**Series: StoryTeller**

**Speaker: Ronnie Norman**

**Today: Making Up Is Hard to Do**

*“Despite the 100’s of sermons on forgiveness, we don’t forgive easily, nor find ourselves easily forgiven. Forgiveness, we discover, is always harder than the sermons make it out to be. We nurse sores, go to elaborate lengths to rationalize our behavior, perpetuate family feuds, punish ourselves, punish others – all to avoid this most unnatural act.” – Elizabeth O’Connor.*

1. **A Forgiveness Story by the Numbers**

***Matthew 18:21-35***

*21Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”*

*22Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.*

1. **Mega Debt**

*23“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of goldwas brought to him. 25Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.*

1. **Mega Grace**

*26“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.*

1. **Mini Response**

*28“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.*

*29“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’*

*30“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.*

1. **Mega Reaction**

*32“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.*

*35“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”*

1. **Punch Line: Forgiven People Forgive**
2. **What Forgiveness Looks Like**
3. **Cancels the debt in a relationship.**
4. **Event & a process**
5. **Doesn’t mean trust is immediately restored**
6. **Doesn’t excuse or ignore**
7. **Rooted in the grace and justice of God.**

*“whoever is forgiven little loves little”*

1. **Costly but unforgiveness is more costly.**

Romans 14 – Disputable Matters

* No condemning
* No condescending

Acts 15

Barnabas John Mark Paul