.
- **Watch the company you keep.** Friends will influence your thinking and your behavior.

17

How we **choose to speak to ourselves** is critical to shaping our responses to life.

Insight #6

If we keep nursing a grudge
rather than cultivating compassion
don't be surprised if forgiveness is difficult.



Pray that God would change
your attitude and behavior
by renewing your mind.

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1 Peter 3

“8 To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but **giving a blessing instead**; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

We are not just to tolerate personal injustice
but give a blessing.

19

Forgiveness is **costly**.



“27 And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.”

- The king suffered (absorbed) the loss of what was owed and forgiven.
- Christ denied what was his right and the hopes of this world.
- We are called to pick up our cross and follow him.



20

Forgiveness is **costly**.



“27 And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.”

Insight #7

Forgiving means losing what was owed us
and not expecting to get it back.



21

Philippians 2

“5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but **emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.** 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

22

Common misunderstandings that lead to misplaced hopes

- If we are in fellowship with Christ will we receive material blessings?
- If we pray in faith will we see dramatic, tangible results?
- If we follow God's plan will we live a long life and escape suffering?

YES,

**but only in the same way
that Jesus, the Apostles,
and the early church did.**



23



TRIED BY FIRE

THE STORY OF CHRISTIANITY'S
FIRST THOUSAND YEARS

WILLIAM J.
BENNETT

New York Times Bestselling Author

The Story of Christianity's First Thousand Years



24

***If this is true, why would anyone
become a disciple of Jesus?***

1 Corinthians 1

“22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a **stumbling block**, and to Gentiles **foolishness**, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power of God and the wisdom of God**. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”



- Paul's life was much more comfortable **BEFORE** he became a disciple of Christ
- **If we want to know why it made sense to him - read Ephesians AGAIN.**

25

Forgiveness is **contemplative**.



contemplative

“33 Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?”

- The unforgiving slave had forgotten the grace shown to him.
- It's one thing to dismiss the testimony of a stranger but only a fool refuses to learn from his own experience.



26

Forgiveness is **contemplative**.



contemplative

“33 Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?”

Insight #8

If we are not moved by the grace of God **FOR** us **we will not be open to the grace of God THROUGH us.**



27

Forgiveness is **contemplative**.



contemplative

“33 Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?”

Ephesians 4:32

“And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.**”



28

A robust, healthy faith is:

- ✓ Intellectually convincing.
- ✓ Emotionally satisfying.
- ✓ Morally transforming.
- ✓ Socially connecting.
- ✓ Culturally inspiring.

When the Sun shines all other stars are hard to see.

We shine when the fire inside us burns brighter than the fire around us.

29



Jeff Philbrook

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Guideposts



Some suggestions

- **Look for the light.** Don't just fear the darkness.
- **Don't forget your story.** Look for God's hand on your life.
- **Be thankful for the things God has given you** that the world can't give or take away.
- **Give till it feels good,** not till it hurts.
- **Watch the company you keep.** Friends will influence your thinking and your behavior.

31

The point of this parable is that the grace of God toward us **is the rational for the grace of God through us.**

32

Ephesians 2:8-10

Forgiven

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

Forgiving

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

33

Insights

- 5 The decision to forgive **is a series of choices.**
- 6 If we keep nursing a grudge rather than cultivating compassion **don't be surprised if forgiveness is difficult.**
- 7 Forgiving means losing what was owed us **and not expecting to get it back.**
- 8 If we are not moved by the grace of God **FOR us we will not be open to the grace of God THROUGH us.**

34

³⁴ And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.
³⁵ So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."



What kind of grace is this?

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