



Forgiving Without Limits

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"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. 23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. 32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? 34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (Matthew 18:21-35).

What a great question Peter asked! The courage to ask questions will change your life if you are prepared to face the answers. Peter's question reveals that he thought the limit for forgiving a brother was seven times, but Jesus pointed out that it should be $70 \times 7 = 490$ times. Whether the frequency of it is per day, week, year or lifetime of the person is immaterial, but the sheer burden of accurately keeping such records, makes it clear that it is not worth the count, and that forgiving should be without limits. As a good

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teacher, Jesus used illustration to get His message across about the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven. Note the following points from the parable:

- 1) Vs 23: the king took account of his servants. A day of reckoning is coming, when we would all appear before God to give account of our lives on earth. It is important to ensure that what we live for will provide an acceptable account to God;
- 2) Vs 24-26: The servant who could not pay his ten thousand talents (about \$14 billion) debt pleaded for leniency from being sold, along with his wife and children to recover the debt.
- 3) Vs 27: The master out of compassion forgave him the debt. Love covers multitudes of offences. Mercy triumphs over justice. This is a illustration of God's forgiveness of the sins that we could not pay for.
- 4) Vs 28-30: The forgiven servant, would not forgive his own servant who owed him a hundred pence (about a few dollars) but held him to ransom, despite his pleadings. He failed to give compassion that he had received.
- 5) Vs 31-34: When his lord heard of it, he withdrew the mercy he showed to him, and demanded full justice.
- 6) Vs 35: Jesus drew the essence of this message by stating **"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses"**.

The message is startlingly clear! You forfeit your right to being forgiven by God, when you fail to forgive others (Mark 11:26). Such a destiny is not worth the price!