

2023



Week Four Devotional

A Prayer for Pardon

“Jesus Prayed.” Series



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Matthew 6:12 NIV

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Matthew 6:14-15 NIV

¹⁴For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Helpful Hints to manage this devotional:

- Set aside 1 hour each day for time with God and his word.
- **Suggestion:** 30 minutes possibly in the morning, 30 minutes in the evening.
- Read, and write daily at your pace so that by the weekend you have completed the weeks devotional. The design is that you don't have to find a starting point to study, just do it. Get an accountability partner to read and study the devotional.

Resources to read: “No Future without Forgiveness” by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“Attitude 101” John Maxwell

“The Bait of Satan” John Bevere

6 petitions, 3 pertaining to the Father and 3 pertaining to the Family of God.

Us...give us...forgive us...lead us

Notice the strategic placement of this model for prayer and its content in this single longest discourse of Jesus...it's in the middle, the heart of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus teaches them to pray in the middle of it and what to pray in the middle of it.

Pardon defined:

- a remission of the legal consequences of an offense or conviction.
- release(an offender) from excuse or forgiveness for a fault, offense, or discourtesy.



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Pardon is the use of executive power that exempts the individual to whom it was given from punishment.

Pastors Easter and Parks in “Mount Motivations”, we struggle with forgiveness especially when pain grips and breaks our hearts. The deeper the wound, the harder it is to let go of our pain and walk in forgiveness.”

“A Heart That Forgives” Kevin LeVar

I want a heart that forgives

A heart full of love

One with compassion just like Yours above

One that overcomes evil with goodness and love

Like it never happened, never holding a grudge

I want a heart that forgives that lives and lets lives

One that keeps loving over and over again

One that men can't offend

Because Your word is within

One that loves without price like You Lord Jesus Christ

I want a heart that loves everybody, even my enemies

I wanna love like You, be like You, just like You did

I wanna heart that forgives

Wanna heart that forgives

When the ones that are closest

That I've known the longest hurt me the most

I still wanna love them just like You loved me

Even though I'm hurting

I wanna heart that forgives

When the pain is so deep

And it's so hard to speak about it to anyone



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Just like Your Son, I give up my right
To hold it against them with hatred inside
I wanna heart that loves everybody, even my enemies
I wanna love like You, be like You, just like You did
I wanna walk like You, talk like You, just like You did
Wanna be like You, live like You, just like You did
Cause the heart that forgives is the heart that will live
Totally free from the pain of the past
And the heart that lets go
Is the heart that will know so much freedom
Lord I wanna let it go (Hallelujah)
God I need to let it go
Lord it's been holding me back
And I don't want it, I don't want it, I don't, I don't want it no more
I don't know exactly what to do to get rid of it
But, here I am Lord Jesus
Here I am, oh here I am Lord Jesus
Oh, Lord, I need You, I need You
I know this is me that You're talking to
This is me, this is me, this me Lord, this is me
Lord I let it go, every person, every person that has ever hurt me
God I let it go, every single hurt
God I let it go, every single pain
God I let it go, I let it go, I let it go
Lord, You can have, Lord You can have
Lord, You can have it, Lord You can have it
You can have it now, You can have it now
Because I don't want it no more



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C.S. Lewis *“Forgiveness is a beautiful word until you have something to forgive.”*

Read

Micah 6:8

Act, love, and walk!

“As Christians, we must **WALK** in forgiveness because God has forgiven us!”

Relevant question: Do you believe God has forgiven you?

If so why, if **NOT** why?

Write here...

I John 1:9 NIV

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Schoolhouse Rock...conjunction junction what's your function?

A. Admonition

Matthew 6:12 NIV

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

St. Augustine called this request “the terrible petition” because he realized that if we pray “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” with an unforgiving heart, we are actually asking God not to forgive us, for “debts” here really means “sins.”



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This 5th petition teaches us to do **2** things.

1. To ask God to forgive US.

This request for forgiveness follows the ask for daily food, bread which suggests that our desire for forgiveness must surpass that of our desire for food.

2. To forgive those who have wronged us.

This is for the health of your soul, and the health of our church which can be sick from a lack of forgiveness among God’s children.

Relevant questions: Who do you need to forgive? Have you been unwilling to forgive your parents, siblings, employer, or neighbor? Have you harbored, hidden unforgiveness against the pastor, a church member, or someone you feel wronged you?

Write here.....

