

The Unmerciful Servant

Matthew 18:23-35

Into the Lesson:

To get a handle on "overwhelming debt" consider the U.S. National debt is \$34+ trillion. If counting once per second calculate how long it would take to get to 34,000,000,000,000. (Show your work)

Bonus question, who said, "neither a borrower nor a lender be"?

Into the Word:

To keep this parable in its context reread Matthew 18:21-35. (Do you ever think the other apostles thought of Peter as the kid who reminded the teacher to give a homework assignment?)

From Sam's sermon, Bible margin notes or commentaries, what are the amounts owed by the two main characters of this parable?

How would you rate the response of the parties involved?

At the risk of getting ahead of the series, look at some of the "Heaven is like..." (v.23) passages and briefly describe the theme of each:

Matthew 13:23-

Matthew 13:31&33-

Matthew 13:44&45-

Matthew 13:47&52-

Matthew 22:2-

How does this teaching fit with the line (Mt. 6:12) from what we know as "The Lord's Prayer"?

What other words are sometimes used in this verse?

How do the "fellow slaves" provide a sense of accountability in this parable?

To be reminded of the depth of the forgiveness afforded to Paul, and to us, reread:

Galatians 2:20-

Ephesians 2:8-10-

Into Life:

Beyond financial concerns (which can feel overwhelming) what other forms of indebtedness do people encounter today?

Is it possible some people feel as if they are being "tortured" because of past wrong choices and desperately need to realize God's mercy?

To hearken back to last week's sermon, how important is it to be a **friend** to those we encounter?

Does the church sometimes hold that debt/sin/trespass against another? How about ourselves?

What would look different if we heeded the words of our "fellow slaves" and forgave those that we might think were unforgivable, *including ourselves*?

What role does genuine repentance and fervent prayer play in the church moving in the direction God desires?

How would your life be different if you could finally realize true forgiveness in your life?

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

- 2 Chronicles 7:14