

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 11/8-9/2021 *Matthew Chapter 18*

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

Join Zoom Meeting -

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Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 For Audio & notes from previous studies - www.ptwente.com

OPENING PRAYER

Matthew Chapter 18

Who is the Greatest? – (vs. 1-5); Jesus Warns of Offenses - (vs. 6-9); The Parable of the Lost Sheep – (vs. 10-14); Dealing With a Sinning Brother – (vs. 15-20); The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant – (vs. 21-35)

Who is the Greatest?

Mat 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Luk 9:46-48) Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. [47] And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, [48] and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great."

- **God chose ordinary people to be His disciples.** It seems that the disciples were always arguing over the fact of who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The reason why they argued over it, was because each of them thought that they would be the greatest. They had their reasons for thinking that. It was a dispute that went on among them. James and John, even got their mother into the issue, coming to Jesus, asking, Lord when you come into Your kingdom, I would like my one boy on the right side and the other on the left side of You. Now they are questioning Jesus. They said to Jesus, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” I am certain that each of them were waiting with anticipation as Jesus, they thought was going to say, Peter will be the greatest, or John, or James.

Mat 18:2 Then Jesus called a little child (*paidion* – a child, normally under the age of puberty; *paidion* is used here in verses 2, 3, 4, 5! *Mikros* – little ones is used in verses 6, 10, 14) **to Him, set him in the midst of them,**

- **But instead, Jesus called a little child,** saying to come. Be with Me. Stand here with Me for a minute.

Mat 18:3 and said, "Assuredly (*amen* – strong affirmation of what is stated; 30x in Mat.), **I say to you, unless you are converted** (*aorist passive*) **and become as little children**(*paidion* - open to instruction), **you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.**

- **You worry about who is going to be the greatest,** but unless you become *converted* and like a little child, open to instruction, you are not going to even enter the kingdom of heaven!

Mat 18:4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child (*paidion* - little, young child, damsel) **is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.** (*Jas 4:6*) *But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."*

- **Jesus taught that the way up was down, and the way down was up!** He that exalts himself shall be brought down. He that humbles himself shall be exalted. If you want to be great in the kingdom of God, learn to be the servant of all! Become as a little child, who really does not have those kinds of ambitions. Now with that little child there in the midst of them, Jesus went on to say a lot of different things. Many of these things that did not seem to relate directly to the little child, but He yet kept coming back to the little child. We have a lot of interesting teachings of Jesus, but the little child is still there. He keeps coming back to this little child that is standing there in the midst of them.
- **The humility is represented in the child.** Notice the child did not just walk over to Jesus. Jesus called the child to come to Him. And the child obeyed His voice! Greatness in the kingdom of heaven is achieved by simply being obedient to the voice of God! Whatever the cost might be. Through His word, by His Holy Spirit, through spiritual gifts—all of the different means by which He speaks to us. That is how greatness is achieved in the kingdom of God! Humility is, marked by obedience to God’s word!

Mat 18:5 Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. (Jesus says, as though done to Myself!)

- **What does this say to us about ministry to children?** What a blessed privilege! Receiving a little child is tantamount to receiving the Lord! According to His statement. **Jesus placed a great priority on and interest in little children!**
- **Greatness in the kingdom God is also found in servanthood, in treating other people the same way we would treat Jesus! How would we treat Him? We are His servants. We would be His servants. So, greatness in the kingdom of God requires coming into the kingdom of God! Humility, marked by obedience; and then treating other people as we would treat Jesus, as if He were in that person’s place! What a beautiful, beautiful response of Jesus to their question!**

Mat 18:6 "Whoever causes one of these little ones (*mikros* - His children, any disciple, any Christian, who has humbly come into the kingdom, who believe in Me, used as the small in “small” and great; Christians manifesting the spirit of little children) **to sin** (*scandalizo* – to stumble or trip up), **it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

- **Note the comparison to the serious judgment that will come if we cause another to sin!**

