

## Jesus' Kingdom Parables, Part 3

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 6

### Parable of the unforgiving servant

- Background
  - Mt 18:21-22
    - <sup>21</sup> “Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’
    - <sup>22</sup> Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.’”
- Mt 18:23-24, <sup>23</sup> “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. <sup>24</sup> As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him.”
- v 26, “The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’”
- v 28, “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.”
- v 32, “wicked servant”
- v 34, “In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.”
- v 35, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”
- v 34, “turned him over” (Gk, v, *paradidomi*): to surrender someone or something to another
  - 1 Co 5:5, “... hand this man over to Satan, so that the [flesh] may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.”
  - 1 Tim 1:20, “Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.”
  - When God turns someone over to Satan, he has a redemptive purpose
- v 34, “jailers to be tortured” (Gk, n, *basanistes*): a torturer-jailer, a prison guard who inflicts severe physical pain; torturer, tormentor
  - root word: *basanos* (Gk, n)
    - Lk 16:23(a), “In hell, where he was in torment ....”
    - Mt 4:24, “... people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.”
    - According to this verse, what did Jesus do to those suffering severe pain?

- *basanizo* (v, to torture or torment)
  - Mt 8:6, “Lord, ... my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.”
- Does God inflict severe pain or terrible suffering?
- v 34, “until he should pay back all he owed”
  - What is this parable about?
- v 35, “... unless you forgive your brother from your heart”
  - Who is “your brother”?
  - God knows your heart, pretense is unacceptable
- v 35, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”
  - Mt 6:12, 14-15, <sup>12</sup> “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors....” <sup>14</sup> For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”
  - Col 3:13, “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (also, Eph 4:32)
  - “as”: in the same way – he forgave us unconditionally – & to the same degree – he forgave us completely
  - Did God really forgive us unconditionally?
  - 1 Jn 2:2, “He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”
  - We’re to forgive whoever sins against us, even if they do nothing in return; i.e., we’re to forgive unconditionally
  - We’re to forgive them completely; otherwise we haven’t really forgiven them
- This parable does not mean we’ll lose our salvation & go to hell if we refuse to forgive
  - Ro 8:1, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- When we think or act like the world, we literally authorize Satan to influence or even oppress us and God allows that to happen because he honors our free will & he allows us to experience the consequences of our ungodly behavior to get our attention
- Belonging to God’s kingdom must have profound impact on the way we relate to others; especially those in our spiritual family
- Refusing to forgive others harms us, not the person who sinned against us
- Kingdom insight:
  - Forgiveness is an important element of God’s kingdom
  - Refusing to forgive exposes us to torment from our spiritual enemy

## Parable of the wedding banquet

- Background (Mt 21)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> parable about a father telling his 2 sons to work in his vineyard
  - Mt 21:31(b), “I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.”
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> parable was about a man who rented his vineyard to some tenants
  - Mt 21:43, “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”
- Mt 22:1-3, <sup>1</sup> “Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:  
<sup>2</sup> ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. <sup>3</sup> He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.’”
- vv 8-10, <sup>8</sup> “‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. <sup>9</sup> Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ <sup>10</sup> So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.”
  - “people they could find, both good and bad”
  - “good” (Gk, adj, *agathos*): a person who is good to others
  - “bad” (Gk, adj, *poneros*): evil, wicked, immoral; a person who does harm to others
- vv 11-14
  - <sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. <sup>12</sup> ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.
  - <sup>13</sup> “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’
  - <sup>14</sup> “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”
- v 12(a), “Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?”
  - “friend” (Gk, n, *hetairos*): a person who joins with others in some activity or effort; understood as not at the level of a friend
- v 12(b), “The man was speechless.”
- v 13, “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”
  - “darkness”: representative of the realm dominated by evil, sinfulness, ignorance of God & his ways
  - “weeping and gnashing of teeth”

- Mt 8:12, “But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- Mt 13:42, “They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (also 13:50)
- What does it mean for someone to be thrown outside into darkness or the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth?
- v 14, “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”
  - “invited” (Gk, adj, *kletos*): someone whose participation or presence has been requested
  - “chosen” (Gk, adj, *eklektos*): selected in preference to another
  - What will happen to those who enter the kingdom by accepting Jesus as Savior, but choose to live in the kingdom on their own terms? And what will their ultimate destiny be?
- Kingdom insights
  - All are invited to enter the kingdom
  - Those who enter the kingdom but refuse to honor kingdom protocol will be thrown out forcefully

**Conclusion** – new kingdom insights

- Forgiveness is an important element of God’s kingdom
- Refusing to forgive exposes us to torment from our spiritual enemy
- All are invited to enter the kingdom
- Those who enter the kingdom but refuse to honor kingdom protocol will be thrown out forcefully

## Supplemental Scriptures

### Christians can abandon the faith, discard their salvation

- Mt 24:10, “At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other.”
- Jn 15:2, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”
- Ro 11:22, “Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.”
- Gal 1:6-7a, “<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – <sup>7</sup> which is really no gospel at all.”
- Col 1:22-23, “But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.”
- 1 Tim 3:6, “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.”
- 1 Tim 4:1, “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.”
- 1 Tim 5:8, “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”
- 1 Tim 6:21, “...which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.”
- 2 Tim 2:11-13, “If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.”
- Heb 3:6, “But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.”
- Heb 3:12-14, “<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.”
- Heb 6:4-6, “<sup>4</sup> It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, <sup>6</sup> if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.”
- Heb 10:26-27, “<sup>26</sup> If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, <sup>27</sup> but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.”
- Heb 12:25, “See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?”
- Jas 5:19-20, “<sup>19</sup> My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, <sup>20</sup> remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.”
- 2 Pet 1:10, “Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.”

- 2 Pet 2:15, “They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.”
- 2 Pet 2:20-21, “<sup>20</sup> If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. <sup>21</sup> It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.”
- 2 Pet 3:17, “Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”
- 1 Jn 2:24-25, “<sup>24</sup> See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup> And this is what he promised us – even eternal life.”

### **Christians can be removed from the kingdom**

- Mt 13:41-42, “The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- Mt 25:1-2, 10-13, <sup>1</sup> “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Five of them were foolish and five were wise.... <sup>10</sup> “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. <sup>11</sup> “Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they said. ‘Open the door for us!’ <sup>12</sup> “But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’ <sup>13</sup> “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”
- Mt 25:30, parable of talents (master entrusted his wealth to servants & one failed to put it to work to increase value), “And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”