

Recap of 11/1/20 message (Joe Ricchuiti – Matthew 18:21-35):

1. Matthew 18:21-35 is part of a larger conversation about the restoration of relationships between believers that starts in Matthew 21:15. It's what prompts Peter's question about forgiveness. Jesus' answer is that forgiveness cannot be limited.

-“A believer is to put no limit on the forgiveness he extends to another believer who has injured him and then seeks forgiveness.” (Pentecost)

-“Forgiveness is one of the most important of the Christian virtues....The Bible makes it clear that the way to relate to others and to maintain the unity to which we Christians are called in Christ demands the exercise of forgiveness....It is not surprising then to discover that there is much emphasis in the New Testament on forgiving, and that in fact we are commanded to forgive as freely as we have been forgiven in Christ Jesus.” (Richards)

-“Non-Christians may tax your patience and compassion, but believers to whom you have deeply opened your life will

drive you to levels of forgiveness of which you never dreamed.” (Compact Guide to the Christian Life)

2. Jesus tells a parable about the unforgiving servant to illustrate His point. The parable can be interpreted as follows:

-The King is God the Father.

-The enormity of the debt owed by the first servant is the enormity of the debt of human sin, our sin.

-The disciples are debtors helpless to do anything about this condition, utterly dependent upon God's grace.

-In grace, based on the cross, God cancels the debt.

-The result is that we are to forgive others their smaller debt to us (that is wrongs done to us).

-To not forgive is to show that we don't really understand God's forgiveness (1 Peter 2:24; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:12-13).

-There are consequences to not being forgiving toward others. Consequences such as God's discipline (1 Corinthians 11:27-32; Hebrews 12:5-10), bitterness, depressions, physical illness, or emotional distress.

-“When you have an unforgiving spirit, you put yourself in prison spiritually and emotionally; you pay dearly for the luxury of carrying a grudge. Is it worth it?” (Wiersbe)