

Week of May 17, 2020: The Lord's Prayer – "Forgive us Our Debts ..."

Discussion Questions Set #1

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6:9-13)

"In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God ... should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered ... [Jesus] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death." (Hebrews 2:10, 14-15)

In sermon, it was suggested that our Scripture presents to us three different ways of understanding our sin: as a debt owed to God, as guilt, and as trespasses (see diagrams below). Each one of these ideas gives us a slightly different view of sin and forgiveness.

1. Discuss how viewing sin as a debt owed to God shapes our view of forgiveness. What gains in understanding does viewing sin and forgiveness from this perspective offer?
2. Discuss how viewing sin as guilt shapes our view of forgiveness. What gains in understanding does viewing sin and forgiveness from this perspective offer?
3. Discuss how viewing sin as trespasses shape our view of forgiveness. What gains in understanding does viewing sin and forgiveness from this perspective offer?
4. Of these three views of sin and forgiveness, of which are you most familiar? Which do you find the most intriguing?

Discussion Questions Set #2

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness". (1 John 1:8-9)

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land". (2 Chronicles 7:14)

1. Why do you think it is necessary – or at the very least, highly recommended – that we confess our sins daily through praying the Lord's Prayer?
2. Why do you think confession is falling by the wayside in much of modern Christianity?
3. If confession and repentance are the route to forgiveness ultimately – think of the Sinner's Prayer – then why do you think we struggle with this as a daily practice?
4. How does confession assist us in our living as followers of Jesus?
5. In sermon, it was suggested that "ongoing confession and the daily asking for forgiveness helps us to remain humble and centered in the forgiveness Christ extends to us". How is this the case? How are confession and humility related?

SIN AS DEBT

Sin - a debt to God that must either be paid off or cancelled.

Forgiveness - through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the debt of our sin has both been paid and cancelled.

SIN AS GUILT

Sin - we are guilty of breaking God's commandments

Forgiveness - through Christ's death, our sin guilt has been passed along, accepted, and atoned for by Jesus.

SIN AS TRESPASS

Sin - seizing a realm and assuming a reign and rule that rightfully belongs to God

Forgiveness - through Jesus Christ, we are put back 'onside' in our living.