

Forgive Us Our Sins

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 18, Gospel of Matthew chapter 18, and I'll begin by reading this conversation that Peter is having with his Lord Jesus.

Matthew 18, beginning at verse 21. Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me?

Up to seven times? Jesus answered, I tell you, not seven times, but 77 times.

Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him 10,000 talents was brought to him.

Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

[1 : 26] The servant fell on his knees before him. Be patient with me, he begged, and I will pay back everything. The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt, and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him 100 denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him.

Pay back what you owe me, he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, be patient with me, and I will pay you back.

But he refused. Instead, he went off and he had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

Then the master called the servant in. You wicked servant, he said. I canceled all the debt of yours because you begged me to.

[2 : 45] Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you? In anger, his master turned him over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed.

This is how my heavenly father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from the heart. In Luke chapter 11, our Lord was praying, and when he was done, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray.

And so we have been taking our place along with them, asking the Lord Jesus to teach us to pray as we too are his disciples.

And we've come to this Lord's Prayer, as it's called. And we've been studying it, and we saw how in the first part we're told to ask for the Lord's name, his kingdom, his will to be done.

And we've now transitioned to the last part of the prayer where we're asking God for things that we need, like daily bread and forgiveness of sins and protection from the evil one.

[4 : 04] And so last week, it's the petition, give us this day our daily bread, all that this body needs to live.

And as we pray this daily, we will grow in a sense of our dependence upon him. I need him today to provide for me. We'll grow in our gratitude as daily he answers our prayers as we sit down to the table and eat what he's given.

We'll grow in our contentment to whatever he gives in answer to this prayer. And we'll grow in our humble trust that he will provide what we need.

So I ask you, are you learning not just to thank God daily, but to ask him daily for your daily bread? But now, children of the Heavenly Father, we have more needs than our daily physical sustenance.

We have daily bread that we need, yes, but we have daily sins that need daily forgiveness. And so we're taught to pray, forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

[5 : 19] Let's draw seven lessons from this petition this morning. In the first place, if this petition says anything, it says that Jesus treats our sins seriously.

He treats our sins seriously. Our day is known for its casual treatment of sin. Now, we would expect this from the world, for there is no fear of God before their eyes.

In their own eyes, they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sins. But sadly, the professing churches of Christ have fallen prey to the same light views of sin as are found in the culture at large.

Pastors are afraid to preach against sin, to preach the laws of the King of Kings that we just heard of and sang to. Why afraid? Well, lest people leave not feeling good about themselves.

And maybe they won't come back. What people's itching ears are desiring are not serious views of their sins, but rather to not be bothered about them, to be told about a God who is all love and grace.

[6 : 37] That's all there is to God. Recently, I was told of an evangelical pastor who told his congregation that if they're Christians, they don't need to confess their sins anymore.

Well, in stark contrast, our Lord Jesus, addressing his disciples, believers, those who by faith in Jesus Christ have become Christians, he says that when we pray, we are to say, forgive us our sins.

So whatever sin is to people, our Lord is teaching us that our sin is a big deal to him and to our heavenly father. It was our sins that brought him out of the glories of heaven into this rotten world.

It was our sins that caused him to be born a man. It was our sins that caused him to become sin for us and then to go to the cross and become a curse for us, that he might take away our sins.

Indeed, that's why he was given the name Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. So this petition shows us that Jesus treats our sins seriously, and therefore we must also.

[7 : 56] The second lesson that we learn from this prayer is that sin is a debt that we owe to God. A debt.

And we see this by comparing the two different times that in the New Testament, Jesus taught this prayer. Here in Luke 11, 4, we have forgive us our sins.

But on an earlier occasion, in Matthew 5, Jesus said, forgive us our debts. So which is it?

Forgive us our sins or forgive us our debts? Well, it's both, isn't it? And what our Lord is teaching us is that our sins are debts that are owed to God.

