

21 July 2013: Preached by Rev Quek Suan Yew

Topic: The Life of Apostle Peter – Peter and Forgiveness

Scripture Text: Matthew 18: 21-35

1. The Jews set a limit of a maximum of 7 times to forgive a person. Peter asked Jesus how many times he ought to forgive someone who offended him. Jesus' reply was 70x7 which really means unlimited time. Forgiveness is not a natural response from us. We usually choose who and what we want to forgive.
2. To have a forgiving hearts means we bear no bitterness, no ill-will and no grudge against the person who hurt and offended us. It does not matter whether the offending party has apologized to us or not. The extend of a believer's forgiveness is without limit.
3. The basis of a believer's forgiveness is solely because we have received forgiveness from Christ for our sins. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all sins and we can do nothing to earn that forgiveness. Jesus told a parable to clearly illustrate this truth. A servant owed the king 10,000 talents which is an enormous amount that the servant has to work about 275 times of his 70 years life-time to repay this debt. The debtor asked for mercy and the king forgave him everything. But this same servant went to his fellow servant who only owed him 100 pence which can be repaid working for about 4 months. Yet he would not show mercy to his fellow servant for the small debt and cast him into prison. Because of it, the king was angry and cast the unforgiving servant to the tormentors.
4. The parable shows that if a person who cannot forgive others and yet claims that God has forgiven him of all his sins, he cannot be a true believer. God's Word states very clearly the end is condemnation for a person who cannot forgive another from his heart. When we experience the mercy and grace of God to forgive every sin we committed, the love of God will enable us to forgive others whose offence against us cannot be compared at all to the gravity and depth of our offence against God.
5. In this lesson of forgiveness, it is about personal injury and ourselves being hurt and offended. But for people who go against God and His Word, it is not about us forgiving them. It is for them to seek forgiveness from God as they sin against God and not us.