



■ † Eleventh Sunday of St. Matthew

Forgive and You Will Be Forgiven* We Must Forgive With Our Whole Heart

The Lord concluded the parable about the two debtors with the following words:

“So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”
(St. Matthew 18:35).



It would seem that such a small thing is required: **forgive and you will be forgiven**. When you are forgiven, you are brought into mercy; and when you are brought into mercy, you have become a participant in all the treasures of mercy. Here, then, are salvation, paradise, and eternal bliss.

What a great acquisition for such a small thing as forgiving!

Indeed, it is a small thing, **but for our self-love there is nothing more difficult than to forgive**. We perhaps forgive some unintentional annoyance inflicted on us in private and unseen by others. But if the insult strikes a sensitive nerve, and takes place in front of other people at that, then there is no question about it: we will not forgive.

There are circumstances when, like it or not, you are not able to express your displeasure, and so you remain silent. Only your tongue is silent, however; meanwhile your heart speaks and devises evil plans. Raise the unpleasantness yet another degree, and there is no restraint. Neither shame, nor fear, nor loss, nor any other thing will restrain you.

Egoism that has reached the boiling point renders a person as though insane, and he who gives in to it begins to speak irrationally.

Typically, those most subject to such an unfortunate state are not just anybody: the more civilized one is, the more sensitive he is to insults and the less forgiving. Relations will often remain smooth on the surface, but inwardly there is clearly discord.

Meanwhile, the Lord requires that we forgive with our whole heart.



(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*.