**7 Keys to Forgiveness**

Scripture Reference: Matthew 18:21-35

The scripture starts out with Peter asking a question how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seventy times seven?

Jesus then used a parable to answer Peter’s question. The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

It is important to mention that forgiveness is only required when a sin has occurred. If there is no sin there is no need for forgiveness.

1. **Key #1: Sin always precedes the need for forgiveness.**
   1. The servant owed his master 10,000 talents (Major sin)
   2. Forgiveness is needed when an offense occurs and a person sins against another.
   3. Matthew 8:15 (If your brother **trespasses** against you… speak with him)
   4. Joseph’s brother’s hated him because of his favor and sin against him causing Joseph to suffer.
   5. Joseph’s brother’s needed his forgiveness because they had sinned against him.
2. **Key # 2: There are no limits as it relates to forgiveness**
   1. The master forgave his servant his debt (Matthew 18:27)
   2. If Joseph went back and killed his brothers most people would have no issues with this as his brother’s had sinned against him.
   3. But he instead forgave his brothers as he understood that all things work together for the good.
3. **Key #3: The offender is in debt to the victim**
   1. The Servant was in debt to his master
   2. Joseph’s brother’s owed him something. If when they thought he was dead.
4. **Key #4: Compassion proceeds true forgiveness**
   1. The Servant begged for forgiveness and it was granted because the master was moved with compassion.
   2. Jesus was moved with compassion and this motivated his mercy to act.
   3. Joseph cried when he saw his brothers and had mercy on them.
5. **Key #5: Everybody Craves to be Forgiven**
   1. The Servant and the one who owed the Servant both wanted to be forgiven.
   2. Joseph’s brothers wanted to be forgiven when they discovered that they had sinned against their brother.
   3. His brothers only confessed their need for forgiveness when they discovered they were guilty and judgment was at hand.
6. **Key #6: We are all accountable to God**
   1. The master judged the Servant for being unjust and for not forgiving his brother.
   2. All things work together for good.
   3. How can I do this thing and sin against my God (Joseph).
   4. The Servant’s actions against his brother resulted in him falling into judgment.
   5. We are expected to forgive our neighbors or to be judged by God for our evil hearts.
   6. Joseph’s brothers hated him and cast him into slavery only to have God place Joseph in a position of authority in which he was capable of placing judgment upon them.
7. **Key #7: Forgiveness Comes from God.**
   1. All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.
   2. All of our righteousness is as filthy rags.
   3. For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life.
   4. 2 Cor. 5:18 (And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation (restoration of favor).
   5. Daniel 9:9 – To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.