- **If you saw the millstones in Israel**, you would realize that Jesus is speaking in a pretty rash way! But again, the faith of a child. The faith and the heart of a little child, the believing in Jesus. How horrible it is for an adult to try to destroy the faith of a little child, to pit his mind against the mind of the child in an effort to destroy that child's faith in Jesus! That is one of the worst crimes that a person could commit, trying to destroy the faith of a child! The word in the original for "*little ones*" has application to all of God's believers, all those who have been born again!
- **The millstone, in the original, is called *μυλος ονικος*, "the mule mill stone."** This type of millstone was large and heavy, weighing 200-300 pounds. It was turned by a mule, or a donkey as opposed to the much smaller millstone, which was turned by hand.
- **Jesus said that it would be better, more preferable, for that person just to put a millstone about his neck and throw him in the sea.** We love to hear little children talk about God. The simplicity of their faith! The beauty of their faith! It is a wonderful thing! To try to destroy that would take some kind of a perverted mind. Those who would do that will suffer a judgment worse than having a millstone put around their neck and drowned in the sea!
- **Video of child reciting the ABC's, each letter with a Bible verse spoken from memory:** <https://youtu.be/JhJ1EDyUbpc>
- **This is a very serious warning that Jesus gives!** One things about those who are persecuting the church, those educations in school teaching against God and the Bible; those in the entertainment industry, those promoting video games and godless, wicked internet sites; politician who pass laws protecting and advancing sin! The coming judgment for those will be greater than being drowned in the sea with a millstone around their necks!



Temptations to Sin

Mat 18:7 *Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses (scandalon – an action or circumstance that leads one to act contrary to a proper course of action or set of beliefs, temptation to sin, enticement to apostasy, false belief) must come (such is the state of the wickedness of men), but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!*

(Mat 16:23) But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Rom 16:17-18) Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. [18] For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

- **Jesus seems to digress a little bit, but yet He comes back to because of offences!** He is talking about offending one of these little ones that believe in Him. "*Woe to the world because of offences!*"
- **For offences must come.** You cannot escape it, living in this world there are going to be offences that are going to come.
- **But woe to that man by whom the offense comes!** Jesus, in speaking of Judas Iscariot, now it must needs be that one of His number will betray Him. That was prophesied. And yet when Judas went out to betray Him, Jesus said, *(Mat 26:24) The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.*" Here He is saying that offences are inevitable. It is going to happen. "*But woe to that man by whom the offense comes!*"
- **He is getting very dramatic when He talks about the importance of entering the kingdom of heaven.** The most important thing in all of our lives is where we're going to spend eternity! That is more important than your being healthy! It is more important than your being wise; more important than anything else, is where you are going to spend eternity.

Mat 18:8 *"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting (eternal) fire.*

(Mar 9:43-44) If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— [44] where 'THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.

- **Jesus gets very graphic in illustrating His point!** He speaks now in very extreme terms. Somehow in these days, we have lost sight of the eternal. We are more prone to choose temporal advantages, rather than eternal advantages. Yet, Jesus in the most graphic way is expressing to us the importance of the eternal destiny of our souls!
- **You would be better off, He is saying, going through life crippled than to go into eternity lost.** I do not believe that Jesus is here speaking literally; if your hand or if your foot offends you, cut it off and throw it away; because you would still have your other hand or foot. But He is just trying to illustrate by this gruesome, graphic illustration how important it is that your eternal welfare and your eternal destiny is settled! It is far more important than anything physical! Your spiritual health is far more important than your physical health!

Mat 18:9 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire(gehenna – place of eternal fire).

- **Jesus goes on and again uses another gruesome graphic illustration.** *It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.* Jesus spoke more about hell than all of the other Bible writers combined. He gave more warning about the future than all of the other Bible writers. **Here He is talking about the Gehenna fire.** Be careful!
- **Now there is what is called “Sheol” in the Hebrew or “Hades” in the Greek.** It is a temporary abode of today, the unrighteous dead. In the Old Testament time, the word “Sheol” sometimes translated hell, sometimes translated grave, is a reference to a holding place, which then was divided into two compartments. It is described in Luke sixteen - Abraham, Lazarus and the rich man.
- **Jesus is describing the condition of the dead before His death,** before He led the captives from their captivity. When Jesus died, He descended into hell, into Hades. *(Psa 16:10) For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.* Jesus, we are told by Peter, *(1Pe 3:19) by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, preached to those souls in prison.* Paul the apostle tells us *(Eph 4:8) Therefore He says: "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."*
- **According to the book of Hebrews, it was impossible that the blood of bulls or goats could put away sin.** All they could do was speak of a better covenant that was coming. The blood of the bulls and goats covered the sin but did not put away the sin. Thus, all these men of faith in the Old Testament died not having received the promise. God having reserved some better thing for us that they apart from us could not come in to the perfected state.
- **There is what is called in the scripture the bottomless pit (abussos). It is the place of incarceration for evil spirits, for satanic spirits, demonic spirits.** This “abusso” would seem to be a shaft that goes from the surface of the earth on down into Hades, which is in the heart of the earth. Jesus, when asked for a sign, said, “No sign will be given to this generation except the sign of the prophet Jonah, as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,” locating then hell as the heart of the earth. He who has ascended is the same one who first of all descended into the lower part of the earth. Today, Hades is the place of the incarceration of the evil spirits, of men who have died apart from Christ. One day, death and hell are going to give them up. They are going to leave to stand before God at His great white throne and those whose names were not found written in the book of life will then be cast into Gehenna!
- **According to Jesus, Gehenna is the place that God prepared for Satan and his angels.** Their eternal punishment is to be in Gehenna, the place of eternal fire. Jesus will talk more about Gehenna. He tells us where the worm does not die and where the fire is not quenched.
- **When Jesus came to Gadara and that demoniac who said his name was Legion** because there were many demons, and when they spoke to Christ, they requested that He would not send them to the “abusso!” When Jesus comes again and Satan is bound, he will be cast into the abusso, the shaft, for incarceration of evil spirits, demonic forms of spirits.
- **When the antichrist and the false prophet come to the earth, they come out of the abusso.** In the book of Revelation, there is an angel that comes with the key to the abusso and opens it up! The earth

