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The Debt

Matthew 18:21-35 ²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother who sins against me? Up to seven times?” ²²Jesus answered, “I tell you, not just seven times, but seventy-seven times! ²³Because of this, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlements, a debtor was brought to him owing ten thousand talents. ²⁵Since the man was unable to pay, the master ordered that he be sold to pay his debt, along with his wife and children and everything he owned. ²⁶Then the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Have patience with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷His master had compassion on him, forgave his debt, and released him. ²⁸But 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, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe me.’ ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and begged him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you back.’ ³⁰But he refused. Instead, he went and had him thrown into prison until he could pay his debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and recounted all of this to their master. ³²Then the master summoned him and declared, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave all your debt because you begged me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had on you?’ ³⁴In his anger, his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should repay all that he owed. ³⁵That is how My Heavenly Father will treat each of you, unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” (NIV)

I. Here are the details of this parable.

- A. It was to answer a question that **Peter** had asked. V. 21
- B. A **king** wanted to settle accounts with his servants. V. 23
- C. The first servant owed him **750,000** pounds of gold. The current price of gold is 1,200 dollars per ounce. Therefore this servant owed him 14.4 **billion** dollars in current spot gold price! V. 24
- D. The king ruled that everything the servant owned was to be sold and his entire family sold into slavery until the **debt** could be paid. V. 25
- E. This servant **begged** for more time to pay off the debt. V. 26
- F. The king had **compassion** on him and forgave the entire debt. V. 27
- G. This same servant was owed **\$147.84** by another servant. He grabbed this other servant and began to choke him to get repayment. V. 28
- H. The second servant begged for more time but instead was thrown in **prison** until he could pay off the debt. V. 29-30.
- I. The master was told about the lack of **compassion** of the first servant. V. 31

- J. The master changed his mind and ordered that the unforgiving servant be jailed and tortured until the original 14.4 billion dollars could be repaid. V. 32-34
- K. Jesus concludes that this is how we are to be treated if we cannot forgive others from our heart. V. 35

II. How can we apply this using the parable of the sower?

- A. A hard heart is unable to extend real forgiveness.
- B. A rocky heart will quote other Scripture such as an eye for an eye or tooth for a tooth.
- C. A weedy heart will be able to forgive as long as it is in non-financial areas.
- D. A healthy heart will take this as a challenge to be as close to God as they can get and live in a constant state of giving and receiving forgiveness.