

hard life, but that was expected of them.

- 2) Jesus asked if the master thanked the servant for doing as he had been commanded to do. The answer was “No.”
The servant was simply doing his duty.
- 3) *After Melody and I got married, I worked for a time in a factory welding microwave ovens together. I worked the 2-11 p.m. shift every day. My job was to weld a part on each microwave quickly and accurately. At times, keeping up with the assembly line and doing an accurate job was not easy. When my work day ended, the boss did not thank me for working. I was just doing my duty. If you work a job, the same is true for you.*

b. Therefore, forgiving is our Christian duty.

- 1) Jesus then applied this parable to his disciples and us.
 - a) God is our Master in heaven. He is our Creator, Sustainer and our Sovereign.
 - b) We are God’s servants. Christ has purchased us with His own blood when He died on the cross. We are no longer our own boss. We owe Christ everything. As God’s servants, it is our duty to obey His commands.
 - c) Jesus said that we ought to have the attitude that *“we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”* (v.10).
- 2) What was Jesus teaching in all this? He was saying that as Christians, we have a duty to obey His command to forgive offenders, even if it is difficult or unpleasant.
- 3) Our need is not for greater faith, but for humble obedience. Our submission to Christ should reflect His absolute Lordship over our lives.

Conclusion: Are you a good forgiver? If not, God put this chapter in the Bible just for you. If you are a Christian, it is your duty to forgive those who offend you. If forgiving is difficult, humbly ask God for grace to forgive. We also need to become good repenters. Quickly seek forgiveness of those you offend. *If you are not a Christian, you need to seek God’s saving forgiveness.*

Song: Have Thine Own Way - 388

Forgiveness: A Christian Duty

11 July 2021 AM – Luke 17:1-10 – Parables21 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Two little boys had quarrelled. But the next morning, Johnny took his cap and headed for Bobby’s house again. Surprised, his mother said, “What! Going to play with him again? I thought you quarrelled only last evening and were never going to have anything more to do with each other.”

Johnny looked a little sheepish, dug his toe into the carpet for a moment, then flashed a satisfied smile as he hurried away. “Oh, Bobby and I are good forgivers.” (Source unknown, edited slightly)

Transition: Here in Luke 17, I want to uncover what Jesus said about our Christian duty to forgive so that we might become good forgivers.

1. Jesus Identified our Christian Duty(v.1-4)

a. First, we must confront offences.

- 1) Offences will happen. A person may have been unkind, lied about you, called you a name, cheated you, hurt you, harmed you in some significant way, or even been unfaithful or disloyal to you. These things hurt!
- 2) Offences are common in our relationships. We are sinful people. *Just the other day, Melody and I could not find something that we bought. I sinfully put the blame on her. I was wrong. I offended her. She was hurt.*
- 3) Jesus said that if a brother sins against us, we are to rebuke him (i.e., we must tell him that he hurt us).
- 4) Thankfully, *Melody lovingly told me that I hurt her feelings. She did what Jesus said we are to do when someone has trespassed against us.*

b. Next, Jesus said we must forgive.

- 1) He said that if the confronted sinner repents, **we must forgive him.** *I told Melody that I was sorry for blaming her, and she forgave me. I am grateful that we have both learned in our 41 years together to be good forgivers, but forgiving can be difficult.* Remember too that forgiving does not justify the wrong; it is simply letting go of the offence.

- 2) What are we to do if the offender does **not** repent? Until he does, he will not prosper. (Proverbs 28:13) "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: ...*" However, we must not hold on bitterness in our hearts toward him. (Matthew 5:44) "*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;*" We must clear our own conscience by forgiving even if the offender will not repent. Jesus forgave His unrepentant crucifiers. (Luke 23:34) "*Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. ...*"

c. Jesus also said, we must forgive repeatedly.

- 1) Jesus knew that his disciples found it difficult to forgive which is why He added verse 4.
- 2) Even if a person wrongs us seven times in one day and each time repents, we must forgive him. In Matthew 6:15, Jesus said, "*But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*"
- 3) A majority of marriage conflicts could be resolved if the couple practised confronting, repenting and forgiving. The same is true of nearly all conflicts.
- 4) The person whom you are struggling to forgive is the person God wants you to forgive.

2. Jesus Qualified our Christian Duty (v.5-6)

a. The disciples admitted their weakness.

- 1) They said, "*Lord, Increase our faith*".
- 2) If you say, "*I am just not a strong enough Christian to be able to forgive repeatedly like that*", then you are thinking just like Christ's disciples.
- 3) They thought that they lacked the faith needed to forgive repeatedly. They thought that only "super saints" could forgive the same person over and over again.
- 4) Their prayer, "*Lord, increase our faith*", was a good prayer, but was their problem really a lack of faith?

b. Jesus said the problem is not a lack of faith.

- 1) Jesus illustrated His point with a story. He assured them

that if they had even tiny faith like a tiny grain of mustard seed, such faith could command a huge *sycamine* tree to be uprooted and cast into the sea.

a) According to the Fausset's Bible Dictionary, *The sycamine is the mulberry tree ... cultivated for supplying food for the silkworm caterpillars. Slow growing; but attaining large size, and stretching deep roots, so that it would require strong force to "pluck it up by the root."*

b) *Faith* is the belief that God can do anything that He said He will do. Even tiny faith in God is powerful.

- 2) Jesus did **not** tell them to do something that was impossible to do. God will never ask you to do something that is impossible for you to do with His help.
 - a) When God calls a missionary to a foreign land, He enables him or her to do that task.
 - b) When the Holy Spirit prompts you to witness to a person you meet, He will enable you to share the Gospel with that person.
 - c) When God commands that you forgive a person, He is able to give you the grace to do it.
- 3) The disciples did not need larger faith; they needed humble obedience. **They did not need more faith; they needed more grace.** Grace is divine enabling given to those who are humble before the Lord. (James 4:6) "*But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*"
- 4) Our duty is to **draw from God's grace to forgive.**

3. Jesus Clarified our Christian Duty (v.7-10)

He did this by telling the disciples a parable about a servant.

a. Servants must do their duties with no thanks.

- 1) Servants were common in that day. This servant was sent to the field to plough the field or to feed the cattle. He worked from early morning until late evening. When he came in from his work, the master did not invite him to sit and eat. Instead, the master expected the servant to prepare the master's meal and serve him. Servants had a