

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Forgive From Your Heart

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**F**orgiveness is one of the hardest lessons to learn in our lives. When we are wronged we are hurt and our relationship with that person is severely damaged. When we see others living in sin, it is difficult to truly forgive someone even though they repent because the memory of what they did cannot be erased. Yet, despite these challenging facts we still must learn to forgive one another.

In Matthew 18:15-17, Christ explains to His apostles how His disciples should treat each other when they have been wronged. Then Peter responds by asking Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother. Peter thinks the selfless answer would be “seven times,” but Christ responds “seventy times seven.” This far exceeded Peter’s expectations of forgiveness. Christ helps explain the true nature of forgiveness through the following parable.

Starting in Matthew 18:23, Christ tells of a king who was settling accounts with his slaves. One slave owed the king 10,000 talents. This was a staggering amount of money. One talent was approximately the equivalent to

33 years of wages. Imagine all the money one may earn in 33 years then multiple that by 10,000! Needless to say this debt could never be paid by the slave. Despite this insurmountable debt, the king forgave the slave of his debt. However, when this very slave went to collect the debt another slave owed him, (only 100 denarii, about 100 days wages) the indebted slave did not have the denarii to pay. Then the first slave threw him in prison. When the king heard of this treachery he then punished the unmerciful slave he had once forgiven.

In light of Jesus’ discussion of forgiveness the first thing we note from this parable is the difference in the amount owed. God is represented in this parable by the king, and we are to take the place of the first slave. Notice how much God has forgiven us. He has taken a debt that would be impossible for us to pay, and forgiven us of it (Matt. 18:27). We realize that God is great in His love and His mercy toward His creation. There is no way that we could ever work off our sin, but God has provided us forgiveness of this seemingly insurmountable debt (Rom. 5:6-10).

In light of this fact it is inter-

esting to note the difference between how much we owe to God verses how much others owe us. In comparison to what the first slave owed the king, the second slave’s debt was insignificant. As is the case in our lives; the amount we forgive in the wrongdoings of others cannot be compared to the amount God has forgiven us.

Still God, the King, in His mercy required something from the forgiven slave (Matt. 18:32-33). God requires that we who He has shown mercy, must then show forgiveness to others. We then see God’s justice: how He brings righteous punishment to those He had once forgiven if they refuse to forgive others (Matt. 18:34-35a).

We must heed Christ’ teaching and forgive others from our hearts (vs. 35). It is wrong of us to hold grudges or to constantly hold contempt in our hearts. We must truly and completely forgive. This is challenging but we must remember how much God forgave us! With His forgiveness in mind we will be able to more easily forgive others.