



Forgiveness Leads to Restoration

Upon the conclusion of my devotional reading for January 16, 2011, I began my daily bible reading. In looking at Matthew 18 I realized how the word of God utilizes brief introductory themes and then opens that theme many times within the passage by way of parables and/or stories within the same chapter that when looked at through Spiritual eyes are often interconnected. Many times when this flesh to bones technique is used the final segment brings us back around to the beginning theme.

"God utilizes brief introductory themes and then opens that theme ..."

In chapter 18 the word of God begins with an admonishment to adopt the attitude of a little child or suffer separation from God. I have heard many preach on this subject and by and large the message is limited to the age and presumed innocence of a little child. We ignore the scripture spoken through King David.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." **Psalm 51:5**

and

"... In time past ye walked according to the course of this world...in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." **Ephesians 2:2-3**

The latter text pointing out that it is mans nature to sin. A man's days may be few but is already full of trouble. I recall that children understand and state early no, mine etc; selfish and self centered are they. Likewise I recall children have a short attention span. They do not normally harbor ill will towards others. Children can fight one minute and be friends the next. A child has an attitude of forgiveness.

This now brings me back to the next verse in Matthew.

"Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense come."
Matthew 18: 7

Therein we learn that the culprit of offenses will not go unpunished. We are told to

free ourselves of ungodliness, free ourselves of unforgiveness for God is watching as He sent Christ to save those which are lost @ verse 11. The balance of the chapter consists of identifying the attitude in a child that we must all possess in order to make it into the Kingdom of Heaven. It goes directly to an attitude of forgiveness as meat is now added to the bones of Matthew 18:6.

The parable of the lost sheep at verses 12-14 speaks to one sheep, lost and alone outside of the fold. As one brethren gone astray can remain unforgiven and outside of the love of friends and sometimes even family. This parable unveils the height of love which is revealed and experienced upon the reintegration of the lost.

In an effort to bring this still closer to home our text at verses 15-20 turns to the brother who has done you wrong. The text discloses the necessity of pointing out the wrong first on a personal level, secondarily (if need be) before one or two others and finally (if necessary) in the presence of the church itself to exclude the brother if he does not repent. We are told that this pointing out of wrong is that a brother might sorrow to repentance.

"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." **2 Corinthians 2:6-7**

This repentance is that we as children of God might come to live out the restoration God in Christ Jesus has shown.

"And be ye kind one to another tender hearted forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." **Ephesians 4:32**

For, while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly Romans 5:6. While you and I were God's enemies, Jesus Christ extended a hand of forgiveness to all that would receive it, in the hopes that we would be restored to the Father through Him. He went so far at verses 21-22 as to express forgiveness as being limitless. The size or number of sins was not outside of Gods grace.

Finally at verses 23-35 we read of a king (who is the picture of God the Father) who commands an account of his servants as God will one day demand an account of that which we have done in this life.

We learn that not one of us has the ability to pay our own sin debt, as this king's servant @25. This king (as God) @27 forgave the debt that he and his servant's relationship might be restored. After this servant received grace he refused to extend that grace and forgiveness to others. How many of us are separated from God because of our willingness to extend forgiveness. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

We are told @3 if a child's attitude is not adopted we shall not enter the kingdom. We are told one who (through unforgiveness) offends would be better off with a millstone about his neck and drowned @6-7. We are told that we ought to forgive as we have been forgiven @ 33-35. We are told that the penalty of unforgiveness is that you are turned over to the tormentors. Why is God so insistent upon forgiveness? God is weighing the wrong done you verses the wrong you have done to Him. God is seeing the value of the shed blood, torture, humiliation and death of our sinless savior. I ask you... how it measures up in your heart and mind.

Check the scripture

1. *Ephesians 2:2-3*
2. *2 Corinthians 2:6-7*
3. *Ephesians 4:32*

"And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
Ephesians 4:32

If no one has told you yet today let me be the very first to say that I love you all and you can't do a thing about it.

Serving Christ

Andre' L. McGuire

Ministry Needs

Praise God:

I believe as God said, He will supply our need according to His riches in glory. That you might be made aware of those present needs please find listed below the needs of ALM's Ministry International, Inc. as we know them.

It is my intention to fulfill the ministry God has placed in my heart. I am prayerful that God would touch those whom He has anointed to be a blessing or participant in this ministry. I have nearly completed the business plan inclusive of a blueprint of the facility wherein the halfway house would be located. If God has so ordained it would be a blessing to receive your assistance in the development of this ministry. Please contact us in the event God has led you to assist and/or forward this to any which you believe may through prayer be interested in assisting in the following areas:

- Prayer
- Secure 501 C3
- Assist in completion of business plan
 - a. Cost Analysis
 - b. Secure Financing and/or Grant Writer

c. Marketing Plan

- Web Site Development (concept provided)
- Editing
- Secure copyright of manuscript(s)
- Prayer

I do thank you for having taken the time to review this information. I pray that God will open your heart to being a blessing to his kingdom by assisting in the development of this ministry.

Donations

The word of **God** admonishes us to owe no man anything except love. Therefore, we have made it possible for our visiting friends to assist us in maintaining our facility and our web presence by sowing seed into this ministry. Initial financing will be used to secure 501-C-3 status. We thank you in advance for your cheerful gift in support of ALM's Ministries, International, Inc.

Please visit us at www.almsministries.org browse the site and please sign the guestbook prior to leaving.