

THE LORD'S PRAYER

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS,
AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS

RIVER OF LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH

FEBRUARY 26, 2023

THE LORD'S PRAYER – PART 17

Matthew 6

7“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,
12 and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.— **ESV**

Forgive us our Debts, As we forgive our debtors

- Jesus makes a distributive statement here
 - It means that the first statement is conditional upon obedience to the second
- FIRST – He says forgive us our debts
 - **Romans 6:15** Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! **16** Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. **17** Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. **18** Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living . . . **20** When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the obligation to do right. **21** And what was the result? You are now ashamed of the things you used to do, things that end in eternal doom. **22** But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. **23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. – NLT 2

Our forgiveness is conditional . . .

- SECOND - Jesus tells us that our forgiveness from HIM is connected to how we forgive others!
 - Forgive us our debts/ as we forgive our debtors
 - Forgive us/ In the same manner that we forgive others
 - Forgive our debts to the same degree that we forgive the debts of those who have sinned against us

How could God expect such a thing from us!

- How can I forgive and let someone off the hook who has hurt or offended me?
 1. God knows that forgiveness is the best thing for us
 - To forgive is to be like God
 - Our Heavenly Father wants us to be conformed to His image
 - We are never more like God than when we forgive
 2. Forgiveness releases our heart from the one who hurt or offended us
 - As long as we hold unforgiveness in our hearts – we are tethered by a soul tie to the one whose debt we hold
 - That person or people have a shaping force that keeps us from freely moving into God's future for us
 - We continue to give that person power and influence in our lives
 - As one of my AA – we let abusers live rent-free in our heads
 3. To forgive someone's debt to us does not take them off the hook with God, not sometimes the law
 - They are responsible to deal with their own debt before God
 - Forgiveness does not mean reconciliation in most cases

How could God expect such a thing from us!

4. Forgiveness is a decision of our will, not our feelings
 - Feelings will come in time
5. Forgiveness is a process
 - It starts with a decision
 - It honestly states the debt (We have people do this in Freedom Prayer)
 - It often involves grieving (loss of relationship, the reality of what happened and letting go)

Sometimes we take up offenses that are not real

- False offenses or taking up offense
 - An imagined offense
 - Being offended for another person
 - Long after the original person has been reconciled – The person who has taken up offense may be trapped
 - This is why – Matt 18 Go to that person alone/ Seek to be reconciled, not to win the argument
 - **Hebrews 12:15** Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of **bitterness** grows up to trouble you, corrupting many. – NLT 2

How did God see our debt? Matthew 18

Matthew 18:21 Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?”

22 “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”

23 “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. **24** In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. **25** He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

26 “But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ **27** Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

28 “But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

How did God see our debt? Matthew 18

Matthew 18:29 “His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. ³⁰ But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

31 “When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. ³² Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

35 “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

Jesus repeats what he says in the Lord's Prayer for Emphasis

Matthew 6:14 “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins. – NLT 2

- Some theologians call this law of double mention
 - **Rom. 12:14** Bless those who **persecute you**. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. – NLT 2

Jesus repeats what he says in the Lord's Prayer for Emphasis

- Age of Offense – **Matthew 24:10** And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. **11** Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. **12** And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. **13** But he who endures to the end shall be saved. - ESV
 - We need to guard our hearts from offense and unforgiveness

House Church Reflection

- Take a moment to have a time of prayer response to the Lord. HC Leaders, allow the Lord to lead you in ministry to people and response.
- Discussion
 - What spoke to you most in the message this morning?
 - How will you apply this truth in your life?