It's an offense to God. It's a breaking of his law. It's a failure to give to God what we owe to him. Therefore, we're indebted to him. We have a debt that must be paid.

[9 : 00] The Bible says every sin is recorded in God's book. And one day, Revelation 20 says the books will be opened. And each of us must give an account of himself to God according to what is written in the books.

The penalty for unpaid debts is what Jesus calls the second death. The eternal torments in the lake of fire where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

That's the Lord Jesus' description of the penalty for unpaid debts. In other words, there's hell to pay for our sin debt. Kids, let me ask you.

How many sins did it take for Adam and Eve to be driven out of the presence of God in the garden? For Adam and Eve to forfeit eternal life? How many sins did it take?

Just one. Just eating the forbidden fruit. God is that holy.

[10 : 06] Sin is that offensive. That each of our sins deserves damnation and needs forgiveness. Let me say that again. God is that holy.

Sin is that offensive. That each of our sins deserves damnation and needs forgiveness. The Bible says we've all sinned.

And we've all sinned more than once, haven't we? Many times each day in thought and word and deed and desire and motive. You know, we're commanded, the greatest commands, the Bible, to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

When have you done that? What day have you done that? What day have you done that? This last week? Ever. Ever. Ever. Ever. Ever.

In your life. Our failures to love God and man are seen. They're all over in our daily living. The wasted time. The wasted time. The wasted opportunities.

[11 : 08] The neglected privileges. The disordered affections. Duties left undone. Neglected Bibles. Neglected prayer. Neglected neighbors. Love of money.

Love of men's praises. Discontent. Coveting. Selfishness. Lust. Pride. Impatience. It's meanness. Gossip. Slander. Disobedience to parents.

Lying. And on and on we can go. David says my sins are more than the hairs of my head. And ours are no less. And so our sins being many and the God we sin against being infinitely holy.

We all have an infinite debt of sin that we cannot pay. You're in trouble when your debts have become more than what you can pay.

And it causes you consternation. But this is your greatest problem in life. This is my greatest problem in life.

[12 : 07] This debt. There are no small sins against a big God. And so our only, only hope is forgiveness. But will he forgive?

Well, we come to our third lesson from this text. We have a God who forgives sins. If not, Jesus would not tell us to ask him to forgive our sins, would he?

He would not lead us on such a dead end. No, this petition is amazingly good news. God forgives sins. Therefore, we can ask him to do so.

But this is miles away from the crass presumption of man seen in Heinrich Hayne, a German journalist, godless journalist, who on his deathbed was asked if he thought God would forgive him for his sins.

And he died muttering, of course God will forgive me. That's his job. That's his job. As if God is obligated to forgive us.

[13 : 11] As if it's something he owes us all. No, what he owes us all is eternal damnation. That's the only thing he owes us all. And if he forgives, it'll be pure, undeserved, amazing grace, such as struck our hearts song this morning as we sang, grace that is greater than all my sins.

No, forgiveness, you see, is God's prerogative alone. He can choose to give forgiveness or to withhold it. It's his divine right. He owes it to none. And so we need to clearly understand then the answer to this question.

Well, whose sins does he forgive then? Not all people, but only those who confess their sins. And this condition for forgiveness is seen all over our Bibles, perhaps most clearly as we've studied on Sunday evenings, 1 John 1, 9.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins. If we confess, he will forgive.

The connection could not be clearer. Now, to confess means to agree with God about what we've done. It was sin, Father.

[14 : 31] And we call it by name. We call it what God calls it. It was lust. It was discontent. It was ingratitude.

It was meanness. Whatever the sin is, we agree with God about what we've done. That's what confess means in its most basic sense. It's to be aware of our sin and of our need for forgiveness.

And where do we become aware of our sin and need for forgiveness? It's in his word. It's in his word. Through the law, we become conscious of sin.

Romans 3, 20. We must look into the mirror of God's law if we would see the smudges and dirt of sin on our face. James 1, 22 and following.