Read

Ephesians 4:32

Matthew 18:32-35

Matthew 18:15

We are told.....this is key in a culture that doesn’t want to be “told” anything or tell me only in a way that I want it or like it **THEN** maybe I will receive it.

Forgive us our debts(sins)

The fundamental qualification for praying this prayer is that we are “debtors”-that is, sinners. Many who “say” this prayer don’t “see” themselves as those who need it too.



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This prayer teaches us that we primarily need this prayer as we are debtors **NOT** **were** **debtors**. We are to engage in daily, ongoing confession of **OUR** sin.

B. Attitude

Matthew 6:12 NIV

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Action gets the attention many times when it's really the attitude that is the culprit. Attitude and appetite lead to the action of sin.

John Maxwell...WHAT IS AN ATTITUDE?

An attitude simply defined is an inward feeling expressed by behavior.

1. It is the “advance person” of our true selves
2. Its roots are inward, but its fruit is outward
3. It is our best friend or our worst enemy
4. It is more honest/consistent than our words
5. It is an outward look based on past experiences
6. It is a thing that draws people to us or repels them
7. It is never content until it is expressed
8. It is the librarian of our past
9. It is the speaker of our present
10. It is the prophet of one's future

Philippians 2:5 NIV

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Attitude determines altitude!

Planes have an “attitude indicator.”

The attitude of the airplane is what they call the position of the aircraft in relation to the horizon. When the plane is climbing it has a “nose-high attitude” because the nose of the plane is pointed above the horizon. When the aircraft is diving it has a “nose down attitude.”



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Pilots are concerned about the attitude of the airplane because that indicates its performance.

Questions for You

1. **What kind of attitude do you have? Nose up or nose down?**
2. **How has your attitude affected your altitude?**
3. **Could unforgiveness be grounding you?**

Having the same attitude about our” debts” as God is important to healing and wholeness. You can’t be healed of what you’re not honest about. What hinders and kills organizations is not what is done from the outside, but more so what happens on the inside.

We are creating a “**Matthew 18:15 Culture**” at COZ.

Be careful what you pray for, you usually have to practice it and that’s the hard work of prayer.

C. Action

Matthew 6:14-15 NIV

¹⁴For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

“I can forgive you but I will never forget it.”

John Wesley was serving as a missionary to the Colonies and was having a terrible time with General Oglethorpe who was noted for his pride and unbending nature. Oglethorpe said, “I never forgive.” To which John Wesley replied, “Then I hope, sir, you never sin.” Charles Spurgeon stated, “Unless you have forgiven others, you read your own death warrant when you repeat the Lord’s Prayer.”

Could it be that our unforgiving hearts make our prayers die on our lips?

We demonstrate **WHAT we have received!**



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Mark 11:24-26 NIV

24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. 25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” [26] ^[a]

Do you really believe Jesus meant what He said here?

This is a warning that goes unheeded.

In chapter 11 of “The Bait of Satan,” John Bevere writes “Forgiveness: You Don’t Give-You Don’t Get....the way we forgive, release, and restore another person is the way we will be forgiven.

What would have happened if Archbishop Tutu never forgave the many atrocities of the brutal and unrelenting South African government during the height of apartheid?

As we forgive our debtors(those that sin against us)

This is the door that the forgiveness door hinges, and swings on.

This is **THE** Action that makes or breaks individuals, institutions, and organizations.

The act or the lack thereof!

Forgiveness is NOT minimizing the hurt you received BUT it is the refusal to become paralyzed by it!

According to Pastors Easter and Parks....Forgiveness does not mean you cannot disagree with or confront someone with sin.

Forgiveness is not ignoring your hurt and pain like it never happened.

Forgiveness doesn’t mean you shouldn’t protect your heart from victimizing pain in the future. Forgiveness means that if you want to enjoy the benefits of God’s forgiveness you must forgive others.



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Action Step:

Read the entire chapter of **Matthew 18** this week.

Some takeaways from chapter 18 according to John Bevere

1. The unforgiving servant is turned over to torture.

Webster defines torture as” agony of body or mind” or the infliction of intense pain to punish, coerce or afford sadistic pleasure.”

2. The unforgiving servant had to pay off the original debt: 375 tons of gold.

Pastors' question: do you have that laying around?

3. God will do the same to any believer who does not forgive a brother’s offense.

“Our response to offense determines our future.”

Luke 17:1 NIV

17 Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come.

I cannot control what happens to me, but I must control my response to what happens to me. Forgiveness is not a trick, but it is a miracle! To whom much is given, much is required.

Who do you need to forgive?

Write them a letter here.....
