

# Hard Sayings Of Jesus

## Lesson 16

### I. This Week's Hard Saying

*Matt 18:34-35 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. KJV*

### II. Why This Is Hard

- a. This is hard because it seems that Jesus' statement says that the Father will **revoke a pardon** of one who does not forgive, from the heart, his brother (or sister) for a trespass (sin) against them.

### IV. The Parable in Which This Occurs

- a. This parable (Matt 18:23-35) arises out of a conversation between Peter and Jesus in which Peter asks how many times he must forgive someone who sins against him. Peter was thinking that something on the order of **seven times** would be magnanimous of him.
- b. The Lord, however, had something quite different in mind and states that **seventy times** seven would be more like the number required.
- c. Jesus then develops the parable in which a servant of a king owes him a debt that can **never be repaid** and the king is about to collect by placing the servants' wife and children into prison and confiscating all that he had.
- d. The servant begs for time to repay and the king shows him mercy and forgives his debt **entirely**.
- e. The forgiven servant then goes out to collect **small debts** owed to him and does not show any mercy to his debtors for the tiny bit that is owed to him.
- f. The king hears about his servant's **merciless** dealing and then revokes the pardon granted on the massive debt owed by this ungrateful servant.

### IV. Understanding Jesus' Meaning

- a. Jesus repeatedly impressed upon His disciples the **necessity** of forgiveness: they were not to harbor resentment, but freely forgive those who had injured them in some way. Mark 11:25-26 *And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. KJV*
- b. The gospel is a message of forgiveness: it could not be otherwise because it is the gospel of God and God is a **forgiving God**. Mic 7:18 *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. KJV*
- c. Those who receive the forgiveness of God, who call God their father, are **expected** to manifest something of His character and display a forgiving attitude to others who have sinned against them. Matt 5:44-45 *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: KJV*
- d. The Our Father contains a petition in which the petitioner asks for forgiveness of his sins as he himself has forgiven the sins of others against himself. Such a petition could not be made in **sincerity** unless one had indeed forgiven those who had sinned against him. Matt 6:12 *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. KJV*
- e. Immediately after that prayer in Matthew, Jesus again states the requirement that if one asks for forgiveness from the Father it is also **required** to forgive others who have sinned against oneself. Matt 6:14-15 *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. KJV*
- f. We know that forgiveness of those who have sinned against us is important, but, is it possible that God would **revoke** His forgiveness of us if we fail to forgive others as this hard saying seems to say?

### IV. Understanding Forgiveness

- a. Forgiveness is the act of excusing or pardoning another in spite of his slights, shortcomings, and **intentional harm**. As a theological term, forgiveness refers to God's pardon of the sins of human beings.
- b. The **initiative** to forgive comes from Him because He is ready to forgive. He is a God of grace and pardon. Dan 9:9 *The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; NIV*
- c. Sin deserves divine punishment because it is a violation of God's **holy character** and His justice demands that all sin be punished. 1 Peter 1:16 *for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." NIV*
- d. In order for God to forgive our sin **vicariously**, two conditions are necessary.
  1. An **acceptable** life must be taken as a substitute for that of the sinner. Lev 22:21 *And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein. KJV*
  2. The sinner must personally **identify** himself with the substitute in a spirit of repentance and faith Lev 4:14-15 *When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the*

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*congregation. 15 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the Lord: and the bullock shall be killed before the Lord. KJV*

- e. Forgiveness in the New Testament is directly linked to Christ and His **sacrificial death** on the cross. Acts 5:30-31 *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. KJV*
- f. He was the morally **perfect** sacrifice, the final and ultimate fulfillment of all Old Testament sacrifices Heb 9:25-26 *Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. 26 Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. NIV*
- g. Since He, taking all sin upon Himself, bore the law's death **penalty** against sinners, those who trust in His sacrifice are freed from that penalty. Isa 53:5-6 *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. NIV*
- h. By faith sinners are forgiven-"**justified**" in Paul's terminology. Rom 5:8-9 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. KJV*
- i. Christ's **resurrection** is also related to forgiveness. It was an act by which God wiped out the false charges against Him; a declaration of the perfect righteousness of His Son, and of His acceptance of Christ's sacrifice 1 Tim 3:16 *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. KJV*
- j. Because He has been acquitted and declared righteous, this is also true for those whom He **represents**. Thus, Christ's resurrection was a necessary condition for the forgiveness of man's sins 1 Cor 15:17-20 *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. KJV*
- k. The forgiveness of the sinner is solely and inextricably linked to the righteousness of Christ, and the believer's position **in Christ**. It is therefore impossible that a true believer could have his forgiveness revoked by God. John 14:20 *On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. NIV*
- l. To revoke forgiveness once granted would mean that the ultimate condition for the forgiveness of sin is rooted in the **works** (forgiveness of others) of the one who is saved by Christ. Eph 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. NIV*

#### VI. The Relationship Between My Forgiveness and Forgiving Others

- a. God's forgiveness of us works into us a profound comprehension of our own guilt and produces a true **humility** which makes the forgiveness of others from the heart something that we are able to do.
- b. This is, in part what it means to personally **identify** with Christ's substitutionary death for our personal sins. In effect we confess: "I am guilty of the most heinous sin, I am forgiven and I can withhold forgiveness from no one."
- c. Failure to forgive another for their sin against me is tantamount to saying that the blood of Jesus Christ is **not sufficient** to cleanse the sin of the one who has sinned against me.
- d. Failure to forgive those who sin against me is, in effect, a claim that the sin I have suffered is greater than my own **personal guilt** in the murder of the innocent Lamb of God. This is unrepentant arrogance and is worthy of the second death.
- e. Hence, the person who fails to forgive **demonstrates** that s/he has never truly been forgiven by God.
- f. This is why Jesus says "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from **your hearts** forgive not every one his brother their trespasses". Matt 18:35

#### VII. Application

- a. For the believer, forgiveness is an active, not a passive work in the soul. We do not just forget about it because when others sin against us it creates a psychic debt (a memory with emotion) that must be paid.
- b. The payment for that debt may be extracted from the one who sins, or it may be put on the account of the sinless Lamb of God, but, someone must pay the debt.
- c. By consciously placing the sin of the offender under the blood of Christ, we are cancelling the debt owed to us by that person.
- d. While we may remember the occasion of that offense, when it is completely forgiven by us, the emotional component is released and it no longer has power within us. The debt is paid.
- e. Who immediately comes to mind as one who has sinned against you? If you experience a strong visceral response when you think of what they have done to you, perhaps you need to place their offense under the blood of Christ.
- f. Since our forgiveness in Christ is so thorough and complete we can forgive others in spite of whatever they may have done to us.