We need to be aware of our sins and of our need for forgiveness. We need to acknowledge, then, our sin and guilt. To not justify ourselves.

[15 : 28] To not rationalize sin away. To not diminish it and excuse it. But to actually condemn ourselves as guilty. It's to accept God's verdict against us.

As we stand before God and we're asked, How do you plead? We don't plead innocent. We plead. I plead guilty as charged, Your Honor.

We agree with God about our sin. We're deserving of nothing but Your wrath. But to confess is also to not only agree with what God says about sins, but it's to agree with God's attitude toward that sin.

God hates sin. God is angry at sin. And so we too must, in our confession, not just have the right formulas upon our words.

So we can get forgiveness and then return to our sins. No, we must come with a truly broken and a contrite heart.

[16 : 35] Forgive me if it comes from a right heart. It will be a broken and contrite heart. As David says in Psalm 51. Humble before the Lord for our crimes against Him.

So God is a forgiving God. But His forgiveness is limited to those who confess. It's not given to those who try to be good to make up for their sins.

Okay, I've sinned, God. Now, here, watch me now. I'm going to church today. Watch me. I'm going to do this good deed. No, God does not forgive that kind of behavior.

No, He forgives those who confess. God, I agree with you. I'm a sinner. I have nothing to pay. Have mercy upon me. We're looking away from anything we do and we're casting ourselves upon the mercy of God in Christ.

Those are the ones He forgives. Psalm 32, verses 4 and 5. After David's sin of adultery and the murder of Uriah, David was not confessing his sins.

[17 : 38] His lips were sealed. He was trying to cover it and to hide it, you remember. For months. And day and night during those months, God's heavy hand was upon him, He says.

But then, I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to you and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

There it is. I confess and you forgive. Jeremiah 3, verses 12 and 13. Return, rebel Israel, says the Lord.

I will not remain angry with you. For I am merciful, says the Lord. I will not continue my wrath forever. Only acknowledge your guilt. You've rebelled against the Lord your God.

You've scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree. And you've not obeyed me, declares the Lord. Only acknowledge your guilt. Is that too much for him to demand?

[18 : 42] For forgiveness? And when with a broken and contrite heart you do, forgiveness is given. Not reluctantly, not stingily, not meagerly, but abundantly.

Isaiah 55, 7. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord and to our God. For he will have mercy upon him and he will freely pardon.

He'll abundantly forgive. Think about it. The great debts that God has forgiven. The worst of sinners. We have a God who forgives sins.

Nehemiah 9, 17 says you're a God ready to forgive. Forgive. He's always ready to forgive. He's ready right now, this morning. He's more ready and willing to forgive your sins than you are to confess them.

That's how ready he is. Micah 7, 18. Who is a God like you? Who pardons sins and forgives the transgressions of the remnant of his inheritance.

[19 : 50] You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show mercy. You see, he's not only ready to forgive on the spot, but he actually delights to do so. It's his pleasure.

He finds joy in forgiving sins. Oh, if God were not a forgiving God, Jesus would not send this to him to ask, forgive us our sins.

But blessed be God, there is forgiveness with him that he might be feared. Stood in awe. Where? Where do we find such grace as is in him?

So there is, we do have a God who forgives. Lesson four, no debt can be forgiven without someone paying it. No debt can be forgiven without someone paying it.

The prayer is forgive us our sins. This word, we're asking God to forgive that sin debt that we have against him.

[20 : 51] And forgive means to cancel the debt. It means to blot it out so that it no longer exists. Indeed, this is exactly what happened when someone made the last payment on a debt.

The creditor would take out his log, his book of debts, and he would blot out the debt. It's gone. It's been paid for.

It no longer exists. And we today still speak of debts being forgiven, don't we? Sometimes you hear of debts that hospitals will write off.

