



**God Covered
Your Cost!
Matthew 18:21-27**



Observations

- Peter comes to Jesus one day, and somebody has hurt him (done him wrong), not once but several times
- The basic thought is, *“I know I’m supposed to forgive him, it feels unfair to do; but how often should I forgive him?”*, *“Why should it always be me?”* (Rabbis said that one is obligated to forgive someone 3 times)
- Notice Peter’s scenario, it’s not just anyone that has hurt him but it’s his brother, someone close (could represent a husband, wife, sister)



Peter's Concern Here Has Been Felt By Everyone Who Has Been Hurt!

- **Why should I forgive (put myself out like that)?**
- **I might get hurt again (doormat syndrome)**
- **What if they don't deserve forgiveness?**
- **Forgiveness looks like pretty risky business**
- **It's one of those subjects that you would expect Jesus to talk about "theologically" from the religious perspective, but doesn't work out so well for those of us who live in the real world!**

Observations

- Imagine Peter's response to Jesus, rather than being commended for his thought process, Jesus says that you have 70 times 7 acts of forgiveness to go
- Jesus is saying that you are going to get hurt a lot in life, and you have basically 2 ways to respond
 - 1) You can live a life of vengefulness with bitterness
 - 2) You can live a life of forgiveness (difficult for the mature)
 - 3) Then Jesus tells a story to illustrate where he wants Peter to focus on the concept of forgiveness



The Story in Present Day Terminology!

- One day the founder and President/C.E.O. of a large thriving software company calls in his whole management team (vice-presidents, department heads, supervisors) because it's tax time in the government of Rome
- The Roman I.R.S. has audited the books, and everyone is nervous because they know that Rome has a Flat Tax Rate! (*if you don't pay what we say, you will be flattened*)

The Story

- It turns out that during the auditing process, the Roman I.R.S. finds that one of the V.P.'s has been putting his hand in the cookie jar.
- This V.P. has been working for the company a long time, but he has an obvious weakness

He wants to maintain a life that he can't afford

He has systematically embezzled from the company a number of years

Jesus says that the man now owes an astronomical sum of money (Jesus gives them a number in their language that it would be impossible to repay, like more money than he'd ever see, not one, but like 10 million dollars)



Observations

- There is no possible way he could pay the money back
- He did not make any shrewd investments (no Swiss bank accounts) no stash; he just blew the money
- Now he is left with no job, or job offers and the prospect of a prison sentence hanging over his head
- This is a case of “*unadulterated greed*” open and shut



Observations

- Now comes the day of reckoning. The company has a big meeting. All the stockholders are there, and the guilty man comes up to the founder and C.E.O. of the company
- The C.E.O had given him a chance, liked him, believed in him, trusted him.
- He is humiliated as he stands there admitting his greed and the violation of trust (his palms are sweating and his heart is pounding)

Basically He Knows He's Finished!

- He would be thrown into jail, or sold into slavery until his debt was paid
- And His family would bear the responsibility of his sins
- The common slave in Jesus' day was worth about \$2000. His whole family wouldn't bring in 1/10 of 1% of the debt he owed (meaning that his future generations would be born into slavery)
- The Sentence is Read: Sell everything he owns, sell him into slavery, his wife, his children, and his children's children until the unpayable debt is paid



CASE CLOSED!

***“GUARDS ESCORT
HIM OUT TO JAIL!”***

NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS





But Something Happens To The Embezzler as Reality Sets In (an idea)

- He Thinks, *“what if I were to fall on my face and beg for mercy? It’s a long shot, but what do I have to lose?”*
- So the V.P. falls on his knees and says, *“I know I’m guilty; I know what I owe. Please show me some mercy. I’ll pay you everything I get from now on.”*
- Now Jesus’ listeners would know that what this man is asking for is crazy!




When it Comes to Owing Something: Every Economy Runs On One Principle

You Owe, You Pay!

Certain Money Lenders Are Sensitive About This

- Banks, Credit Unions, Loan Sharks (adequately named)
- Brothers and Sisters are sensitive when you don't pay them back (and never bring it up, as you think "maybe they forgot about it and I'll keep it that way")
- Don't assume they forgot, rather assume that they remember!



Now Imagine What His Colleagues are Thinking as He Falls on His Knees and Begs for Mercy!

- *“This is embarrassing, he has stooped to an all time low”*
- *“He took from us and he got caught”*
- *“He didn’t care about us or the reputation of the company or the founder”*
- *“If he hadn’t got caught he’d still be stealing”*
- *“Surely the founder is not going to fall for his drama”*

Observations

- But when they look at the old man, he can't speak because he's all choked up
- But the C.E.O. thinks of the man standing before him and his family and something happens to his heart
- His eyes are teary, his lips tremble as he speaks
- In Jesus' account of the story, in Matthew 18:27, He calls it compassion or pity



The C.E.O. Walks Over To The Man Who Is On His Knees and Says:

➤ *“I will forgive you, I will rescind your sentence!”*

➤ The man now will not go to jail

➤ He will not be a slave

➤ He will not lose his family

➤ He may keep what he owns

But the C.E.O. Goes Beyond That

➤ The unpayable debt does not have to be repaid

➤ Grace will be extended indefinitely




We Love This Description Of the
Heart Of God in This Story! (the
Grace and Mercy of God!)

But!

***THERE IS STILL A
WHOLE LOT OF
MONEY MISSING!
FORGIVENESS COMES
WITH A PRICE TAG!***



WHO ABSORBS THE COST?

- **Children, when you don't pass to the next grade or when you flunk out of college for social reasons, and have to come back home, who absorbs the cost?**
 - **When there is an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, who absorbs the cost? (we put our parents in a position of social and financial loss) Living styles change!**
 - **Brothers/Sisters, when your urine or hair sample is positive for T.H.C. and you get fired, who absorbs the cost?**
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Who Absorbs The Cost?

- When you get lung cancer from cigarettes?
- When you get alcoholic cirrhosis from chronic alcohol use?
- When you marry a girl or boy that has no spiritual understanding, have children by them, and they get tired of you and bolt for another “lover?”

Somebody Has To Put Forth Some Effort To Put You In A Better Position Than The One You've Gotten Yourself Into!



Let's Summarize

- The Master in this story is a stand-in for God
- The man or embezzler is you and me
- Jesus is saying that all of us have accumulated a moral debt before God that has been growing for years
- Each, lie, immoral action, adds to our mountain of debt
- So God develops a new paradigm He never would have developed if we hadn't sinned



He Says:

***YOU OWE,
I'LL PAY!***

***But Remember That
Forgiveness Does Not Come
Cheap! John 3:16***



The Plan Of Salvation

Hear the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Believe the Gospel	Acts 15:7
Repent Of Sins	Acts 17:30
Confess Christ	Acts 8:37
Be Baptized	Acts 8:38