



Sermon Notes

The Lord's Prayer – Forgive Us Our Sins

Matthew 6:9-15

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1. Forgive us our debts (sins)

Recognising our sins (not excusing, rationalising, deceiving ourselves).

1 John 1 v 8,10

Confessing our sin. 1 John 1 v 9

2. As we also have forgiven our debtors

God's forgiveness is contingent on one thing, that we in turn forgive those who sin against us.

Christianity is not just accepting a set of beliefs, of holding right doctrines about God and Christ.

It involves turning from sin, from self will and surrendering to God's will. And it must, it will result in a change of behaviour. Acts 26 v 20.

John speaks of this in 1 John 1 v 6, 2 v 9.

And nowhere is this clearer than in regard to forgiveness.

If we have truly been saved and received God's forgiveness it must result in the willingness to forgive.

If not we reject God's forgiveness of us.

Scripture is so blunt.

Matthew 6 v 14 & 15

- We sing "Come just as you are to worship" (but not if we are nursing unforgiveness)

3. The nature of forgiveness

"Forgive us as we also have forgiven"

Our forgiveness is to be of the same nature and quality as God's.

It is not superficial it is deep. As Matthew 18 v 21 says "forgive your brother from your heart"

Forgiveness is something that takes place at the core of our being, not necessarily involving feeling but a choice, a decision at the deepest level to do God's will and not ours, even though everything in us is resisting forgiveness.

When we have truly forgiven we become inwardly free. Yes if there are reactions, we tense up when we see them, we deliberately avoid, pretend not to see, those can be real signs of unforgiveness.

Perhaps having a secret satisfaction when something goes wrong in their life. And if we keep talking to others about what someone has done to us.

"I will forgive but not forget." Is that how God forgives? Doesn't He hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea"? Micah 7 v 19

Doesn't he say "he remembers our sins no more"? Isaiah 43 v 25

And often to fully forgive we need not just an inward choice but action is also required.

One time an older man shared with me how he was being badly treated at work by younger co-workers – I asked "have you prayed for them, do you love them"? Luke 6 v 27 & 28

And how should we pray?

Just like Jesus on the cross "Father forgive them".

Like Stephen as he was being stoned "Lord, do not hold this sin against them".

In closing, people object "if you knew how much pain I've been through". "If you realise how that person destroyed my life."

But it is needful to understand no human has the power to harm you in a lasting way.

"If God is my helper what can man do to me". Hebrews 13 v 6

Your relationship with God and His plan for your life cannot be affected ultimately by others however difficult and destructive their behaviour.

It's only our choice, whether we choose to forgive or not to forgive, that can affect our relationship with God.