They'll forgive the debt. Or our own president's student loan forgiveness. There's that word again. That's our word. If someone borrows money from the federal government to go to university at the end of their schooling, they need to start repaying it with interest.

So suppose someone has a school debt of \$50,000. Well, the president would like to forgive that debt, to cancel it, so that you no longer need to repay it.

[21 : 56] Now, that might seem kind, but it's not like the debt just, poof, disappeared into the air. No, somebody had to pay those \$50,000.

And it wasn't the president. It was you taxpaying individuals. Perhaps some of you who worked hard and sacrificed to pay off your school debt, you must now pay.

You see, because no debt can be forgiven unless it's paid for in full. We read it in Jesus' parable in Matthew chapter 18 just minutes ago.

When the king wanted to settle accounts with his servants, there was a man who owed him 10,000 talents. That's millions of dollars. And he was not able to pay. So the king demanded that he and his wife and children and all that he had be sold to pay the debt.

And the man fell to his knees and begged, be patient with me and I will pay back everything. The king did better than what he asked. And instead, he let him go and he canceled the debt.

[23 : 06] Most translations have it, he forgave the debt. It's the same word in our prayer, forgive us our sins. He forgave the debt. So the debt was forgiven.

But once again, it was not without someone paying it. Now, in this story, who was it that paid the debt? Well, it was the king himself, wasn't it?

It was the king himself who assumed the debt and lost 10,000 talents that belonged to him. So let no one think for a moment that it costs nothing to forgive the debt.

It costs him big time. And so our problem is that our sin debt cannot be forgiven without someone paying it. You see, our debt is to the justice of God.

And our debt can't be swept under the rug and just pretend. God, just pretend it doesn't exist. No, God's justice will not be ignored.

[24 : 05] He demands payment for what is due, for what is right. But we can't pay it. All eternity in hell would never pay off the last payment of what our sins deserve.

That's why hell is eternal. We can't pay the debt. It will take an eternity and even then will not have paid the last installment. Our sins are against an infinite God.

And so the offense against him is infinite. And therefore, the penalty is infinite, everlasting punishment. Now, in the Old Testament, the sacrificial system was teaching the Israelites that forgiveness would come through atonement.

And so in Leviticus 4.26, after giving instructions about the sin offering, the Bible says in this way, the priest will make atonement for the man's sins and he will be forgiven.

And over and over in Leviticus, that point is made. To be forgiven, an atonement must be made for the man's sin. A payment must be given. A man's life lost.

[25 : 21] And when atonement has been made for him, he will be forgiven. The sin debt must be paid. But who can pay this hefty price for sin? Well, the Bible says without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.

So it is a hefty price. It's a life given, laid down. The New Testament answers the blood of Jesus, God's son, cleanses from all sin.

That Christ died for sin. Once for all time, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring us to God. That in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

And so on the night that he was betrayed, Jesus took the cup and said, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Here is blood that cries to the Father, forgive them, Lord. Forgive, it cries, nor let that ransom sinner die. Here is blood valuable enough to pay the sin debt in full that our sins might be forgiven in full.

[26 : 35] Octavius Winslow says forgiveness is the costliest blessing that God can give and that we can receive. Because it would cost God his own beloved son and putting him to wrath, punishing him in order to forgive me.

Now this is the only petition in the Lord's Prayer that our Lord never prayed. He never prayed, Father, forgive me for my sins. For he had no sins of his own to confess.

He had no debt to pay. And you see, that's what qualified him to pay our debt for us. There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.

He only could unlock the door of heaven. And let us in. And so we all like sheep. We've gone astray. And the Lord has laid on him, on Christ, the iniquities of us all.

He's transferred our sin onto his own son. And he assumed our sin debt. It was laid on him. And then he goes to the place of the cross and pays it in full as he suffered the full wrath of God upon sin and the sinner.

[27 : 55] The concentrated punishment of hell. So that Isaiah can say the punishment that brought us peace was on him. He bore that punishment.