is invaded by hordes of demonic spirits. When Jesus comes again, Satan will be put in the abisso for a thousand years, but the false prophet and the antichrist will at that time be cast into Gehenna. At the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ, when Satan is released for a short season, he then, when he is brought to judgment, he also will be cast into Gehenna where the beast and false prophet are. Death and hell will give up the dead which are in them. Hades, those that are in the heart of the earth, they will be cast into outer darkness into the place called Gehenna, where again Jesus said the fires are not quenched, neither does the worm die.

- **The warnings against this place of punishment** for Satan and his angels, where those human beings who have chosen to cast their lot with Satan will share in that punishment. God did not really create it for man but for Satan and his angels. But those men who chose to go along with Satan's rebellion will also share.
- **He comes back to the thought of the child.** The little child is probably still standing there. Probably, at this point, is quite wild-eyed, as he hears Jesus saying these things.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Mat 18:10 *"Take heed that you do not despise (kataphroneo – look down upon, scorn, treat with contempt) one of these little ones (mikros), for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. (Heb 1:14) Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Luk 1:19) And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.*

- **Guardian angels!** God is reminding us that in heaven, all things which we do are known and understood that angels may be assigned to each child of God. God is aware of every kind of thing that is going on! The scriptures seem to teach concerning what is sometimes classified as guardian angels. In *(Psa 91:11-12) For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. [12] In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.* The angels have been charged to watch over you, to take care of you, to protect you. Sometimes my angel seems to have been sleeping on the job, but there have been other times when I was very aware of that protection. I am still here, had it not been for him I am sure I would not be. There have been those experiences where I knew that the Lord was just there and watching over and protecting and keeping me.
- **Speaking of angels.** In *(Heb 1:14) Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?* Here, Jesus is speaking of these little children who have angels, and their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven. You know that some of these little kids have angels watching over them. Jesus warns against really despising these little ones, because God is so concerned for the little ones!

Mat 18:11 *For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.*

Mat 18:12 *"What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to (continually) seek the one that is straying?"*

- **How encouraging this verse is for those parents** whose child or children have gone astray! It seems like they are lost forever! But no! *The Son of Man has come to save that which was lost! We see they joy here for every lost sheep that He finds!*

Mat 18:13 *And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.*

- **For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.** *What do you think? What do you think about this? If he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.*
- **The heart of the shepherd.** There is one sheep missing, as he counts them into the fold at night! He goes back out, searches over the mountain until he finds that missing sheep. Then, he rejoices because the lost one has been found! In fact, rejoicing more than the fact that ninety-nine are safely there in the fold. What rejoicing over the lost one that has been found!

Mat 18:14 *Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones (mikros - His children, any disciple, any Christian, anyone who is young in the faith, who has humbly come into the kingdom, who believe in Me, used as the small in "small" and great; Christians manifesting the spirit of little children) should perish.*

- **Back to the child!** *Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little*

ones should perish. Their angels watch over them! They are important to Him. It is best that you do not offend one of these little ones! Note the interest of Jesus in the little children! It is beautiful.

