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- The Parables of the Kingdom
- Sermon #17 Dave Sturkey
- The Debt Our Forgiveness Brings, Part 2
- Matthew 18:15-35
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- I. The Process of Reconciliation and the Heart of Forgiveness
  - a. What the Text Says – If you love your brother, you will pursue him when he sins against you.
    - i. Brother-to-Brother = Christian-to-Christian
    - ii. Private Principle
    - iii. Semi-Private Principle
    - iv. Public Principle – Declaration of Apostasy
    - v. “The Binding Principle”
  - b. What the Text Means – If you don’t love your brother, then the church will declare your faith as false.
    - i. Relationship breaking sin is so serious, not only personally between people, but also because it indicates false faith.
    - ii. Membership is implied here. This is speaking of ex-communication – withdrawing something from the unrepentant sinner.
      - 1. All Christian churches have membership (formal or informal)
      - 2. 3 Marks of a Biblical Church
        - a. Preaching of the Gospel
        - b. Sacraments
        - c. Discipline (declaration of who is inside or outside the church’s teaching)

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- II. The Principle Illustrated in Jesus’ Parable
  - a. Because our salvation came by such great grace, we must show grace to others.
  - b. If we show no grace to others that echoes the grace we show grace to others. have received, then we have false faith. A true apprehension of grace leads to graciousness.
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3 **THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM**

Sermon 17

Dave Sturkey

Matthew 18:15-35

4 **REVIEW**

- Jesus taught that if we don’t display a heart of forgiveness, then this is evidence that we ourselves may have never experienced the saving grace of Christ.
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5 **TWO PRINCIPLES OF FORGIVENESS**

Principle 1 – Because sins against us are a debt, to forgive, we must bear the debt of the sin.

- Biblical idea of restitution
- Biblical concept of “an eye for an eye”

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Principle 2 – The greater the sin against us, the more difficult it is to forgive, because to forgive you must bear the full weight of the sin.

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“God’s grace and forgiveness, while free to the recipient, are always costly for the giver... From the earliest parts of the Bible, it was understood that God could not forgive without sacrifice. No one who is seriously wronged can “just forgive” the perpetrator.... But when you forgive, that means you absorb the loss and the debt. You bear it yourself. All forgiveness, then, is costly.”

Tim Keller on forgiveness.

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Principle 3 – True forgiveness (that brings reconciliation) always requires compassion and love for the other person.

10  **HOW RECONCILING FORGIVENESS WORKS**

1. Someone sins against me and harms me, and by their action I am hurt and damaged.
2. My feelings against them are legitimate. There has been a real wound created.
3. If I love them, then I will pursue a process of reconciliation with them and I will find myself more and more willing to bear the weight of the sin against me.
4. Because I am a Christian, something happens inside of me. I realize God’s compassion and forgiveness for my great sin, and am more and more willing to give forgiveness to others.

11  **CHECKLIST TO FORGIVENESS**

- How deeply do you see your own sin and unworthiness before God? Unforgiving people always see themselves as “little” sinners. Forgiving people see themselves as “great” sinners.
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- How much do you love the other person and how much do you love yourself? This is always in contrast to each other. You cannot be a great lover of others, if you are a great lover of yourself.

12  **COVENANT-BREAKING SINS AND FORGIVENESS**

- A covenant is a BOND OF RELATIONSHIP and there are both responsibilities and privileges in these covenant-relationships.
  - Marriage
  - Parent/Child
  - Christians who covenant together in a church family
- And there are sins which break this bond and prevent future relationship.

13 14  **THREE TYPES OF FORGIVENESS**

1. There is the type of forgiveness that flows daily and often from a person who has a ‘FORGIVING HEART.’

Relationships with this type of person are easy and they are quick to overlook sin and think the better of someone rather than the worse. When they are wronged, they seek

reconciliation quickly. They move to the “process of forgiveness” quickly rather than slowly. They exhibit themselves as true children of God.

15  **THREE TYPES OF FORGIVENESS**

2. There is also RECONCILING FORGIVENESS that loves others enough to work through a process of forgiveness where the sin is confronted, laid upon a table, and dealt with.

Matthew 18 explains the process clearly ...

- Privately first between the two parties
- With other’s help to reconcile the issue
- If repentance after facts established, then there is continuing relationship. If no repentance, then there is separation.

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“Forgiveness is not about forgetting. It is about letting go of another person's throat... Forgiveness does not create a relationship. Unless people speak the truth about what they have done and change their mind and behavior, a relationship of trust is not possible. When you forgive someone you certainly release them from judgment, but without true change, no real relationship can be established... Forgiveness in no way requires that you trust the one you forgive. But should they finally confess and repent, you will discover a miracle in your own heart that allows you to reach out and begin to build between you a bridge of reconciliation.”

Paul Young, *The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity*

17  **THREE TYPES OF FORGIVENESS**

3. There is a type of forgiveness with people who commit covenant-breaking sins, and the obligation in these cases is more “internal” than “external.” We give up the right to judge the person, and hand them over to God to be dealt with as he sees fit, but we realize that relationship is no longer possible.

4.

We can truly say, I forgive you, and not re-establish relationship.