He paid that price. He was condemned. And I am forgiven. We have four accounts of that glorious transaction of Calvary.

And John, in his gospel, tells us that just before Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit to God, he cried in a loud voice, it is finished.

Tetelestai. Finished. Now, studies have been done and have found in this time period that this word, tetelestai, is written in financial documents, in books of debt, that when the last payment was paid, in some places would be written, tetelestai.

Finished. It's over. There's no more debt. Paid in full. And so here is that glorious word.

[29 : 14] But from the cross, Jesus is letting us know that he has made the sacrifice that pays in full, that finishes the debt completely.

He separated our sins from us as far as the east is from the west. He's cast our sins into a lake that's bottomless. He's thrown it behind his back.

He remembers it no more. And since Jesus paid it all, there's nothing left for. The believing sinner in Jesus to pay. There's nothing left for us to pay.

So David can say after he's received this wonderful forgiveness, blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. There's nothing like it in all the world.

There's nothing like it in any of the religions of the world. There's nothing like the joy and peace that comes from sins forgiven. And if you've not received Christ as your Savior and Lord, you're not trusting in his death alone to save you, what he suffered for sin, then it means your sin debt is still written on the books and is still waiting to be collected from you in the day when you stand before your maker.

[30 : 29] But why? Why? Why? When the sacrifice has been made. In Acts 10.43 says, All the prophets testify about him, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

You see, it doesn't matter who you are or what you've done. All, everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins. What a gospel. What good news.

Lost sinner, confess your sin. Trust in Jesus now and you'll be forgiven all. All of your sin. Think of that. All your sin debt blotted out forever in the crimson blood of Christ.

Well, that's the only way sins can be forgiven is if they're paid for. And that's what Jesus was doing on the cross. The sixth lesson. Children of God are to daily ask the heavenly Father to forgive our daily sins.

You see, forgiveness of sins is a concern not only for unbelievers. According to this petition, it's an ongoing concern of all believers. This is what you're to say when you pray.

[31 : 49] Whenever you talk to your Father, Jesus is saying, here's something to say, forgive us our sins. It's to believers that Jesus gives this prayer for forgiveness.

Our need for daily forgiveness is no less than our need for daily bread. Then let it also be found daily upon our lips, asking our Father in heaven for Jesus' sake to forgive us.

So a question. When can Christians stop asking the Father to forgive us? Well, when we stop sinning and have no more sins to confess.

And that day is coming for those in Christ. For when we see Him as He is, we'll be made like Him. We'll be saved to sin no more.

And never again will this prayer be found on our lips throughout all eternity. Rather, we will be praising Him forever for having forgiven us our sins. But until then, think of it.

[32 : 56] The first prayer of the sinner is the lifelong prayer of the saint. We're never done praying this until we see Him face to face. Forgive us our sins.

We need daily the application of Christ's blood to cleanse our guilty conscience from sin. And believers, when we come to confess sins, we're not coming to an angry judge asking forgiveness.

We're coming to a reconciled, loving, heavenly Father. And we're looking to Him not to justify us. He's already justified us. The first time we came to Him and put our trust in Jesus, we're justified from all of our sins.

But we're coming to Him as our Father to remove the cause of His fatherly displeasure. Kids, you know what fatherly displeasure is.

Dad's not pleased with what you did. He hasn't disowned you. You're still His daughter, still His son. But He's displeased. And in confessing to our Heavenly Father, we're asking for Him to take that thing that has come between Him and me, called sin, my sin, to take it from between us and to restore an unhindered fellowship and communion with God.

[34 : 12] That felt distance, that heavy hand of the Lord. It's much like the broken fellowship of husband and wife when sins are not confessed. They're just allowed to pile up. And what happens?

They grow into a cold wall of distance. And we feel that with our God when we hold on to our sins, when we do not confess. And so daily confession means keeping short accounts with our Heavenly Father, that we might go on enjoying this sweet fellowship with Him.