If Your Brother Sins Against You

Mat 18:15 *"Moreover if your brother sins (hamartano – to commit a wrong) against you (who have been offended), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.*

- **Jesus is setting forth a form of discipline within the church**, even though at that point, the church does not yet exist. This is the way relationships are to be maintained. If you are offended because of a brother, because of his actions, because of his deeds, because of something perhaps that he has said, **it is best that you go alone to him, sit down with him, and talk it out with him, with reconciliation in view.** Do not go around broadcasting, do you know what he did? I cannot believe it. I saw him myself, going around broadcasting it to everybody and trying to get everybody on your side. First of all, go to the brother! Deal with him. If he hears you, good! You have gained a friend. You can just bury it right there.
- **It is a good rule, which should ordinarily be observed among Christians**, not to speak of our brother's faults to others, till we have first spoken of them to themselves. This would make less reproaching and more reproving; that is, less sin committed, and more duty done. It will be likely to work upon an offender, when he sees his reprover concerned not only for his salvation, in telling him his fault, but for his reputation in telling him of it privately.

Mat 18:16 *But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.'*

- **When meeting with or speaking in detail with someone who may want to argue and repeat or report erroneous comments**, it is wise meet with them alone but in the presence of another person, to establish or be a witness to what was said. A lot of times, you say things to people, and they go out and they distort what has been said. So having witnesses is scriptural and wise.
- **Often when you have an offensive brother and go to them, they rebel against what you say.** They are not going to always to listen, but if they respond positively, you have gained a friend. If they do not, then do not jeopardize yourself by going alone the next time. Go back again with some witnesses that every word might be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses. Then, you're protected.

Mat 18:17 *And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen (unbeliever) and a tax collector.*

- **If he refuses to hear them after the two or three that have gone to him, then tell it to the church.** They should be exposed before the church. *But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.* They are not really a part of the fellowship of God's people.

Mat 18:18 *"Assuredly I say to you (plural), whatever you (plural) bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you (plural) loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

- **Heavenly powers that have been vested in God's people by God.** Powers over the powers of darkness, so that we as children of God have the authority to bind evil spirits, tormenting spirits. *Whatever you bind (already will have been bound!) on earth will be bound in heaven.*
- **The question often arises, If man is a free moral agent, if God has given to him that capacity of choice** and does not violate that capacity of choice, then how can we pray that an unsaved person will be saved? They have the power of choice and God will not violate that capacity of choice that He is given to them, and **therefore, how can I really pray for them?** Because if they do not choose to receive Christ, they cannot be saved and God's not going to force them to choose.
- **You need to take it one step further, asking why haven't they received Jesus and His forgiveness for their sins?** The answer is, according to the scriptures, *(2Co 4:4) whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.* The god of this world has blinded their eyes so that they cannot see. They are being held as captives by Satan. He has distorted their perception of spiritual things, lying to them about God, about Christianity. They are very prejudiced against spiritual things because of the work of Satan blinding their eyes to God's truth.
- **By prayer, I can bind this power of Satan that is blinding them** and keeping them in darkness. Whatever I bind on earth will be bound in heaven. **As I bind the powers of darkness that are**

blinding their eyes, then God binds these powers of darkness! If anyone could just see the truth, if they could just see it without this heavy prejudice of Satan clouding the issues, of course, they would receive Jesus Christ! You would have to be a fool to reject the offers that God has made to us. If a person only saw the truth! But the problem is, they cannot see it because of Satan's blinding influence. So, I have the power to bind! Oh, what **great, great powers that God has given to us as His children to exercise these powers in the redemption of the lost!**

- **That is beautiful, isn't it?** Whatever you bind on earth will be bound! Whatever you loose would be loosed!

Mat 18:19 *"Again I say to you that if two of you agree (sumphoneo – symphony, to have come to an agreement about something, be of one mind, agree) on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.*

(1Jn 3:22) And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. (1Jn 5:14-15) Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. [15] And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

- **If just two of you will agree concerning anything given in Christ's name, you will have what you ask!** *It will be done for them by My Father in heaven.* **If two of you agree, or symphonize like a great orchestra, we have this great promise.** There is such power in agreement in prayer and in the presence of Jesus. This is what the unrepentant unbelievers miss!
- **It will be done for them by My Father in heaven:** In the Old Testament we see the promises to Israel, if they were obedient to God. This is similar to the promise given here, working on the principle related in *(Lev 26:8) Five of you shall chase a hundred (one defeating 20), and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight (one defeating 100); your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.* We see there is real, even exponential power, in the prayer of agreement.

