

The Power Of Forgiveness

(Sample Excerpt)

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Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations in this book are from the King James Version of the Bible.

The Power Of Forgiveness
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ISBN 0-9760738-1-1

Published by:
Seed Word Communications
P.O. Box 16615
Tallahassee, FL 32317
Toll-Free: (866) 517-3872
Local: (850) 893-9781
www.seedword.com

Cover Design:
Ruth Palao
Manhattan, KS
850-212-2574

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Chapter 1

Living By Kingdom Principles

Last week, when my wife and I went to get our hair done, I noticed that our hair-dresser had a concerned look on her face. She told me, after I sat in the chair, “over the past few weeks, I’ve had two of my customers commit suicide. They sat in this same chair and I talked with them, but they went and committed suicide.”

We live in very troubled times in the world today. It does not seem that the times will improve. Things seem to be getting worse. Many people seem to be giving up. I heard very clearly in my spirit, in that beauty salon, that the reason many people are suffering today, is that they do not know how to forgive. I am convinced that those two ladies who committed suicide would have been alive today, if they had understood the power of forgiveness.

Forgiveness is one of the most positive and encouraging concepts that we can find in the Bible. It makes all the difference between success and failure in life. My hope in this book is to help you understand that there is great power in forgiveness. We will discuss how that power is released and the dangers of unforgiveness.

Let us begin with the words spoken directly by our LORD JESUS CHRIST in Matthew Chapter 18. That parable JESUS told is about the principles we should live by in the Kingdom of

God. If we want to have the full benefits of the Kingdom of God in our lives, then we must operate by the principles of the Bible.

If you are an ambassador of the United States to another country, you do not need to worry about taking care of yourself. All your needs are supplied by the United States government. Even if there is trouble in that foreign country, once you can get into the United States Embassy building, you are protected by international law. Also, if you are serving in the United States Armed Forces, you do not have to buy your own uniforms or food. The government takes care of you.

We Christians need to understand that we are ambassadors from another country. We are not citizens of this world. The Bible says we are in the world, but we are not of the world. As long as we abide by the principles of our home country, the kingdom of our home country will guarantee that all our needs are met. We belong to the Kingdom of God. If we live by the principles of the Kingdom, then we will be protected by the Kingdom.

I am thoroughly convinced that in the Kingdom of God, there is no sickness or disease. There is only health. There is no poverty or lack. There is only wealth. There is no turmoil in the Kingdom of God. There is only peace. It is our own fault that we are not getting all the Kingdom benefits. We are in the Kingdom, but we are not abiding by the principles of the Kingdom.

In order for Ambassadors to continue receiving their benefits, they must abide by the principles of the United States. If an ambassador violates the principles of the United States, they are normally called back. If someone serving in the armed forces violates the rules of the armed forces, they could be discharged from the army.

The same principles apply to us in the Kingdom of God. JESUS is teaching one of those Kingdom principles in this parable in Matthew's gospel. JESUS was teaching about the power of forgiveness. Now let's look at the parable.

²³Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. ²⁴And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. ²⁷Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. ²⁹And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. ³⁰And he

would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. ³¹So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. ³²Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: ³³Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? ³⁴And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. ³⁵So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” **(Matthew 18: 23-35).**

I believe most of us have heard this parable several times, but I want to be sure we get the facts straight. Here is a man who owed his master ten thousand talents. One translation says this is the equivalent of one hundred thousand dollars. One hundred pence is about ten dollars. It is ridiculous to think that a man who was forgiven a debt of one hundred thousand dollars would turn around and grab someone, who owes him ten dollars, by the throat.

JESUS CHRIST came down from heaven and forgave us of our greatest debt. He forgave us our trespasses and sins. He released us from our connection to Adam and made us new creations. He translated us from darkness into the Kingdom of God.

We could never put a monetary value on the amount of debt JESUS forgave us. But in comparison to this parable, we would agree that JESUS forgave us at least the equivalent of a one hundred thousand dollar debt. He expects us to forgive the debts and sins of one another. In comparison to what JESUS forgave us, the debts people owe us would be equivalent to only ten dollars.

The mere fact that we have been forgiven does not mean that we know how to forgive. The fact that we have been released does not mean that we know how to release others. The message I believe God wants me to convey to you in this book is that the power of forgiveness lies in learning how to release others. When we release others, we are also releasing ourselves.

Chapter 2

Levels of Forgiveness

In the parable, the master had compassion on this man who owed him one hundred thousand dollars. The master released him. What kind of man was that master? Why was he able to forgive such a large amount of debt? Could it be merely because he was rich? I don't think so because I know a lot of rich people who are very stingy.

I believe strongly that this master had some experience in showing compassion. I don't think anyone starts off by forgiving such large sums of money. He must have practiced forgiving smaller debts. He might have started with forgiving ten dollars. Then he might have moved up to one hundred, one thousand and then to one hundred thousand dollars.

This master understood the power of forgiveness. We all need to be like him. We may not be able to forgive large debts in the beginning. But we can start with small debts. We can start by forgiving others who just rub us the wrong way.

We learned from the Bible that faith grows. There are different levels of faith. JESUS referred to the following three levels at different times, "no-faith, little faith and great-faith." In the same way, there are growing levels of forgiveness. We must first begin at the ten dollar level. With

practice, we will increase in our ability to forgive people for more serious situations. We can grow to the ten thousand dollar and higher levels.

We should also realize that as we grow in God, Satan will give us higher resistance. When Satan noticed that Paul was becoming greatly used by God, Satan assigned a demon to trouble Paul on a regular basis. Those troubles came mostly through people. We should not focus on the people being used by Satan. We should turn our guns toward Satan. Those people are not our real enemies. Our real enemy is Satan himself who is trying to stop God's power from flowing through us. We should remember what the Bible says in Ephesians 6:12.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).

We may notice that we are getting offended in more situations. But we should not grow weary in well doing. We need to understand that forgiveness doesn't just release the person we are forgiving. Forgiveness releases us also. This type of teaching about the power of forgiveness is not for the weak-minded Christian. It is for those who want to grow into the deeper things of God. It takes a mature Christian to forgive. It takes someone who wants to be like JESUS to say *“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).*

We need to realize that most of the time, people who are doing us wrong do not know what they are doing. I am not trying to absolve people from their responsibility. Satan uses people who allow themselves to be used. But many times, they may not be aware of the fact that they are being used by the devil. It could be a family member in your household or someone in the church. It could be someone at your place of work. It could even be someone you do not know. While you are on your way to work, someone could cut you off in traffic.

When we go back to the parable, we will notice in verses 32 and 33 that the master expected the servant to follow in his footsteps. After being forgiven of our sins, JESUS expects us to be imitators of Him. He expects us to forgive others their sins. CHRIST is the Head of the church. We are His body. The body must follow whatever the Head does. JESUS is the Vine and we are the branches. We must produce the fruit of the vine.