



A just weight  
and balance

are the  
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

- Matthew 18:21

**Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?**

- 18:22 **Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.**

- **To dwell above  
with saints we love,  
Oh, that will be glory.**

- **But to dwell below  
with saints we know,  
Well, that's another  
story.**

(R. Steadman)

- Peter's question is a good question.
- And the reason it is, is that Peter knows Peter.
- He knows himself.
- And he knew how many times he needed to be forgiven.

- He also is talking out of the context of his Jewish background, where there were certain hard lines drawn in relation to forgiveness.

- Might I add that we are greatly indebted to Peter for a lot things?
  - One of them is that he asked questions.

- People who ask questions of the right people get the right answers.

- Forgiveness is the only way to break through the resentment barrier that separates us from each other.
- Forgiveness is the virtue we most enjoy,
  - And least employ,  
in our Christian experience.



- We all love to be forgiven.

- We expect it,  
and want it.

- But we find it a struggle to forgive.

- We resist it, and refuse oftentimes to do it.

- We are like a little boy who was saying his prayers.
  - As he went down the list of his family, asking God to bless them,
- he omitted his brother's name.
  - His mother said to him,
- "Why didn't you pray for Cliff?"

- He said, "I'm not going to ask God to bless Cliff because he hit me."
  - And his mother said, "Don't you remember Jesus said to forgive your enemies?"
  - But the little boy said, "That's just the trouble. He's not my enemy; he's my brother!"

- We laugh at Cliff because it is easy to pray for our enemies whom we rarely see but difficult to pray for our brother or sister whom we may see more that we would like.

- We owe a very great deal to the fact that Peter had a quick tongue.
  - Again and again we find him rushing into a situation without thinking.
    - And this drew from Jesus teaching which is immortal.

- On this occasion Peter thought that he was being very generous.
- He asked Jesus how often he ought to forgive his brother,
- And then answered his own question by suggesting that he should forgive seven times.

- Peter was not without good reason for this suggestion.
- He was merely a product of the times.
- The Rabbi's taught that a man must forgive his brother three times.
- Basing their teaching on the Book of Amos.  
(Amos 1:3;1:6;1:9;1:11;1:13;2:1;2:4;2:6).



- Thus they taught that God himself never forgave more than *three times.*

- So Peter feels that he has gone to the utmost limit when he doubled that.
- And added one for good measure.
- Oh! How we pat ourselves on the back.

- By proposing any limit whatever to forgiveness, Peter showed that he still considered that to forgive was the exceptional thing.

- That he was foregoing a right to which he was entitled.

- That somehow underneath the forgiveness we extend to an erring brother, there lies a right to revenge which we may at any time assert.

- What Peter is really getting at is:
- How many times do we forgive if he sins again  
or  
sins the same sin?
- Does forgiveness have a limit?

- That's really the point of the whole text.
- Does forgiveness have a limit?

- So Peter suggest that **7** would be the magic number.
- And you know, he's waiting for congratulations.
- He's waiting for the Lord to say, "Marvelous, Peter."

- Jesus does something quite unexpected.
- He holds up a mirror in order that Peter might see himself.
- Not a literal mirror but a symbolic one.



- **One that exposes**  
our Peter  
as he really are.
  - One that we  
**turn away from**  
due to its ugliness.
  - One that we  
**do not want to see.**

- Our Lord then gives a parable.
- In this parable there is a man who owes a debt to the king but is unable to pay.

- The king threatens to sell his family into servitude in order for the debt to be paid.
  - Realizing this the man begs for forgiveness.
  - The king takes pity and forgives the debt.

- Then later this same man found a man who owed him a small debt.
- Evidently, forgetting that the king had forgiven him, took the man by the throat and had him imprisoned.
  - When the king heard about this he became very angry and had him put into prison.

- That, says Jesus, is what we do when we refuse to forgive each other even the most insulting and injurious offenses.
  - No matter  
how hurt we are  
by what someone has done to us,
    - In comparison to what God has forgiven us,  
it is like comparing twenty dollars to ten million dollars of debt.

- The valuable of this parable lies in seeing that it is a picture of us.

- The Lord Jesus is here holding up a mirror in order that we might see ourselves.

- There is not one of us here who is a Christian, who does not realize that we did not stop sinning when he was first forgiven in Christ.
- Despite the increasing light and knowledge that has come to us.
  - We still experienced much more failure than we like to admit.

