

MASTERCLASS #8 Forgive But Don't Forget

Word

Scripture Reference

Matthew 18:21-35

Discussion Questions

1. What makes it quite difficult to forgive someone?
2. When someone hurts us deeply, we tend to wait until the last moment or need to be compelled to ask for or give forgiveness. Do you think that the reason we do not want to forgive is because we do not want to forget the offense made to us? Hebrews 8:12 says that God forgives and remembers our sins no more, but He is also omniscient, which means He does not really forget. However, though we may suffer the consequences of our sins, in His graciousness in forgiving us our offenses against Him, God will no longer use our offenses to condemn us to hell. The Bible does not teach "forgive and forget;" it teaches us to "forgive but don't forget." Read Matthew 18:21-35. The background of this parable is when Peter asked Jesus how often shall he forgive his brother who repeatedly wrongs him. Peter asked, "Up to seven times?" Jesus responded that it should be up to seventy times seven. Jesus was not advocating frequency of forgiveness, but forgiveness as a way of life. How possible are people to forgive beyond two or more times? Are you able to do it? Why or why not? What is the danger of an unforgiving spirit?
3. Jesus understands that forgiveness is something difficult for us to do, and so He gave the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant to teach us what forgiveness is all about, and that with the help of the Holy Spirit, it is something that we can learn as a way of life. In this parable, a king wants to settle the accounts of every one of his subjects who owed him money. How did the king deal with the servant who owed him 10,000 talents (which is equivalent now to 7 billion pesos)? Discuss how God has demonstrated mercy in forgiving your sins. Does God's mercy mean that you should not take the responsibility and obligation to pay off your

debt? What do Matthew 22:17- 21, Proverbs 22:7, and Ecclesiastes 5:5 teach about borrowed money? When you take your obligation to pay off your debt seriously, what does it show to others? If you are not paying back what you owed others then you are stealing. How would that affect your integrity as a Christian?

4. The servant who had just been completely forgiven of his unpayable debt must be so elated and overjoyed with the grace and mercy showed to him by the king, yet he did not extend the same grace and mercy to his fellow servant who owed him money. There are three principles that we can learn from this parable:
 - a. **Forgive because you have been forgiven (v. 28-30).** After the king forgave his 7 billion pesos worth of debt, this servant found a fellow servant who owed him a hundred denarii (which is about 55,000 pesos today). The first servant grabbed the second servant's throat and yelled at the man to pay him what he owed. How did the second servant respond? Describe how you feel about that first servant who treated the second servant without grace and mercy. In what ways are you similar to that first servant in how you treat others, in light of the fact that your unpayable debt of sin was wiped clean through the blood of Jesus? Forgiveness does not mean that you should give up your right to collect what is owed you, nor allow others to pick on you. Neither would it mean that you not use the legal system to protect your rights. But forgiveness as a lifestyle means that you remember you have been forgiven an unpayable debt, and therefore should also forgive. Share tangible ways in which you could show forgiveness to those who have offended you.
 - b. **Forgive to show the world that you are living for eternity (v. 31-33).** This incident between the two servants was witnessed by others, and was passed on to the king. The king expected the first servant to show compassion and pity on others, as he had been a recipient of compassion and forgiveness himself. He may not be technically obligated to forgive the second servant, but to live for eternity means you give up your rights and forgive. Discuss how, as a Christian, you can give up your rights and forgive instead of fighting hard for everything. What are the things you would be willing to take as a loss in view of eternity?

- c. ***Forgive so that God's grace and mercy will be more abundant in your life (v. 34-35).*** The first servant was sent to the torturer until he can pay what he owed, because the master was rightfully angry. In this context, Jesus was not talking about the loss of salvation, but the similarity of how God deals with us based on how we deal with others. God the Father will treat us based on how we treat others. If you treat others with mercy and grace, the more grace and mercy will be abundant in your life. Discuss what you should do if you do not feel like forgiving someone who has hurt you. Share about a time you extended forgiveness to someone who has offended you, and that decision released you from bitterness and pain.

Walk

It is important that you forgive; however, do not forget that you forgive because God has forgiven you. Doing so will show others that you live for eternity, and God's grace and mercy will be more abundant in your life. Is there someone in your life whom you should release from his or her debt to you? It may not be financial, but something that you hold against another for what that person did to you. Could you think of a way to show mercy to someone who has hurt you?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for the lesson of forgiveness. I must admit that among your commands, bestowing forgiveness to someone who has hurt me deeply is one of the most difficult to obey. But thank You because You have shown me how to forgive when You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to wipe away my sins with His blood. Thank You that You forgive the daily wrongs I make against You. Thank You that when I acknowledge my sin, You bestow Your grace and mercy and forgive me from all my sins. Hard as it is to forgive the people who had offended and hurt me deeply, please help me to forgive—to show grace and mercy as how you have shown it to me. Thank you for the victory I can have with You. In Jesus' name. Amen.