

Morning Sermon June 28, 2020
“Christian Forgiveness” Matthew 6:12; :14-15

One of the things I noticed about the Sermon on the Mount is a similarity of teaching style with the giving of the law in the Old Testament. Here, I would like you to see how Jesus’ first statement after the Lord’s Prayer –

¹⁴ “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14–15 (NKJV)

Brings up an important issue for further elaboration and emphasis just like God did immediately after His giving of the Ten Commandments –

²² Then the LORD said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. ²³ You shall not make *anything to be* with Me—gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. Exodus 20:22–23 (NKJV)

What is similar is not exact subject matter, idolatry is condemned in the Ten Commandments, forgiveness is promoted / lack of forgiveness is condemned in the Lord’s prayer! But what is similar is that in each case an important issue is brought up again for elaboration and emphasis! Idolatry is still condemned today –

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. 1 John 5:21 (NKJV)

So, also is lack of forgiveness; We see in Jesus’ first teaching after the Lord’s prayer –

I. The great necessity of our being forgiving –

¹⁴ “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14–15 (NKJV)

1. What God will not do! What God does not do! Forgive an unforgiving person, our prayer was –

¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matthew 6:12 (NKJV)

A. Our forgiveness from God is a great forgiveness, involving many / terrible sins –

¹¹ For Your name’s sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. Psalm 25:11 (NKJV)

If we think our iniquity is little, less than others, not a big deal than we are missing the point of the Gospel, and that is –

B. Christ’s own blood was NEEDED to wash away our sins –

⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, Revelation 1:5 (NKJV)

C. Nothing less than the Son of God’s suffering of death on a cruel cross is a remedy or sure for our sad condition –

³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” ...

⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” Matthew 26:39 & 42 (NKJV)

2. Our awakening to, understanding of Christianity begins with understanding and mourning over the greatness of sins –

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:3–4 (NKJV)

3. If we understand the greatness of our own sins against God and the greatness of His forgiving of our debt, we cannot help but be forgiving toward others –

²¹ Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. ²³ Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 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. ²⁶ The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay

you all.’ ²⁷ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ “But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ ³⁰ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 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. 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. ³³ Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ ³⁴ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

³⁵ “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” Matthew 18:21–35 (NKJV)

II. The great necessity of extreme forgiveness –

1. Extreme forgiveness is the essence of being Christ-like –

³⁴ Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” ... Luke 23:34 A (NKJV)

2. Extreme Christ-like forgiveness is the mark of being one of His elect –

¹² Therefore, as *the elect of God*, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. Colossians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

A. Note, what is comforting about these verses, that is continued forgiveness is needed even within the Body of Christ, implying there will be continued SIN! This tells us God does not expect sinless perfection from us –

¹⁴ For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Psalm 103:14 (NKJV)

B. Yet while He does not expect sinless perfection, He does expect a high level of forgiveness –

¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. Colossians 3:13

C. *Forgiveness and love go hand in hand in the Christian Life –*
⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “*love will cover a multitude of sins.*” 1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV)

D. *In Colossians 3:12 the words “put on” are getting dressed in clothing terms, while in Colossians 3:14 the word “bond” could be translated belt ... So, what is spoken of here is the Elect Christian’s spiritual dress code –*

We are to carry certain image / appearance –
“To be morose, implacable, inexorable, revengeful, is one of the great degeneracies of human nature. To remember wrongs, to watch of opportunities for revenge, to hate and be maliciously perverse, is to represent the image of the devil to the world in its proper colors, he is the great enemy and self-avenger. On the other hand, no grace, no duty, no ornament of the mind is in itself so lovely, so praiseworthy, or so useful to mankind as are meekness and readiness to forgive. This is that principally which renders a man a good man, for whom one would even dare to die. And I am sorry to say that this grace or duty is recommended by its rarity. John Owen

III. This extreme love / forgiveness among Christians is what Christ says is at the heart of Christian evangelism –

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34–35 (NKJV)

1. A huge part of Christ’s love for us is His forgiveness!
2. This forgiveness / love is for one-another!
3. This love / forgiveness will be noticed, by “all”!
4. Just like idolatry, lack of love / forgiveness among believers presents a wrong picture of God to the world!

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