

Psalm 51; Lord's Day 51
FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

- I. To appreciate forgiveness we must truly understand the reality and depth of that for which we are forgiven.
 - A. When we request forgiveness it is because we are aware of what we have done to our Father.
 - 1. Luke 11:4 speaks of "sins," i.e., any human activity which misses the mark of God's glory.
 - 2. Matthew 6:12 speaks of "debts," because every sin incurs guilt and makes us worthy of punishment.
 - B. This petition must be in the spirit of a confession, not an abstract, general notion of sin.
 - C. True apology consists of the admission of sin unaccompanied by excuses, reasons, or "buts."
- II. The request to be forgiven is our asking God to wipe out so they cannot be seen anymore (Psalm 51:4).
 - A. Only God can forgive, because all sin is essentially against Him.
 - 1. The only way God can erase sin is by its debt being paid; God cannot just forget sin, but He must forgive it.
 - 2. Only the Son of God could bear God's eternal and infinite wrath (II Cor. 5: 19) and do so in perfect loving obedience.
 - B. Forgiveness also includes the positive blessing of righteousness.
 - C. This petition every child of God wants to pray and must pray.
- III. The wonder of being forgiven.
 - A. Through the means of prayer God gives His grace and Spirit, which is the application of the atonement.
 - 1. He assures sinners of forgiveness and right relationship: "thy sins are forgiven thee" (Matt. 9:2,5).
 - 2. Then we know the gospel of free, sovereign grace.
 - B. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1). "There is ... no condemnation to them .. in Christ" (Rom. 8:1).
 - C. O the bliss of this glorious thought: that not the part, but the whole of my sins are nailed to the cross.