

Part 4 - Matthew 18:21 -35 How Necessary is it to Forgive Each Other?

- ❖ Matthew 18 starts with the disciples asking Jesus “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” In verses 1 -20 how does Jesus answer this question?
 - The greatest are those within the body of Christ who are the weakest and neediest.
 - The little ones - our brothers and sisters.
 - Those who have wandered from the Gospel.

 - ❖ What is the Kingdom of Heaven?
 - ❖ The kingdom of God (heaven) is His ruling as king over the whole universe (kingdom of power), the church on earth (kingdom of grace), and the church and angels in heaven (kingdom of glory).
- Luther's Small Catechism #212***
- ❖ **Psalm 103:19** - Kingdom of power
 - ❖ **John 3:5** - Kingdom of grace
 - ❖ **2 Timothy 4:18** - Kingdom of glory
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- ❖ What is the basis for the difference between worldly forgiveness and Christian forgiveness? What gives Christians the ability to forgive each other?
 - ❖ Christians can forgive because they have been forgiven.
 - The Lord's Prayer.
 - We have been forgiven of our trespasses and because of this great love shown to us we should try to forgive others of their trespasses against us.
 - Christ's love given and shed for each of us already.
 - John 3:16 -17.
 - Ephesians 2:8 -9.
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- ❖ **Read Matthew 18:21 -35**
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- ❖ What is the debt load that the first servant owed to his master? From a rational viewpoint can the servant ever repay his master?
 - Immense by any worldly imagination.
 - He will never be able to pay off this debt.
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- ❖ What was the debt load that the second servant owed to the first servant? From a rational viewpoint can the second servant ever repay the first servant?
 - Large but workable debt.
 - Yes, it was a payable debt.
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- ❖ What is our debt load that we owe to our Master? Can we ever repay our debt?
 - The full weight of our sin. More than we can ever pay.

Follow up questions

- ❖ Verse 18:23 -25 tell us, "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made."
 - ❖ Who initiates the action?
 - The king.
 - ❖ Where does the king's action point us to?
 - The law - The debt owed by the servant.
- ❖ In verse 18:27 we are told, "The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go."
 - ❖ What are some other words that could be used for the master's actions toward the servant?
 - Compassion - Kindness - Grace - Merciful - Loving.
 - ❖ How do we see God's loving grace and mercy in our lives through the master's actions?
 - God, not us, initiates His loving mercy in our lives.
 - Seeing and knowing the Law, the debt we owe because of the weight of our sin we can more fully understand the Gospel, the price paid by our Lord for the forgiveness of our sin.
 - Our God is all these things and more. He not only forgave our debt but Christ paid for our debt with His blood.
- ❖ What is mercy as we live our lives within the kingdom of heaven?
 - We live daily in the forgiven glory our Lord won for us.
 - We live in the assurance given to us by our Lord's compassion for us that our sins are forgiven - we are assured of this through the means of grace.
 - Our Master through His love for us made us the greatest.
- ❖ What does the kingdom of heaven, the reigning of our Lord mean to us, His Church?
 - We do not get what we deserve - deserve damnation / receive grace.
 - We should always keep our eyes on the cross and the empty tomb. These truths give us the assurance of the promises to come.
 - Forgiveness and love come from Christ to us to the world around us.
- ❖ Christ in answering Peter's question states basically that the forgiveness of a brother or sister in Christ should be limitless.
If we feel we are unable to forgive a brother or sister fully (though we want to) where are we to turn?
 - ❖ **2 Corinthians 12:9 -10**
 - We turn to the Lord knowing we are weak, always striving to do better.
 - We rely on the means of grace.

- ❖ What does this parable teach us about our debt?
 - We are brought into the reigning of our Lord through the debt He paid for us.
 - The Lord's Prayer.

- ❖ How necessary is it to forgive each other?
 - God's forgiveness is once and eternal.
 - Human forgiveness is something we have to work on over and over again.

- ❖ What does this chapter tell us?
 - We see ourselves through the eyes of our Master.
 - We live within the community of our Lord.
 - We live in the love as God's children.
 - We owe a great debt.
 - That debt has been forgiven.
 - We carry that forgiveness through Christ's Church.