- Not a day goes by  
but that we  
do not stand  
in desperate need  
of the forgiving words  
of our great King



- And yet, when someone offends us,  
how quickly we revert  
to our old selves.
- "*I demand an apology.*"
- "*I demand my rights.*"
- "*Treat me like I deserve.*"
- "*I demand to be treated with respect.*"
  - How many times  
do we utter such words?

- **We are the servant**  
who has been forgiven  
a vast and staggering  
amount of money,
  - **And God is**  
**the great king**  
who has forgiven us.

- Ten thousand talents is an incredible amount.
  - A talent was worth about a thousand dollars.
  - Ten thousand talents is ten million dollars.
- The entirely yearly income of a kingdom would hardly be that much.
  - It is an exaggeration used to make a point.

- **We must see ourselves in this**  
if we are to be helped  
by the words of Jesus.
  - We must see that  
**the sum of our offenses**  
against God through the years  
constitutes this kind of a debt,  
**an absolutely**  
**impossible amount.**

- Our rebellions,
- Our selfish acts and thoughts,
  - Our willful choices,
  - Our loveless attitude toward one another,
    - The hurt we have caused others.

- Our pride, our anger, our lusts,
  - Our bitterness, our hates,
    - Our lies;
    - All these add up through the years to a staggering debt we owe God and which we cannot pay.

- But then there comes the good news,
- The wonderful good news of the gospel.
- In the presence of God we heard him pronounce these word,
- "Forgiven, in Christ's name."

- The debt  
wiped away.
- In one moment  
it was all gone.
- The glory of that moment  
when we realized  
that before God  
we stood cleansed,  
blameless, free.



- Forgiveness is a great, great virtue.

- It is the key to the unity of the church.

- It's the key to love.

- It's the key to meaningful relationships.

- **Forgiveness**

**tears down the barriers**

**that separate us**

from one another,

to wall us off,

to make us bitter,

and angry, and vengeful.

- Forgiveness is a tremendous concept.

- Proverbs 19:11

“It is a man’s glory  
to pass over a  
transgression.”

- If you want to see man at his best,  
he is at his best  
in his ability to forgive.
- In overlooking a transgression,
- In forgetting a sin and an evil.
  - Ephesians 4:32  
“forgiving one another,  
even as God for Christ’s sake  
hath forgiven us.”

- We all remember the wonderful story of Joseph who forgave his brothers for their awful deed..

- Genesis 50:20-21

“As for you, you thought evil against me; - ”

says Joseph to his brothers,

- **“ But God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive.**

- *Now therefore fear ye not:*
- *And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.*”
- **Even though they had**
  - Thrown him in a **pit**,
  - Sold him into **slavery**,
- Treated him as if he were **dead**.
- **He forgave them everything.**

- Forgiveness is the glory of a man/woman.
- It is the highest human virtue.
- It is the virtue that understands the forgiveness of God.

- Jesus has just talked about becoming like little children.
- And little children need forgiveness.
- So we might as well learn to forgive because all children need forgiveness.
- And in God's eyes we are all children.



- No matter how **we portray ourselves.**
- We're **weak.**
- We're **ignorant.**
- We're **selfish.**
- We're prone to **disobey,**
  - And we need **forgiveness frequently.**
- **We are such children.**

- Louis the XII said,  
“*Nothing smells so sweet  
as the dead body of your enemy.*”

- That maybe articulated  
something of most  
people’s feelings.
- Forgiveness is very foreign  
to man’s nature.
  - We must not  
forgive with our lips,  
and bear malice  
in our hearts

- We're all somewhat shocked when we see Jesus dying on the cross and people are spitting on Him.
- They've shoved a crown of thorns into His brow.

- They've hammered nails through His limbs.
- And He's hanging naked with flies and blood  
as a cloak  
before the  
whole watching world,
- And He looks down  
and says,  
***“Father forgive them.  
They don't know  
what they're doing.”***

- And we're shocked again in the Acts 7:60 to see Stephen crushed beneath a pile of stones and he looks up and says,  
“Lay not this sin to their charge.”

- God's people are to be like Christ.
  - And to be like Stephen.
- We are to release ALL against a person who has wronged us,
  - No matter how they've wronged us,
  - No matter how we have been wronged.

- I know there is something within us that resents that thought.

- But, keep in mind that it is what Jesus is teaching.

- And not only is he teaching it but He soon puts it into practice as He is dying on the cross.

- No only did Jesus die on the cross to redeem us
- But, He died to show us how to live.



**The doors of the church  
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride  
Say  
“Come”.**

**Revelation 22:17**



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