



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study: **PRAYING FOR FORGIVENESS AND FORGIVING OTHERS**

Matthew 6:12,14,15

Forgiveness, pardon for sin, is the most essential, the most blessed, and the most difficult act that God ever did for man. It is the most essential because it keeps us from eternal suffering in hell and gives us joy in our present life with fellowship. It is the most blessed because it secures us a place in heaven, to live forever with God. It is the most difficult because it cost the Son of God His very life on the Cross to provide. Forgiveness of sin is man's deepest need and God's greatest gift. And the Lord has promised that if the sinner confesses and forsakes his sins and if by faith in the vicarious death of Christ he trusts in God for forgiveness, he will be forgiven and will be granted the privilege of sonship.

It is important for the sinner to pray: "**For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great**" (Psalm 25:11). Only those who come to God knowing their debts are so great that they cannot pay, relying only on the mercy of God and the merits of Christ will receive forgiveness. With humility and sorrow of heart for sinning against God, such a sinner turns to God for mercy and pardon. Gratitude for being forgiven makes him to also forgive his fellowmen who have sinned against him.

PLEA AND PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS FROM GOD

Matthew 6:12; Psalm 25:11; Luke 18:13,14; Psalm 51:1-13; Isaiah 1:16-18; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Exodus 34:8,9; Daniel 9:4-19.

"**And forgive us our debts.**" "**And forgive us our sins**" (Luke 11:4). Sins are represented by the term, debts. These debts are sins (Luke 11:4), transgressions (1 John 3:4), trespasses (Ephesians 2:1). Our sins are moral and spiritual debts to God. Sin makes men guilty before God. Sin brings men under judgement. But what is sin? (1) Sin is missing the mark of God's required standard. (2) Sin is transgression, stepping across the line – that is, stepping across the line drawn by God to demarcate what is right from what is wrong. (3) Sin is lawlessness – the breaking of God's law. God will judge all lawlessness. (4) Sin is slipping, sliding or falling – losing control and falling into degrading lifestyle. (5) Sin is debt and except God graciously writes off the debts of sin we owe, no man can hope to pay off his debts of sin from birth. This is why we plead and pray: "**Forgive us our debts; forgive us our sins.**" In praying like this, the sinner or the backslider prays for personal forgiveness.

Can the saint or the believer ever pray, saying, "**Forgive us our sins**"? When praying for national forgiveness, Moses, though he was free from the sin of the nation, prayed, "**O Lord, ... I pray Thee, ... pardon our iniquity and our sin**" (Exodus 34:9). Daniel identified with his nation and prayed in the same way. Also, within the family circle, a child may ask the father's forgiveness. Examples of believers' debts for which we ask Him forgiveness in the New Testament are: Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 9:49-56; John 13:6-11; Acts 22:17-22. Without committing sins that damn the soul, we can still pray: "**Forgive us our debts.**"

PROMISE AND PRIVILEGE OF FORGIVENESS FROM GOD

Matthew 6:12; Isaiah 55:6,7; Proverbs 28:13,14; Acts 5:30,31; 13:38,39; 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 10:16,17.

God's word is full of His promises of mercy and forgiveness. Examples of the greatest of sinners receiving forgiveness (David, Ninevites, Paul, etc) encourage every sinner to come to God for mercy, grace and forgiveness. The Lord promises pardon on condition of repentance from all sins. Man's greatest spiritual need is forgiveness and that is what God has promised and provided. What God has promised is the cancellation of the sinner's debts, the removal of the ultimate penalty of sin and victory or triumph over the power of all past sins. With the forgiveness experienced by the believer, he is no longer under condemnation, no longer under the power of sin, no longer destined to hell. The eternal Judge has declared him pardoned, justified and righteous. The eternal Judge has become his heavenly Father and the Spirit of God bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. This

experience of forgiveness and the joy of salvation fills his heart with love and gratitude to God. He is eager to extend the love and mercy received to all who have any contact with him.

POSSIBILITY AND PERIL OF FORFEITING FORGIVENESS FROM GOD

Matthew 6:12,14,15; 18:21-35; Mark 11:25,26; Luke 6:36,37; Ephesians 4:31,32; James 2:13; Galatians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:13-17; Luke 15:25-30.

Having received infinite mercy and great forgiveness, we ought to show gratitude to the Creator by forgiving all His creatures. No man should lie down in his bed at night without forgiving all those who had offended him. From the parable of the kingdom which Jesus told, forgiving our fellowmen 100 pence when God has forgiven us 10,000 talents should be normal and natural. This forgiveness does not merit God's forgiveness but it should be the natural consequence of the joy of being forgiven by God. He who will not show mercy and forgive others rejects mercy and forgiveness himself.

If a man comes before God, harbouring dark and vengeful thoughts, how can he expect that God will show him that mercy which he is not willing to show others? If we are unwilling to forgive others, we have the assurance that God will never forgive us. A life without forgiveness is a life without love, without grace, without Christ. The divine plan is that those who receive mercy from God must show that mercy to others.

If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we'd like to hear from you.

You can email the pastor@dclm-liverpool.org.uk with your comments