So bring your prayer life to this pattern of the Lord's Prayer. Let it inform your prayer life. Let it reform your prayer life. Do you daily ask God to forgive your sins?

Are you aware of your sins and guilt? Are you acknowledging them? Are you seeking His forgiveness? Asking for His forgiveness? And since we don't sin in general, but in particular, our confessions ought to be in particular too.

This is just the outline of the prayer. We need to say, forgive us of our sin of those unkind words I spoke to my wife. Forgive me for that bitterness I'm holding against this person.

[35 : 32] Forgive me for the way that I've been neglecting you. You see, we sin in particular as we need to confess. And the sooner the better as our sin spoils fellowship with God and our sin gains power, the longer it is allowed to go on unconfessed.

There's no reason to wait. We have a Heavenly Father who delights to forgive sins. The last lesson is clear on the face of the text.

Only those who forgive others are forgiven by God. The full petition reads, Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

Unless you think I'm twisting this to say what it's not saying, listen to the footnote that Jesus adds to this prayer, this petition, in Matthew 6, verses 14 and 15.

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

[36 : 40] It was the same lesson in the parable, wasn't it? The man who did not forgive his fellow servant's sins against him in debt was not forgiven by his Master.

And so strong is the impulse to make others pay for their sins against us. So strong is this impulse to give them a piece of your mind. They hurt you to hurt them back.

They hit you to hit them back. To give them the silent treatment, the cold shoulder, to have nothing to do with them. So strong is that impulse in our hearts that Jesus warns us that only those who forgive others will be forgiven by God.

Can you see the value of this daily prayer then? If every day I'm coming to my Father and saying, Father, I've sinned against you.

In these ways, please forgive me. Something's happening to my heart, you see, in receiving mercy from God that will then dispense the same mercy to those who offend me.

[38 : 00] Remember, you're asking God to do to you what you do to them in the way of forgiveness. So what are you to do when others wrong you? Well, rather than demanding payment, pay up, you owe me, and paying them back.

No, you assume the debt yourself. You suffer the loss yourself. You say, what loss? I'm talking about the pain involved of not getting even. You know what that is. It hurts to not be able to get even.

And that's part of the debt that you assume. And you say, I'm not going to demand it, and I'm not going to make them pay. I'm going to assume that debt, even as Jesus assumed mine on Calvary.

It's to a man's glory to overlook an insult. It's to a man's glory to overlook an offense. Because it's to be like our Savior.

It's Christ-like. It's Jesus-like. It's God-like to overlook an offense. He never needed to pray, forgive me. But, oh, Jesus did pray, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they're doing.

[39 : 08] Even praying that while they were crucifying him and mocking him to scorn. So the word to us is bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances.

Those are long arms. Whatever grievances you have against one another, forgive as the Lord forgave you. You know, it helps immensely to remember how the Lord has forgiven you.

He forgives you immediately. He's always ready. The olive branch is always extended. No hesitancy, no standoffishness. You confess, I forgive.

He forgives fully. He forgives all your sins. Well, forgive these, but I can't forgive you for that. There's no withholding. The whole mountain of our sins.

The same sin over and over, 70 times seven, he forgives. Where sin abounds. His grace and forgiveness abounds all the more.

[40 : 18] He forgives us fully. Thomas Watson said, no man can do so much wrong to us all our life as we do to God in one day. Remember that.

We stand before the one that's wronged us as the greatest wrongdoer against heaven ourselves. And if we've received pardon and forgiveness from him, we will do something to this heart.

He forgives us fully. He forgives us heartily. Not reluctantly. Okay. Better not do it again, though. No. He forgives us willingly.

He delights in mercy. He takes pleasure in free forgiveness. And how does he forgive us? He forgives us finally. It's over. Till the last time.

Finished. You're not going to hear from me about it again. There are sins and wickedness. I will remember no more. That's how he deals with us.

