

The Gospel of Matthew #59

Sermon on the Mount: chapter 6: LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

HOW TO PRAY: I. WHO WE PRAY TO: OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

II. WHAT WE PRAY FOR: 6 PETITIONS: 1ST 3 FOCUS ON HIM

2nd 3 FOCUS ON US: #5: FORGIVE US AS WE FORGIVE (2)

Matthew 6:12, 14-15; 18:21-35

AS

6:12: Forgive us **AS** we forgive

6:14: If you forgive, your Father will forgive you

6:15: If you do not forgive, your Father will not forgive you

Expanded in **Matt 18:21-35**

Three possible interpretations:

1. Christian who forgiven but lost salvation
2. Seemed to be a Christian, but lack of mercy showed he not
3. Christian who forgiven, but severely chastised to teach grace

Is the issue heaven or hell, or simply discipline?

Reasons for #3:

1. Parable is in answer to Peter's Q about forgiveness, so it is to a disciple (18:21-23)
2. The master actually cancelled the huge debt (v27). Once forgiven, God never withdraws that (John 3:16; I John 5:11-13)
3. Therefore v32-35 is not describing hell, but the torture of putting oneself back under the Law by treating others that way.
4. The parable is an extension of what Jesus teaches in Matt 6:12, 14-15, which is clearly to disciples who have God as their Father ("your Father" 2x); cf. 18:35 "your Father"

2 important insights to understand this parable:

1. The distinction between God as Judge and Father:
Forgiveness from God as Judge is **judicial**:
Justification: declared innocent under the Law
Your debt to God is cancelled because Christ paid it in full

The Judge **acquits** you and **adopts** you!
He becomes your Father; you become His child.
Forgiveness from God as Father is **relational**:
Restoration upon a lifestyle of repentance and faith
It grieves you to grieve Him (Eph 4:30)
But His discipline may cause you great pain (v34-5)

2. Tho it is primarily about interpretation #3, interpretation #2 is also in view.
Not either/or.
Jesus is teaching that forgiven people are forgivers by nature (cf 5:7
only the merciful will be shown mercy)
All Christians struggle to forgive when deeply wronged.
If you resist, you will live by the Law, and that is *painful!*
And you *will* eventually forgive.
If you live in pervasive bitterness, it is an indication you have not known
His grace and mercy.

Remember what forgiveness actually is: **canceling a debt.**

A costly _____ (not feelings or amnesia) to

Absorb the cost of the sin and _____

1. To your former _____: accusation
2. To _____ gossip
3. To _____ brooding

(It is the offer and hope of reconciliation, but reconciliation involves the offender's seeking forgiveness [18:15-17])

Have you experienced His mercy?

Who are you withholding it from?