

FORGIVENESS.

I. WHY IS FORGIVENESS SO IMPORTANT?

- a. Unforgiveness is more subtle than most sins.
- b. It's more common than most sins. - We all battle it from time to time.
- c. It's more dangerous - Unchecked, it will eat us alive.

II. THE TWO LEVELS OF FORGIVENESS. Matthew 18:21-27

Forgiveness from God and Forgiveness for others.

- a. That the huge debt is like our own.
Each of us accumulated a huge debt towards God.
- b. He created us. He loved us, took care of us, fed us, and clothed us.
Yet at some point each of us rebelled.
- c. Yet, God says to us:
Repent - Receive my Son -
And the debt gets erased. Just like that.

But the story doesn't end there. **Matthew 18:28**

- a. When the employer heard about it, he threw him into prison.
And in this prison, the man would face torture. **Matthew 18:31- 34**
- b. Unforgiveness is a self-inflicted prison. - It is self-induced torture.
Forgiveness or unforgiveness is your own choice.

Colossians 3:13 Ephesians 4:32 Luke 11:4

- c. And some of Jesus' own words are even more severe:

Matthew 6:14-15 Mark 11:25

- d. These tie in with the final verse of our scripture today: **Matthew 18:35**

Jesus and the other Bible writers consider forgiveness fairly important. **Luke 6:37**

III. FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS IS TIED TO FORGIVENESS FROM GOD.

Why are we to forgive? - Why is it so important?

- 1. Forgiveness brings freedom. **Matthew 18:26-27**

- a. Being forgiven means God gives freedom to us.
- b. But what does unforgiveness do?

It puts you into prison.

Unforgiveness of others results in not feeling forgiven by God.

- 2. Forgiveness brings closure.

- a. We seem to think that if we forgive, then we will forget. That's not true.
Forgetting is not a substitute for forgiveness.

- b. Forgiveness is a choice.

Ask for the courage to forgive.

Ask God to show you how to move on.

- 3. Forgiveness brings life. **Colossians 2:13**

Paul puts "giving life" and "forgiveness" in the same breath.

We find life when we are forgiven. Joy, hope, peace, strength.

We give life when we forgive.