

The Parables of Jesus



The
Unforgiving
Debtor

The kingdom of heaven is like...

Parables

“The word parable means to ‘cast alongside’. A parable is a story that teaches something new by putting the truth alongside something familiar. A parable starts off as a picture that is familiar to the listeners. But as you carefully consider the picture, it becomes a mirror in which you can see yourself, and many people do not ask for help, then the mirror becomes a window through which we see God and His grace. To understand a parable and benefit from it, demands honesty and humility on our part.”

Warren Wiersbe

Parables

“The primary purpose of the parables is to reveal some aspect of the coming of the kingdom of God in the person and teaching of Jesus. But Jesus also intended that the parables conceal his teaching while being a vehicle for it. Even the disciples of Jesus did not understand the parables without fail. But their adherence to Jesus caused them to seek and receive understanding of the parables. Understanding is made subject to whether a listener is willing to identify with Jesus or wishes to remain ‘outside’ (hold Jesus at arms length). The disciples inquiry arose from commitment and was itself hearing which was in contrast with others failure to hear.” Eerdmans Bible Dictionary

Parables , What do We Know?

1. They used everyday objects, events and images to communicate important truth.

-Matthew 13: 1-7

2. They were designed to test, not the intelligence but the spiritual responsiveness of the hearer.

-Matthew 13:11-13

3. Great insight about God and his Kingdom can be ours by listening carefully to these parables

-Matthew 13:16-17

“Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

“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.

“So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.

When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Interesting to Note

1. Peter's Question – how many times?

- law would mandate 3 times
- Peter going big with seven
- not about math (490 times)
- every single time – important to faith

2. Response of the Debtors

- give me time to try
- plea for mercy, one reasonable and one extreme

3. From the Heart

- suggests it will change our motivation
- more than the absence of unforgiveness

“We forgive others when we strive against all thoughts of revenge. When we do not do our enemies mischief but wish them well. We grieve their calamities, pray for them, seek reconciliation with them and show ourselves ready to relieve them” Thomas Watson

1. Two Debtors

a) Servant to Master

- The Debt is ridiculously large
- 10 000 Talents = entire annual income of kingdom
- 1 silver talent = 6000 dracmas
- 1 dracma = average days wage
- debt is 60 million days wages
- equivalent to 10 million today
- request for time unrealistic

b) Servant to Servant

- The amount is small in relation to what he owed
- 100 denarii = 100 days common labor
- equivalent to approx.. 3 months wages
- The Servant went looking to settle the debt. Vs.28
- There is a plea for time to pay. Vs. 29

2. Two Responses

a) Master responds with mercy

- debt removed
- new lease on life and future

b) Servant responds without mercy

- debt must be settled, law invoked
- will remain in prison till family makes good
- judgment day for you buddy

3. Responses Seen By Others

a) large debt would have been known

- everyone see's the Master's actions

b) small debt would have been normal

- most understand the situation

c) distress of those observing

- clear this is not right knowing what we do

d) reported and resulting consequences

- family and life drastically changed

4. Clear Lesson Exposed

a) Jesus on how the Father Feels

- “So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

- “and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Matt. 6:12

- ‘forgiving one another’ Col. 3:13

- “And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.” Luke 23:34

Counter Cultural today – Society Suggests

1. I deserve..... And am not obliged to

- rights, benefits, excusing my behaviors
- holding others to account for actions and justifying myself on intentions

2. Small Issues don't have huge impact

- if it's a small thing, don't have to deal
- patterns of allowing irritations and pet peeves to stay festering

3. I will forgive others when... attaching conditions to the offering of forgiveness

- they say sorry and mean it
- they convince me they have changed
- they deserve it or earn it in some way
- question – is that how God extended to us?

4. My Actions (choices) in this affect me alone

- when I am ready – will offer it
- unforgiveness affects everyone in relationship with you
- reflects who you see God to be

So What

1. As a Child of God – You have been forgiven
 - while we were ‘enemies’ of God
 - while we owed a ‘debt’ that we could not pay
 - before you ‘cleaned up’
 - Christ took your sin and punishment – cross
 - Given his righteousness – removed as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against you again
 - we are all the first servant

2. Clear in Scripture you are called to reflect this amazing truth
 - not an optional issue, connected issue
 - when we claim the name of Christ we reflect the father in our actions and choices
3. Holy Spirit will reveal area's, empower your decision to walk the road of forgiveness
 - justice is still something you can love and leave with God
4. Create Patterns, choose the path
 - deals with bitterness, resentment, issues