

Faith Matters

What Jesus really said - When asked probing questions?

Matthew 18:21-35 and Luke 10:25-37

Exploring the relevance of faith for us today

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6:9-13



The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Why did Jesus use a Samaritan in the story? (Who is our neighbour?)

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Can we ever justify a lack of love?
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Is it enough to love without action?
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In what practical ways can we do likewise?
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Summary of Jesus' Message

- God's grace (His unearned gifts to us — especially in regard to salvation) is irrespective of our actions or proven goodness. **(Ephesians 4:32)**
- God's grace, if truly accepted, should mean that we grow more and more like Him.
- We should forgive as He forgave us.
- We should love as He loves us.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35)

How often should we forgive?
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Why should we forgive and who benefits?
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What happens if we don't forgive?
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How does this parable show God's grace?
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The Story of the Venture Capitalist

from 'What's So Amazing About Grace'
by Philip Yancey (ISBN: 0-310-24565-6)

An entrepreneur in Los Angeles decides to cash in on the boom in adventure travel. Not all Americans sleep in Holiday Inns and eat at McDonald's when travelling overseas; some prefer to stray from the beaten path. He gets the idea of touring the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Most of the ancient wonders, he finds, have left no trace. But there is a move underway to restore the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, and after a lot of legwork the entrepreneur lines up a charter plane, a bus, accommodations, and a guide who promises to let tourists work along-side the professional archaeologists. Just the kind of thing adventure tourists love. He orders up an expensive series of television ads and schedules them during golf tournaments, when well-heeled tourists might be watching.

To finance his dream the entrepreneur has arranged a million-dollar loan from a venture capitalist, calculating that after the fourth trip he can cover operating expenses and start paying back the loan. One thing he has not calculated, however: two weeks before his inaugural trip, Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait and the State Department bans all travel to Iraq, which happens to be the site of the ancient Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

He agonizes for three weeks over how to break the news to the venture capitalist. He visits banks and gets nowhere. He investigates a home-equity loan, which would net him only two hundred thousand dollars, one-fifth of what he needs. Finally, he puts together a plan that commits him to repay five thousand dollars a month the rest of his life. He draws up a contract, and even as he does so, the folly sinks in. Five thousand a month will not even cover the interest on a million-dollar loan. Besides, where will he get the five thousand a month? But the alternative, bankruptcy, would ruin his credit. He visits his backer's office on Sunset Boulevard, nervously fumbles through an apology, and then pulls out the paperwork for his ridiculous repayment plan. He breaks out in sweat in the air-conditioned office.

The venture capitalist holds up a hand to interrupt him. "Wait. What nonsense are you talking about?

Repayment?" He laughs. "Don't be silly. I'm a speculator. I win some, I lose some. I knew your plan had risks. It was a good idea, though, and it's hardly your fault that a war broke out. Just forget it." He takes the contract, rips it in two, and tosses it in the paper shredder.

Book Recommendations

Desiring God by J. Piper (ISBN 978-1590521199)

Knowing God by J.I. Packer (ISBN 978-0830816507)

The Jesus I Never Knew by Philip Yancey (ISBN 978-0310219231)

The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel (ISBN 978-310209300)

"He who cannot forgive another breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself."

George Herbert