Mat 18:20 *For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there (already) in the midst of them." (Act 2:42) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

- **We can correctly say. Whenever we gather in His name, Jesus is here!** He is here right now. He is here in the midst of us. He is here to minister to you and to your needs. Our problem is, we cannot see Him. Thus, because we cannot see Him, then it is hard for us to realize that He is here. If He should suddenly materialize, and we could actually see Him, if you could see Him just standing here beside me, what would your response? If you have a physical malady here right now, you would be wanting to get close to touch the hem of His garment. That if He were just here, we all have that confidence that He could take care of any problem that we possess! If we could just see Him. But *(Joh 20:29) Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* The Lord wants you to have the greater blessing. He just says **I am there in the midst!** We can be assured that Jesus is here right now, wherever you are, right now, to meet your needs, to minister to you. Because He said, I did not come to be ministered to, I came to minister. His being here with us, is not really for the purpose that we should minister to Him, He desires to minister to us!

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

Mat 18:21 *Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up (until, unto) to seven times?"*

- **Peter** (going back to v. 15), **likely was stretching it even in his thinking of his own ability**, trying to make points with the Lord. They were arguing who was going to be the greatest. They even questioned, Lord, who is going to be the greatest? So, Peter is trying to get in on this now. Lord, how often should I forgive a fellow that sin? Seven times Lord? (The pharisees were saying, three, possibly four times.) See how I am growing. I am getting the message. Lord, when You set up the kingdom, remember, I can do it seven times, maybe, with proper circumstances and all.

Mat 18:22 *Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.*

- **Four hundred and ninety times?** I am sure that the Lord figured you would lose count before you got that far. Wouldn't that be horrible? Four hundred and how many? Then I want to slug this guy,

counting, where are we? We would realize that forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics. It is a spirit that God wants us to possess! A Christlike spirit, who, when they were crucifying Him, prayed, *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!*. He said, when you stand praying, forgive! Forgiveness is part of the Christian experience. We are to forgive ahead of time. Always be in readiness to forgive!

Mat 18:23 *Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like (a parable) a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.*

Mat 18:24 *And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.*

- **10,000 talents. What is a biblical talent worth today?** Quoting from *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Danker & Bauer, pg. 988, copyright 1979*, from the definition of *talanton*: “At 6,000 drachmas or denarii to the Tyrian talent, a day laborer would need to work 60,000,000 days to pay off the debt. Even assuming an extraordinary payback of 10 talents per year, the staggering amount would ensure imprisonment of at least 1,000 years.” Really, it is a huge amount! It is hard to imagine owing someone that much money! The point here, really, is an unimaginable huge, huge, debt, which could never be paid back!

Mat 18:25 *But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.*

Mat 18:26 *The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'*

Mat 18:27 *Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.*

- **The servant's debt has been called. He had been bound!** He was headed for jail! He was headed, to be sold, auctioned as a slave, with the proceeds being applied to the debt. But *the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt!* He set him free, forgiving this immeasurable debt! A supernatural miracle. Just like Jesus Christ setting us free from our immeasurable debt of sin. Grace received becomes grace bestowed!

Mat 18:28 *"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii (a 100 days average worker's wage; compared to the forgiven debt, 600,000 times greater!); and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'*

- **What a graphic picture this is!** This is a picture of us! Jesus is seeking to remind us of the great debt that we owed that God forgave! All your sin has been forgiven, every offence, every transgression, everything! **God's forgiveness is totally complete!** Yet, we are guilty of holding these little offences against one another! We become so angry, so bitter, because of what someone said, what someone did! We get so upset. Even worse, we hang on to these things. We let these just sort of eat us up.
- **From time to time we meet people whose lives have been filled with hate for years** because of something that someone had done to them. They may go for 20-25 years, or more, filled with bitterness and anger. Oh, how important it is to let that kind of thing go! All of this bitterness and anger isn't hurting the person who did the thing all. It does not hurt that person that did the thing, but it is eating the one up, who is holding on to the bitterness.
- **These things hurt you more than they hurt the persons towards which it is directed.** That is a major offence, to be sure. Many of the offences that we have are very minor. Just someone said something, well, or we heard that they said it. That is enough for us. We knew that they were rotten rats anyhow. What do you expect out of someone like that! We are so unwilling to forgive these slight offences. Jesus is drawing a picture here. God has forgiven you a debt of much more than 10,000 talents. Here you are ready to destroy a brother because of very tiny amount. The idea is having been given so much really puts me under the obligation to forgive. I have received forgiveness and therefore, it is obligatory that I forgive!
- **We remember Ahithophel, David's counselor who developed a hatred toward David.** His hatred ended up killing him. (*2Sa 17:23*) *Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.*

Mat 18:29 *So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'*

- **The fellow servant, laid his hands, took him by the throat,** said, Pay me what you owe! *So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.* He said the exact same words, the same petition.

