

May 5, 2013

## This Is How It Feels To Be Free

*Matthew 18:21-35*

### Introduction:

The longer I am saved, and the longer I serve the body of Christ, the more convinced I am that one of the greatest needs we have is the need of forgiveness. I am not referring simply to the forgiveness that needs to be given to others, but to the need to forgive one's self as well.

Nothing reflects the new nature of the child of God any more than forgiveness. A person who forgives another person emulates the character of God. Likewise, a person who refuses to forgive is lacking in godly character and is without Christlike love. Truth is, Christians should forgive because they themselves need forgiveness. Forgiveness is a give-and-take part of life.

"Nothing smells so sweet as the dead body of your enemy."

--*Frenchman King Louis*

*The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger,  
and his glory is to overlook a transgression.*

Proverbs 19:11 (NKJV)

Christians are never more like Jesus than when they are giving and forgiving. Unforgiveness is a bondage that stifles our ability to love and accept those that we know in our hearts most deserve our love. To claim that we understand what God did in Jesus Christ on the cross for us and then refuse to forgive those who have wronged us is to be no different than the lost world.

### **I. The Deepness of Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-22)**

### **II. The Depiction of Forgiveness (Matthew 18:23-27)**

- Unless I begin to understand the depth of my sin against God and the depth of His forgiveness toward me, I will never be able to forgive others.

"At this moment God is quite unreal to us, He loses all reality, and the only reality is the devil. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us."

--*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

### III. The Demonstration of Forgiveness (I Kings 15:5; Psalm 3:1-6)

If there is no help, and no offer of grace to those that are *in* grace, how can we preach a transforming gospel to those who haven't even come to grace yet?

To refuse to accept God's forgiveness for yourself leaves you enslaved and ineffective, in bondage, in shame, and in fear.

*"When it comes to self forgiveness,  
why are some people so generous  
to point others to grace, but in turn  
they give themselves law?"*

*--Johnny Hunt*