

# How Can I Forgive?

(Matthew 18:21-35)

- Introduction:
1. All of us know the sting of being sinned against.
  2. We often react to offenses in several ways, which are not biblical.
  3. The development of the discipline of forgiveness is not an easy task, but it is a necessary one.
  4. In this lesson, we will examine why it's necessary and offer some helpful tips to do it.

## I. The Parable

- A. A servant is forgiven a great debt by his master (18:27).
- B. This forgiven servant then fails to forgive a fellow debtor (18:28-29).
- C. Consequently, the master revokes his forgiveness (18:31-34).
- D. We must "from the heart" forgive our brethren (18:35).

## II. Practical Applications

- A. Life isn't always fair.
  1. Habakkuk.
  2. Let God work in his own time frame.
- B. What happens in you is more important than what happens to you.
  1. (Genesis 50:20) You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.
  2. (Genesis 49:22-24) His bow remained in strength.
- C. God is watching to see what you will do and how you will react.
  1. (1 Peter 2:19-20).
  2. Bear up under what is unfair and you will have God's favor.
- D. Don't give in to bitterness.
  1. (Ephesians 4:31-32).
  2. Stop replaying the offense over and over again in your mind.
- E. Don't allow one wrong to cause another.
  1. (Romans 12:17-21).
  2. (Luke 9:51-56) Jesus, James, & John with the Samaritans.
- F. What you do is more important than how you feel.
  1. (Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:20).
  2. We work our way into feeling better easier than we feel our way into working better.
- G. Remember that you are still the bigger debtor.
  1. When all is said and done, the one who has sinned against you has not sinned against you any greater than you have sinned against God.
  2. How many times has your worst enemy sinned against you and how many times have you sinned against your Heavenly Father?

- Conclusion:
1. Forgiveness is an ongoing battle.
  2. Don't give in to hatred and bitterness.
  3. Remember that your forgiveness depends on your willingness to forgive others from the heart (Matthew 18:35).