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TORMENTED BY CHOICE

You might think it a strange title, "Tormented by Choice", but truly it is a choice to be tormented or not. Jesus talked about a servant that owed a great debt to a king in Matthew 18:21-35. The king was doing his books and saw that a servant owned a great debt that had not been paid. This debt was over a billion dollars in today's money. Now that is a huge sum to owe anyone. The servant was brought in before the king and told to pay the debt, but he didn't have the money to pay it. The king commanded that he, his wife, and children and all he had to be sold to pay the debt off. The servant begged him to have patience with him and that he would repay all. He fell to the ground and worshipped the king. The king had compassion on this man and forgave him this huge debt. Can you even imagine the relief of having that debt gone? Forgiveness and mercy had spoken.

This same man left the king's presence not owing any debt. Once he left, he saw another servant that owed him a very small debt compared to what his debt had been. He grabbed the man by the throat and demanded that he "pay up." This man that owed the small debt said the same thing to the servant that had been forgiven, ***"Have patience with me, I will pay thee all."*** (vs. 29.) Instead of forgiving this man the small debt he owed, he put him into prison until the debt would be paid off. He showed no mercy or compassion like the king had shown him. The servant only cared about himself, not others.

The king heard what this servant had done. He heard that he had not given the same compassion for the small debt that he had been given for the large debt. He brought this servant back before him, and said, ***"O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?"*** It made the king very angry that this forgiven servant had no compassion on his fellow servant. Verse 34 says, ***"And his lord (king) was wroth (extremely angry), and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due him."***

The debt was so large that there was no way it could be paid off, and what's more, the man was in prison, so he had no way to work to pay it off even if he wanted to. Verse 35 goes on to say, ***"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses."*** This was spoken to Peter and the disciples, and it is relevant for each of us also. This parable is really about our sin debt my friends. God has forgiven us of our sin; a debt that we could never pay.

Many people are tormented by choice. They choose to not forgive others that have hurt them. It doesn't matter how big the hurt was (like the first servant) or how small the hurt was, (like the second servant) if we choose not to forgive, we have chosen to be tormented by choice. Do you feel like you are being tormented? Then perhaps you need to examine your heart and see if there is someone that you need to forgive unconditionally, including yourself. If you don't let

go of the unforgiveness, you will never be free of torment. If you have, then Satan has no right to torment you over these things.

We must daily examine our hearts to see if there is even a tiny bit of unforgiveness my friends, because it doesn't take but a little thing left to grow into bitterness by not forgiving to be tormented.