[41 : 20] No brooding over wrongs. I say it helps immensely to remember how God has forgiven you in Christ. It helps immensely to remember how God, what God had to pay to forgive you.

Come and gaze again tonight at that very reality. What did it cost to forgive me my debt against heaven? But it also helps to remember that God will not forgive you if you do not forgive your brother.

That helps too. That's why Jesus attached it to the prayer. Wouldn't be there if he didn't know it was a trouble for us. You see, if you demand justice, eye for eye, tit for tat, and the one who wronged you, you need to be prepared to receive the same justice from your Father in heaven.

You need to know that that's how you are going to be treated in the day of judgment. The one you call Father is not your Father. He will be your judge.

And where there has not been mercy extended to us, he will not show you mercy either. And so, what's he saying to him? He's not saying by forgiving others, you thereby earn or deserve to be forgiven by God.

[42 : 41] No, you've got it backwards. It's rather the proof that God has forgiven you that you forgive others. So, how can we learn whether or not our sins are forgiven in heaven?

I cannot peer into the books of heaven to see whether my sins are blotted out. I don't need to go into heaven. I need to go into this heart and say, do I forgive others? Can I bury injuries done to me?

Can I overlook offenses? Can I return good for evil? Can I forgive others? A hypocrite can go to church. He can give money into the offering box.

He can read his Bible. But he cannot forgive the one who sins against him. Whereas the true believer is so amazed that God has forgiven me of all my sins.

That once I take in that forgiveness, my heart is changed. Something happens in here that when my brother comes and says, forgive me, I cannot not forgive him.

[43 : 47] You see, in this way, forgiveness is just like love. You know our memory verses. What are we saying? Whoever does not love obviously doesn't know God. Why? Because God's love. You can't know God who is love and not love your brother.

It's the same thing here. You say you're forgiven by God? Okay. Put it to the test. If you are forgiven by God, you can know it.

Not by looking into heaven, but do I from the heart forgive my brother? Because you can't know a forgiving God without being forgiving to others.

the loved ones love. The forgiven forgive. And oh, how this petition addresses a constant need in this fallen world that's so fractured and broken and where offenses abound within families and churches and friendships and neighbors and communities and nations.

and here's the sweet opportunity to let your light shine, brothers and sisters, in believing communities, churches of the Lord Jesus Christ who was damned in our place that we might be forgiven.

[44 : 58] That there it might be seen the awesome greatness of God's forgiveness. That he did not spare his own son to purchase this everlasting gift to us.

Forgiven. Remembered no more. Here's your opportunity, families, to demonstrate in your family the same spirit of forgiveness to one another.

Husbands and wives, parents and children, as God has extended to you. Thereby to display the glory of this God. There is no God like him.

The God who forgives sins and he's to be worshipped and praised for it. And in this way of dispensing forgiveness, we can bring glory to him. It's only because we've tasted his forgiveness that we ourselves forgive.

Well, if you've not tasted that forgiveness of God in Jesus Christ, do so right now. He's ready. Only acknowledge your guilt, he says.

[46 : 06] Just come and confess it. Come and ask me to forgive you. And I will. I'm that faithful and just. I will. Come now. And the heart of God towards his rebel people is laid bare that he's eager and ready to forgive.

In Isaiah chapter 1 and verse 18, come now, he says to these rebels. Come now. Come on. Now. Let's reason together. Let's talk about this. Sin is between you and me and you.

You won't come to me. But I want you to know that there's nothing holding out on my part. Come on. Right now. Let's talk and reason about it. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow if you come to me.

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Come on. Right now. You might have come this morning with your whole sin debt unpaid.

It's still on you. It's still on the books against you. You can go home with it wiped clean in the blood of Jesus because everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins.

[47 : 18] That's the promise of the God who does not and cannot lie that you cast yourself upon him. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Amen. Who forgives all your sins. Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him.

Amen.