

COME TO PAPA: ENCOUNTERING THE FATHER THAT JESUS KNEW

— GARY WIENS

SESSION 5: THE FORGIVING FATHER

INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 130:4 – “If you would mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you, Lord, there is forgiveness; therefore men fear You.”

Personal observation and experience – forgiveness is something taken for granted, not something to produce the fear of the Lord. But the Biblical standard is that forgiveness is something that should cause the fear of the Lord to rise in our hearts.

It is inevitable and essential that our Father’s character is formed in us. This is the indication that we are of His family, and that the inheritance of His Kingdom does indeed belong to us.

I. GOD’S LIBERAL FORGIVENESS

A. The standard is unlimited forgiveness – seventy times seven

Matt. 18:21-22 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.”

B. The command is rooted in God’s nature as the God of mercy

1. Moses’ encounter in Exodus 34

Ex. 34:5-7 Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6 And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”

2. The purpose of the Old Testament sacrifices was to provide forgiveness so the people could survive in the immediate presence of God.

Lev. 5:10 And he shall offer the second as a burnt offering according to the prescribed manner. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

C. Jesus exemplifies this mercy in His relationships with others

1. He experienced the full range of human stress and temptation

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 2:16-17 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. (17) Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

2. Therefore He understands and has compassion for us

Psalms 103:13-14 As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities (has compassion on) those who fear Him. (14) For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

Hebrews 2:18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

3. Therefore He embodies the mercy of God toward us

John 14:7-9 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." (8) Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." (9) Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

D. God removed the debt from us, and laid it on Jesus

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Mercy and forgiveness is much more than saying “It’s OK, it doesn’t matter.”
Mercy and forgiveness means the willingness to bear the cost of another person’s sin at your expense.

We can only do this by a fresh awareness of how much mercy God has had on us.
We become partners with Him in the release of His mercy upon others.

II. EXAMPLES OF THE MAGNIFICENT FORGIVENESS OF GOD

A. The Parable of the Forgiving Master and the Unforgiving Servant

1. Do the math – “talent” = 100 lbs. @ \$1000 per oz. \$1.6 million per talent
X 10,000 = \$16 Billion

2. Unrealistic confidence – “Be patient with me, I’ll pay it back!”

At \$100,000 per year, it would take him 160,000 years to pay it back.

3. The Master is Moved with Compassion

4. The Torment of Unforgiveness – to be unforgiving is to be “delivered to the torturers” – demonic harassment with physical and psychological implications

5. The Sober Warning – we receive what we give out

Matthew 18:35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Matthew 6:14-15 "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."

B. The Story of Hosea (*Salvation*)

1. Recruiting the Prophet

2. The Prophetic Assignment – not merely a word, but a living example
Hosea 1:2-3 When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: “Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD.”
3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim.

Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.”
3. A New Testament expression of the Father’s heart – Luke 7:36-50
 - a. A sinful woman’s worship
 - b. The Pharisee’s question to himself
 - c. Jesus’ question – who will love more?

III. OUR REWARD IS LIVING IN MERCY AND THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – LUKE 6:27-36

- A. There is “Kingdom credit” that comes to those who are merciful
- B. This reflects the Father’s nature – *“You shall be sons of the Most High”*
- C. The Gracious Command – “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

CONCLUSION: