

## Parable of Two Debtors

- How has this week been? Where have you seen God at work in your life?
- Were you able to see your gifts developing from last week?

### Matt 18v21-35

*“Earth is Forgiveness School. You might as well start at the dinner table. That way you can do this work in comfortable pants.”* Anne Lamott.

All need to learn to say sorry, and to forgive. Calvin and Hobbes: *“Is there a less obvious solution?”* Sir Elton John: *“‘Sorry’ is the hardest word.”*

Jesus is being very practical here having just spoken about Sin in the Church (Matt 18v15-20). Rabbis taught you forgive 3 times so Peter thought he was going above and beyond with 7 times. The “Mina” equated to 20 year’s wages (an impossible debt to pay). A “Denarii” was a day’s pay.

Forgiveness is the heartbeat of Jesus: On the cross Luke 23v34; In his daily prayer Matt 6v12.

7x and 77x also occurs in Gen 4v23-24 where Lamech is serenading his 2 wives about retribution. This is Old Testament curse. But Jesus brings the blessing of forgiveness. Lamech was unbridled revenge but Jesus is unbridled mercy. God’s forgiveness sets us debt free. His love is unending. *“Nothing puts us more out of step with Jesus than unforgiveness.”* This is a new Kingdom, a new way of being human.

But: Forgiveness doesn’t mean tolerating abuse, or staying in an unsafe situation. It is not always reunion, we’re not to be doormats or taken advantage of. Forgiving others takes away our victimhood.

The greatest lie of unforgiveness is that it gives you power and control. It doesn’t - it keeps you bound. To “forgive” is to give away. To “resent” is to feel it again. Forgiveness is when you set the prisoner free only to discover that the prisoner is you! Nelson Mandela forgave his captors - “They can’t take my mind and heart.”

For “big offences” seek help, review Izwe’s talk on Matt 5v7 (12 March, Beautiful Attitudes 5). For “daily offences” forgive daily! Develop a lifestyle of forgiveness. Live lightly toward each other. Unforgiveness can taste good, it’s hard to shake off control and one-upmanship. But don’t build prisons, like “silent treatment” toward someone who has offended you. Choose a higher path.

The first servant was blind to his own forgiven-ness. We’re to know our fallenness, our depth of sinfulness, so we can know God’s mercy. Struggle with shame? Totally forgive and be totally forgiven. The 10,000 Minas equates to 8,600 men each with 60lb bags of coin forming a queue 5 miles long! The 100 Denarii in comparison was pocket change! It is easy to forget the 8,600 men in line when we fixate on the pocket change.

We can forgive because God has forgiven us. Jesus didn’t wait for us to be worthy - forgiven-ness is supernatural. We enact forgiveness by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is our Helper to make us like Jesus.

Forgiveness is: **1.** the new Jesus way of being human **2.** a daily habit but not about removing safe boundaries **3.** result of forgiven-ness **4.** supernatural **5.** a choice.

Forgiveness is an act of our will. Jews didn’t separate thinking and feeling. Hence, Jesus’ use of “heart” meant rational decision making - choosing to forgive rather than feeling forgiveness.

Corrie Ten Boom met a former concentration camp prison guard after WW2. He asked for forgiveness, Corrie struggled but her will “functioned independently from her heart” and felt the intense love of God course through her.

### For Reflection in Collective:

- What part of the parable most resonates with us? Why?
- What does daily forgiveness look like in practical terms?
- Pray for each other so we don’t fixate on the “pocket change”
- Rejoice and thank God that we are forgiven people.

6 August 2023. Emmaus Rd., Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford