

Trinity XXII

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Preacher: Father Randall Russell

[0 : 00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. To err is human, but to forgive is divine.

To err is human, but to forgive is divine, which is why God became man, so that men might become like God.

For in Christ Jesus, to forgive is human, because to be human is to be like the divine, to be like Jesus, to be like the God who became man.

For in the incarnation, God became what we are, a human being, in order that we, we might become what God is, holy and righteous, merciful and just, perfect and without sin.

And it's not like when God became man, he became anything less than he was before, because even as a man, God is still God, and our heavenly king is still our heavenly king.

[1 : 25] But in Christ Jesus, we, we become infinitely more, because we become like God, become like him, which is exactly what this morning's parable is all about.

For in this morning's gospel, Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

Now the king in this parable is God, and the servants are us human beings. And so when the king, who is God, begins to settle accounts, one is brought to him, who owes him 10,000 talents, which was an absolutely ridiculous amount of money in those days, something that no one, no one could ever pay, unless of course that person was the king himself, which is exactly what happens.

The servant is unable to pay, so he begs his master, the king, to have mercy upon him, to which the king responds in kind, by forgiving all that servant's great debt.

In other words, the king, the master, takes his servant's poverty upon himself, with the result that the servant now becomes just as rich as a king.

[2 : 56] Yet in doing so, the king becomes nothing less, for he still remains a king, but the servant, that servant becomes infinitely more.

For he actually goes from being an indebted slave to becoming a debt-free man, who had been given so much. Not unlike, by the way, how God became man, in order that man might become like God.

Yet in our Lord's parable, in our Lord's parable, what does that servant do with this newfound status, as a debt-free man, who had been given so, so, so, so, so, very much?

Well, he goes out. He finds one of his fellow servants, who owes him a hundred denarii, which really is a significant amount, about four months' worth of wages, but nowhere near 10,000 talents, which is about 160,000 years' worth of wages.

No joke, for a talent was worth about 6,000 denarii. He goes out, and he grabs that fellow servant by the throat, and he exclaims, pay me what you owe.

[4 : 17] Pay me my four months' worth of wages now. To which the fellow servant begs for mercy, but the freed servant would hear none of it, and he has his fellow servant thrown into prison until he should pay back all of his debt.

And do you think the king was happy, happy at all with that unforgiving servant, when he heard what he had done? No, of course not.

The king was furious. He was outraged. So he exclaimed, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt.

I forgave you 10,000 talents, 160,000 years' worth of wages, because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had compassion on you?

Therefore the king had that unforgiving servant delivered unto the torturers until he should pay back every last cent. And dear Christian friends, the real lesson for us all to learn this morning is that God, Jesus Christ, really does want us to be more like him.

[5 : 52] Because he is a king who really does want to settle accounts. Because salvation, salvation is not just about us.

Salvation is not just about us getting something. Salvation is not just about us all being forgiven so that we might get all the riches of heaven instead of lying destitute in all the poverty of hell.

No. For the biblical and more Catholic understanding of salvation is about how God became man in order that man might become like God.

For forgiveness isn't just about what God has done for us, but forgiveness is also about what God is constantly and repeatedly doing to us.

Reshaping us over and over and over again in his image until at last we are as holy as God is holy.

[7 : 14] And that means that salvation is not just about us. But salvation is about everyone we encounter as well as about the entire world.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with all of his servants. A God who wanted to settle accounts with all of his creation which serves him.

And we would all do well to consider our Lord's words here for us all this morning. Each and every time we kneel before our king in worship and beg for his mercy lest our fate be no different than the fate of that unforgiving servant in this morning's parable.

For that unforgiving servant mistakenly thought that salvation was all about what we get but not also about what we are called to become.

For we are called to become forgiving servants of our heavenly father and master just like Jesus Christ our one true king.

[8 : 39] For to err to err is to be a human like Adam but to forgive to forgive is to be a man like Christ who you have been baptized into and the likeness of whose image of mercy and grace you now bear.

After all God became man in order that men might become like God. For in Christ Jesus you are the salt of the earth.

You are the light of the world. So in the riches of all God's grace forgive one another as you yourself have been forgiven.

in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.