

**WCBC SERMON NOTES - JUNE 4, 2017**

**TOPIC: HINDRANCES TO GOD'S BLESSINGS**

*Sermon 2: The Hindrance of An Unforgiving Spirit!*

**TEXT: Matthew 18:21-35**

**INTRO:**

- Man Bitten By A Dog!

**PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE**

**I. FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE: Matthew 18:23-27**

1. All of us are in sin-debt to God - v.23 cf. Rom. 3:23
2. All of us are unable to pay for our sin-debt to God - vv.24-25 cf. I Peter 1:18-19, esp. v.19
3. Christ's once-and-for-all ultimate sacrifice on the Cross had paid for our sin-debt to God - vv.26-27 cf. Matthew 20:28

**II. FROM MAN'S PERSPECTIVE: Matthew 18:28-35**

1. Forgiving others should be easy as what we owe God, our sin-debt, is infinitely more than what others owe us - vv.28, 32-33 cf. I Tim. 1:12-16, esp. v.15
2. The unforgiving person is destined for everlasting punishment - vv.34 cf. Luke 16:23, 28
  - "...to be TORTURED!"
3. Only those who are willing to forgive others from the heart can be assured that they are truly forgiven - v.35 cf. Matthew 6:14-15

**CONCLUSION:**

- Caring For Family's Killer!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Have You Truly Forgiven? Four Ways To Know If You Have (Or Haven't)**

1. **Do the Lord's Prayer test** - Say the Lord's Prayer. When you get to the part that says that the Lord should forgive you as you forgive others, mention specifically the name of a person who has hurt you in the past. So let's say John hurt you in the past, you should say, "And forgive me my trespasses as I forgive John." If you can mention the person's name without any hurtful feelings, you have truly let go. If the mention of that person's name evokes emotions of hurt and bitterness, it is very likely you have not completely forgiven the person and you need to deal with it immediately.

2. **You never have anything good to say about the person who hurt you** - You may have genuine complaints about the person. However, when your first instinct is to "bad-mouth" or slander the person to every single person you meet, you may insist that you have let go, but it is very likely that you haven't. Slandering an ex to everyone you meet is not you "letting out some steam." It is you holding on to a grudge which could destroy your perception of the opposite sex if not dealt with.

3. **You do not wish the person who hurt you well** - In fact, if you are truthful with yourself, you will realize you even wish nothing ever works out for this person. All your wishing that something bad happens to the person who hurt you and whose offense you are holding on to WILL NOT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER. Take it from me.

4. **You have vowed never to speak to the person again** - I once heard someone say, "I will forgive but I will never ever speak to them again!" Umm, deciding not to speak to someone is one of the hardest and most uncomfortable things to do especially if you live in the same house, go to the same school, or work at the same job. It's never a freeing experience. You will constantly run into the person and then what? Romans 12:18: "*If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*" "*As much as depends on you...*" means you have to make every possible effort to forgive and reconcile with the person. You may even take someone who is mature in the faith with you on your journey of reconciliation as Jesus commands us to do in the Gospels. If you do your part and the other party refuses to accept your offer of peace, you know you've done your part and all you owe that person now is unconditional love whether they choose to ever speak to you again or not.

This list is not exhaustive and I do not claim to be perfect in all these. However, I am constantly praying that God will search my heart, and help me forgive and let go of any grudge or offense I am holding on to! - Gertrude Nonterah

\*\*\*\*\*

**Verse For Today**

***"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you!" - Ephesians 4:32***

**Food For Thought**

"The greatest conqueror is he who overcomes the enemy without a blow!" - Chinese Proverb

\*\*\*\*\*