

We come to a very important request (in this model/pattern prayer), that the Lord Jesus taught His disciples, and that He is teaching us. Text: Matthew 6:9-15, Luke 11:1-4.

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”; Luke: “Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us”; that is, when they have sinned against us! How often have I bowed in prayer to my Heavenly Father with an unforgiving heart towards someone who has offended or hurt me. And now, here I am, asking God to forgive me! There is so much “unforgiveness” and so little “forgiveness” in the world today. I will never forgive him. The world doesn’t forgive, you hear it all the time, someone says or does something offensive; they ask for forgiveness/apologize, but the world says NO! The world will permanently mark you with the shame and stigma of your sins; but God doesn’t do this when He forgives! Psalm 130:3-4

Psalm 103:10-12: “He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us”. No mark of shame in God’s eyes!

Isaiah 43:25: “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and (I) will NOT remember thy sins”

What is forgiveness; what does it mean? What am I doing when I forgive one who has sinned against me; when they’ve hurt or offend me?

If we would understand “the act of forgiveness”, we must first understand what the word “forgive” means.

To Forgive: Means to let go, put away, or to release, as one would someone else from a financial debt. But also, to put away an offense, “to release or let one go” who has sinned against you; you read the word “DEBT”; we release them from their debt; we don’t hold it over their heads.

FIRST: Our request to our Heavenly Father for forgiveness for our daily sins, spiritual failures, offences against Him. (Don’t forget that EVERY sin is against God).

SECOND: We are asking God to forgive us, AS we forgive those that have sinned or those that are indebted to us.

THIRD: A GRAVE WARNING to any who refuse to forgive their brother, sister, neighbor, or friend.

First: “Forgive us our debts, or our sins”

You might ask, why am I asking for forgiveness for my sins when God has completely forgiven me and saved me from my sins in the atonement of Christ? Isaiah 38:17, Micah 7:18-19, 1 John 1:7

So, why am I asking for forgiveness if I am forgiven for all my sins in Christ? Justified in the eyes of God!

The first and primary reason that you are to ask for “daily” forgiveness is because the Lord Jesus is teaching us to do so; and also, this is the prayer of a child of God, not of a lost sinner. In fact, YOU children of God are the ONLY ONES that have the right/privilege to call God, your Father!

John 1:12-13, 1 John 3:1-2

So that we understand the forgiveness that we are asking for, let us go to the example taught by the Lord during the last supper: John 13.4-11

You see, walking through this world our “feet” are going to get dirty, and so we need “daily washing and cleansing” from the filth of this world and from our daily sins. 1 John 1:8-10, 2:1-2, Psalm 51:1-5, Proverbs 28:13

Note when the Lord came to Peter, and Peter said, wash me all over; the Lord replied, you don’t need a bath, only your feet are dirty. (V10):

“He that is washed (or bathed) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit (or completely clean): and ye are clean, (you’re already clean through my Word which you have believed); but not all. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore, said He, ye are not all clean”.

So back to our text; Our Father, forgive and cleanse us for our debts and daily sins and failings which are against you.

Next: Forgive us Father, AS WE FORGIVE our debtors; or those that have sinned against us, or those that are indebted to us:

Deal with me Heavenly Father AS I have dealt with my neighbor and friend, and as I have dealt with my enemies and those that hate me!

It is at this point that you must examine your own heart; making sure that you are not harboring a grudge or the spirit of vindictiveness and unforgiveness toward anyone in your life!

Augustine: If you pray “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” while refusing to forgive those who have wronged you, this prayer (meant to be a blessing) becomes a self-inflicted curse. What you are really saying is: “O God, since I have not forgiven my brother (or sister), please do not forgive me”.

Don’t forget that Jesus is still sitting on the top of that mountain near the northwest shoreline of the Sea of Galilee preaching what we call the Sermon on the Mount.

Don’t forget the Beatitudes, (which should be YOUR attitudes, child of God); these exceptional virtues or spiritual qualities should exist in the heart of EVERY child of the Kingdom of Christ!

Matthew 5:7: “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”. If you are NOT merciful; you will not receive it. If you don’t forgive, you won’t be forgiven by YOUR heavenly Father!

Those who are not merciful and compassionate and forgiving to others will receive none. Again, one of the marks of a child of God is, you will be merciful, compassionate, and forgiving.

James 2:13: “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment”

Luke 16:24: Have you ever considered the rich man in hell, when asking for mercy, he asked Father Abraham, “SEND LAZARUS”, the very man to whom he showed no mercy. Matthew 18:21-35

Third/Last: A Grave Warning: Matthew 6:14-15:

After the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He reemphasized the importance of forgiving those that sin against us.

“Forgive us our debts, AS WE FORGIVE our debtors”; (Luke): “And forgive us our sins; FOR WE ALSO FORGIVE EVERY ONE that is indebted to us”

You see, forgiveness of others' sins against you is one of the excellent virtues ~ prominent marks that the Spirit of Christ is in you.

Children of God are forgiven, and therefore they are also "forgiving" people. In fact, one of the evidences that you have been born-again; forgiven for all your sins by the blood atonement of Christ is, you readily forgive those that have sinned against you.

In contrast, it is a "grave warning" to any of you who do profess faith in Christ, who refuse to forgive "another"; your neighbor or even your enemy for their offences against you. Mark 11:20-26, Luke 6:35-37

"Ye shall be children of the Highest"

As a child of God, (Born of Him), you are a partaker of His nature, the Spirit of God is IN YOU. NOW Christian, you will bear a wonderful resemblance to your Heavenly Father, in your life, and here, specifically in how you forgive. "Forgive us our debts, AS we forgive our debtors"

Athendorus, the philosopher by reason of his old age, begged leave to retire from the court of Augustus, which the emperor granted. In his compliments of leave, he said, "Remember, Caesar, whenever thou art angry, that thou say or do nothing before thou as distinctly repeated to thyself the twenty-four letters of the alphabet." On which Caesar caught him by the hand, and said, "I have need of thy presence still;" and kept him a year longer. This was excellent advice from a heathen; but a Christian may prescribe to himself a wiser rule. When thou art angry, answer not till thou hast repeated the fifth petition of our Lord's prayer – Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: and our Lord's comments upon it – For if ye forgive NOT men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

Colossians 3:12-14, Ephesians 4:31-32, Luke 17:1-4