

Being Forgiven and Forgiving.
Discussion Notes on Matthew 18: 21-35
For Home Groups week beginning 25th January 2010.

Welcome

Q: Can you remember a time when you were young when you did something wrong and you really wanted to be forgiven? What did you do and how did it feel to be forgiven?

To be forgiving towards someone is one of the greatest gifts we can give. To be forgiven is one of the greatest gifts we can receive.

Word - Please read Matthew 18:21-35.

So what does it mean to ask for forgiveness.

Q: v24, imagine ways in which the servant managed to get himself into debt (say £500 million). Do you think it happened in one go or over a period of time? What excuses/reasons do you think the servant might have given to himself to allow him to continue to get into so much debt?

Q: Why do you think the servant didn't seek out the king before v24?

Q: When we have done something wrong why is it natural to want to give reasons and excuses – how does this prevent us from being forgiven by others?

Q: So what does this mean for our relationship with God?

Q: v25 Was it right for the King to do this? If I stole £50 from you and spent it. How much would it 'cost' to be forgiven? If you choose to forgive me 'for free' who in fact has paid the £50?

Q: v26 the servant is caught. Is he concerned about his situation or is he concerned about the Master's situation?

Q: Why is it natural that when we have been caught we more concerned for ourselves than for the person we have hurt? When you have been hurt by someone why is it important that you sense that they feel your pain?

Q: So what does this mean for our relationship with God?

*Q: v27 the servant's debt is cancelled. Did he have a right to be forgiven? Do we **ever** have a right to be forgiven? How does this change the way we ask for forgiveness from someone and our expectations about being forgiven?*

Q: So what does this mean for our relationship with God?

So what should happen when we are forgiven!

Q: How should it have felt for this man to be forgiven his £500million debt!? How should he have felt about his own life? and how should he have felt towards the King?

Q: So what does this mean for our relationship with God?

The death of God's Son on a cross at human hands is a price paid sufficient to cover the sins of the whole world. God cannot do anymore to show us his love and to show that we are completely forgiven. God has forgiven all our sin, past, present and future.

Q: So what is happening if we "don't feel forgiven" or if we think "surely God can't forgive us this sin again". Do feelings get to vote on what is "truth"? Where do we get our understanding of truth from? And how should we use this to silence the voices of accusation?

Q: What if we don't believe God has forgiven all our sins (past, present and future) – what hope is there then? Is it possible for a Christian to die without having some sins forgiven?

Q: So what does this mean for our relationship with God?

To receive forgiveness is a new beginning every day!
But to OFFER forgiveness is a new beginning too.

Q: In what ways is it true that our own unforgiveness towards others will destroy our lives, spiritually kill us, bind us and rob us of joy? Do we win or lose if we refuse to forgive someone?

Q: How do we see this in the life of the unmerciful servant v29+

He had been offered and shown Grace but his actions and attitude show that he had not received it

Q: How practically, can we begin to forgive people who have hurt us? What practical suggestions do you have? Is it a "once and forgotten" thing to forgive someone? What does 1 Pet. 2:23 mean?

It would be good to end the study in silence as you pray – both about your own forgiveness and for the grace to forgive