The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant  
Matt. 18:23-35

Introduction:
A. One of two outstanding parables on forgiveness.
  1. Unforgiving brother.
  2. Unforgiving servant.
B. Both parables illustrate 3 great principles.

Discussion:
I. The Seriousness of Sin.
A. A “debt” we cannot pay. (Mt. 18:24,25)
B. A “waste”, “death” and “lost” (Lk. 15:13,32)
C. Always “against heaven” (Lk. 15:18,21).
   1. Transgresses heaven’s law. (1 John 3:4,5).
   2. Forgiveness must take place in heaven. (cf. Mt. 9:2-8)
D. Sometimes against others as well. (Lk. 15:18,21, Mt. 18:15).
E. It is more than mere “fault” or “mistake”
   1. All sins are faults and mistakes.
   2. Not all faults and mistakes are sin. (cf. 1 Cor. 7:28,31-38)
   3. May overlook fault - sin must be dealt with.

II. The Requirements of Repentance.
A. It is the penitent that must be forgiven.
   1. Unforgiving servant & elder brother would not after repented.
   2. Forgiving father forgave after repentance.
B. It is not best for impentitent to be forgiven.
   1. Else why does God require it. (2 Pet. 3:9, 1 John 1:9)
   2. Else why Lord make Lord say “If he repent” (Lk. 17:3,4)
   3. Else why “let him be as heathen”, etc. (Matt. 18:15-18).

III. The Fundamentals of Forgiveness.
A. It is not automatic.
   1. Calvinists think so.
B. It depends on our forgiveness. (Matt. 18:32-35).
C. It is the right thing to do. (Lk. 15:22).
   1. In view of our blessings in Christ. (Lk. 15:32).
   2. In view of our own need for forgiveness. (Mt. 18:24,25).

Conclusion:
A. Those who advocate forgiveness before repentance minimize seriousness of sin.
B. Those who neglect forgiveness after repentance minimize seriousness of sin.