



Session # 1:
Parable of the unforgiving Servant (Mt. 18:23-35)
Tuesday, October 22, 2019

²³“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold^[1] was brought to him. ²⁵Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. ²⁶“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. ²⁸“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.^[1] He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. ²⁹“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ ³⁰“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. ³²“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. ³⁵“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

If you’re still counting how many times you’ve forgiven someone, you’re not really forgiving them at all, but simply postponing revenge. “Seventy-times-seven” is a typical bit of Jesus’ teasing. What he means, of course, is don’t even think about counting; just do it.

--Tom Wright

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Spend some time, but not too much time, getting re-acquainted with one another.
If you need a suggestion:
 - a. What has been the most dominant theme in your life this Fall?
 - b. What experience or event has been most memorable to you this Fall?
 - c. What relationship in your life seems to be growing and strengthening right now?
 - d. Which relationship is the most tender or fragile?

Study Questions: Have Matthew 18:21—35 open

2. This parable, like many parables, is an expanded answer to a specific question. How would you rephrase the question that is being asked? What is the question behind the question?
3. Jesus’ parables are almost always expansive and surprising and convicting.
 - a. How does Jesus’ parable expand beyond the surface question?
 - b. In what ways is His answer surprising compared to the way you think you know Jesus?
 - c. Where does this parable convict you in your own personal relationships and circumstances?

Application and Accountability Questions:

4. When you assess your own life and lifestyle, how would you rate your own risk-taking spiritually?
5. Identify which of these three is most true of you and then discuss:

I live a thinner-than-I-could spiritual life because:

- a. I don't understand what has been done for me.
 - b. I mostly access spirituality to affirm rather than grow me.
 - c. I am in a rut of my own making and choosing.
6. For me to really grow in my faith quest this year I know I will need to _____:
Fill in that blank with a habit to break, an attitude to adjust, or something to start.
How can the men in your group help you?