Mat 18:30 *And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.*

Mat 18:31 *So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.*

Mat 18:32 *Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.*

Mat 18:33 *Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'*

- **As Jesus said, (Eph 4:32) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.** That is what the Lord has asked. You have been forgiven. God has forgiven you! Be kind one to another. God's been kind to you. Be tenderhearted, God has been tenderhearted. Be forgiving, God forgave. So, we are asked to have these Godlike qualities and characteristics.

Mat 18:34 *And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers (basanites - one who elicits the truth by the use of the rack, an inquisitor, torturer), until he should pay all that was due to him.*

Mat 18:35 *"So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

- **The principle of forgiveness is clear. God has forgiven such a great debt,** that any debt owed to us is insignificant in comparison. No person can possibly offend me to the extent that my sins have offended God. This principle must be applied in the little and great things done to us!
- **Forgiveness is not an option!** It is not even a suggestion by Jesus. **It is a command!** He is telling you that your heavenly Father will do the same to you. It is very easy in the parable to see that the King or the Lord is God. It is also easy to see that I am the servant that had this huge debt, and I was forgiven. It is very easy to get the point that I must forgive because I have been forgiven! What a horrible thing unforgiveness is! How it eats away and destroys you. How it can cause all kinds of mental aberrations and mental turmoil. How important it is for us to have a forgiving spirit.
- **We must walk away from such a situation and to be able to just leave it.** Not to brood over it. Not to breathe out threats! Not to determine to get even, but just to forgive! What a powerful witness that is when you can forgive. And when you do forgive!
- **So, My heavenly Father also will do to you:** It would appear that it would be wrong to think that this passage teaches that unforgiveness itself is the unforgivable sin. It is better to say that forgiveness of others by us, is evidence of truly being forgiven. Conversely, that the practice of unforgiveness may show that a person's heart has never really been touched by the love of Jesus. How forgiving of others am I?

Key principles

- **Who is the Greatest in the kingdom of God?** Whoever humbles himself as this little child! How close am I to a little child in my humility?
- **Heavy judgment on stumbling, offending, or destroying the faith of a child or another believer.** Is there any part of me that is truly offending another?
- **Jesus said He came to save that which was lost!** As the True Shepherd, He rejoiced more over the finding of the one lost sheep than for the ninety-nine! Couple that with last week's study, where we were told that the value of one soul is more than the whole universe! What an incentive for us to pray for the lost! Does my prayer life always consist of praying for the lost ones?
- **Consider the power of prayer!** Jesus said where two or three are gathered together in His name, that He is there in the midst of them! There is such power in agreement in prayer and in the presence of Jesus. This is what the unrepentant unbelievers miss!
- **By prayer, I can bind this power of Satan that is blinding them** and keeping them in darkness. May we always include praying for the lost!

- ***Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them!*** This is similar to the promise given in **(Lev 26:8)** *Five of you shall chase a hundred* (one defeating 20), *and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight* (one defeating 100); *your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.* We see there is real, even exponential power, in the prayer of agreement.
- ***Forgiveness – What an amazing parable, contrasting the lesser to the greater with such impact!*** Here we are told because our LORD has forgiven us an unimaginably, large debt, which is beyond calculation, impossible to repay! How can we hold on to our unforgiveness of someone else for a tiny infraction, so small, it does not even compare? Jesus command us to forgive! What is my tendency to forgive others, continually until I go to glory? Is there anything in my life that I need to respond to in light of this?

Closing Song:

GOODNESS OF GOD - Bethel Music (5:03)

I love You, Lord, Oh Your mercy never fails me. All my days I've been held in Your hands
 From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head, I will sing of the goodness of God
 Chorus - And all my life You have been faithful And all my life You have been so, so good
 With every breath that I am able Oh, I will sing of the goodness of God
 I love Your voice, You have led me through the fire. In the darkest night, You are close like no other.
 I've known You as a Father. I've known You as a Friend. And I have lived in the goodness of God (Chorus)
 Cause Your goodness is running after. It's running after me.
 Your goodness is running after. It's running after me.
 With my life laid down I'm surrendered now I give You everything
 Your goodness is running after, It's running after me. (2x)
 (Chorus) (2x)
 Oh, I'm gonna sing of the goodness of God

Closing Prayer:

Assignment for next week: Read *Matthew Chapter 19*