



FORGIVING

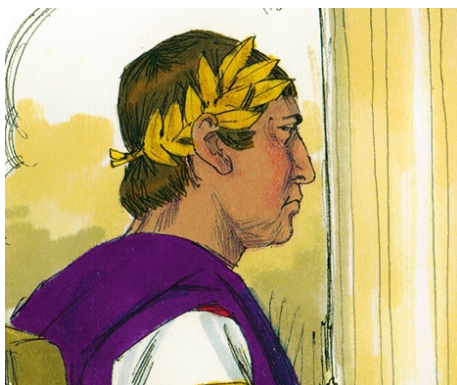
Today we are going to talk about forgiveness. You have already had the opportunity to ask for forgiveness from your father, your mother, or your friend and you were glad they forgave you and forgot what had happened.

Now let's say it's a friend of yours who did something wrong towards you. You have a conversation and he tells you "what I did is wrong, I beg your pardon"; you forgive him and the matter is settled, it is forgotten. If this happens a 2nd time. You forgive. But the 3rd, 4th, 5th time, how will you react? Act as if everything is fine? But in fact, something happened that puts a shadow, a separation between you and him, you were hurt. If you refuse to forgive him, or take revenge? You will not be real friends anymore. You can also decide to forgive.

This is what Jesus tells us to do; it's not always easy but he explains to us why in a parable. Pay close attention, we will tell it to you now. In the story, the king represents God and the servants represent us, you and me.

THE EVIL SERVANT

Here is the king! Here is the king! Announce the servants. He is coming to find out what's going on in his kingdom!

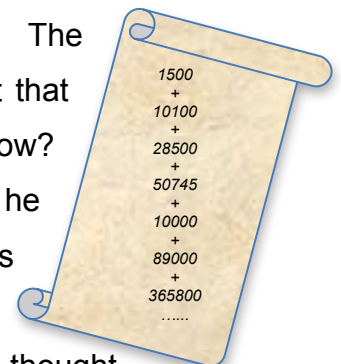


One after the other, the servants appears before the king to tell him about their accounts. The problem is, they have a lot of debt that they will have to pay back, but how? One of them has an enormous debt: he owes 10000 talents – millions of euros

– but he carried on with his life without worrying about it. Perhaps he imagined that the king would never ask him explanations about it or he thought he would find an arrangement:

- So, my friend, what have you done? asks the king.

The servant, very embarrassed, has nothing to say, nothing to defend himself. He is



confused, he knows he's done something wrong, and he's going to be condemned:

- Since you cannot repay your debt, continues the king, you know what awaits you, what you deserve! Servants! Sell everything that belongs to him, sell his goods, his properties



and his family! Sell everything that belongs to him so that he can pay me back! The servant is devastated! He knows he's finished. And that's it's his fault, he has not paid his debts. He throws himself to the feet of the king and kneels in front of him:

- Be patient with me, O King! He begs, I'll pay you everything, you'll get all your money back! Have pity on me!

It is impossible for him to reimburse and the king knows it well; in front of his distress and



his supplications he has pity on his servant. He is a good king, full of compassion:

- Go, he says, I cancel all of your debt, you don't owe me anything anymore, I forgive you.

The servant cannot believe his ears:

- How is that possible, he says to himself? How can the

king do such a thing? Now

I don't owe him anything anymore, not a dime! He erased my debt. The king has forgiven me everything. I could never have imagined such a thing. What a relief for me and my family!

Indeed, he is free, not because he deserves it, but because the King has granted him his pardon... Very happy, he goes and finds his family. Along the way he sees a servant like him:



- Here, here, he says to himself, but... I lent him a hundred deniers - a few hundred euros - Ah! But the rascal hasn't paid me back yet, it's time to settle our accounts:

- Hey, he says brutally, you owe me money, remember? And I want you to give it back to me without delay!

- Listen to me, says the other, I can't at the moment, but I promise you, I will return it to you as soon as possible!

- It is out of the question! Now is the time to pay me what you owe me!

- Be patient, I'll pay you everything! I promise you, give me some time.

The servant is red with anger:

- I want my money now!

The poor man throws himself at his feet and implores his mercy...

- Have mercy on me, I'll pay you, he begs



But nothing helps. The servant summons the guards and has him sent to jail. Some people saw the scene.

- It's a scandal, they say, you saw how he behaved! It is unacceptable! We cannot let that happen, it's too serious!

They go and tell the king what happened.

If the king is very kind, he also likes justice, and we

don't like to be laughed at.

He therefore calls for the wicked servant:



- What did you do? he says to him. When you came to find me didn't I listen to your pleas? Didn't I pardon you? Didn't I spare you? Don't I have you forgiven? And you, shouldn't you also have pity of your companion as I had pity on you? You are a wicked man; you will be punished according to your wickedness!

And the wicked servant ended up in prison.

1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



Let's see what Jesus teaches us in this parable.

First, the king wiped out his servant's debt, a huge debt he owed him he forgave, he erased everything!

The king of this story, do you know he represents God and the servants represent us. We all owe a debt to Him. Of course we do not owe money but every time we disobey Him it is like a debt. We can't pay it and we deserve to be punished but if we sincerely ask Him for forgiveness, He is ready to give grace, to forgive us; He erases our debt, our disobedience.

Some people might say, but that's not fair! That God should forgive us like that! It's too easy!

Do you know why He does it? Because there is someone who has paid for us: it's Jesus, He was punished in our place. You understand why it is important to believe in Jesus and to love Him?

What is Jesus still telling us in this parable? That now that we are forgiven, we too must forgive the one who asks us for forgiveness.

When God tells me "I forgive you", he also tells me "You do it too, and if it's too hard for you to forgive that you can't do it, ask me and I will help you".

You can read this story again in the last part of the chapter 18 of the Gospel of Matthew.

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



To forgive is what God asks of us; being forgiven of our sins, we must forgive. Forgiveness is proof of love, as is asking for forgiveness. It's not something natural with us, nor with our children. We can support them in this process and this learning of forgiveness and if we have been unfair to them let us ask their forgiveness.

Here is some food for thought that you can share with your children depending on their age.

What does it mean, "I forgave him"?

- *I have nothing against him anymore*
- *He hurt me but I let my anger, my bitterness go, even if I admit that I have been hurt*
- *It may take a while for me to heal because it's not an easy thing to do, it's an injury*
- *Here may be consequences for him because he is responsible for his actions but, for my part, I decide not to take revenge.*