

TEXT

Matthew 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Luke 11:4a And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us...

INTRODUCTION

In our study of The Lord's Prayer, we come to day to the fifth petition, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

It occurred to me that although all of us know more or less what forgiveness is, we all could benefit from a more thorough biblical understanding of it than what we already have.

Forgiveness being such a joyful subject, we will have more joy in the Lord the better we understand it and the more we contemplate it.

And forgiveness being such a profoundly important subject regarding both life in this world and eternal salvation, we will be the more blessed the more this gospel truth is made known to us.

So I intend to speak to you more than just today on the fifth petition, opening the subject of forgiveness not only in regards to praying for it, but also in relation to faith, and to repentance, and to baptism, and, in all, its relationship with our Savior Jesus Christ.

Today, let's look in the scriptures to understand what it is we are praying for, fundamentally, when we pray, "forgive us our debts."

BODY

- I. The Word “Forgiveness” Means the Same Things As the Word “Remission”
 - A. When you study the subject of forgiveness, you encounter also the word “remission.” This could be confusing, because we don’t use the word “remission” to mean “forgiveness” in our everyday speech.
 1. in our everyday speech,
 - a) we use the noun “remission” only to refer to when someone has cancer, and it is not actively growing and making him sick anymore. We say that the cancer is “in remisson.”
 - b) we use the verb “remit” only to refer to making a payment
 2. but in our Bibles, and in our 1689 Confession
 - a) “remit” means the same thing as “forgive”
 - b) “remission” means the same thing as “forgiveness”
 - B. It is the same Greek word in the original
 1. the verb “to forgive” or “to remit” in the Greek means literally to leave something behind or to send it away
 2. when you see “forgiveness” or “remission” in your Bible, in both cases the noun in the Greek original is the same word
 - C. The two words have the same meaning in English
 1. forgiveness is Old English
 2. remission is Latin
 - D. We need to be able to use either of those two words
 1. because many of our Bibles use both
 2. because our 1689 confession uses both
 3. because old commentaries and sermons use both
 - E. So, do not be confused when you read or hear “remit” or “remission.” They mean the same thing as “forgive” and “forgiveness.”

II. Forgiveness or Remission Is of Our Sins

- A. Luke 11:4a And forgive us our sins
- B. Sin is literally the transgression of God's law; the breaking of God's law; any want of perfect obedience to God's law
 - 1. Sin is not only the evil things we do, but even the evil things we think in our hearts - Acts 8:22
 - 2. breaking the law deserves punishment
 - 3. so for God to forgive us our sins is for Him not to punish us as we deserve to be punished; but He is a just judge, so there is more to it: He makes it to where we no longer deserve to be punished
- C. Our Lord Jesus teaches us also to think of sin as a debt; something we owe
 - 1. Mt 6:12 And forgive us our debts...
 - 2. someone who contracts debts, then can't pay them, deserves to have everything he has taken away from him, and himself made a slave, in repayment of the debt
 - 3. so for God to forgive us our sins is for Him not to make us repay the huge debt we owe; for Him to cancel it, so that we do not owe it anymore; but He is just as well as merciful, so there is more to it: He causes the debt to be paid, so that we no longer owe the debt
- D. The wages of sin is death, so unless something is done about our sins, we can expect nothing from God but death
 - 1. the first death
 - 2. the second death
- E. So, in the fifth petition, we pray that God will forgive us our debts, meaning our sins

- III. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins Is By Jesus Christ Shedding His Own Blood for Us
- A. The Old Covenant law given through Moses, with all its required animal sacrifices, shows us a thousand times over that God forgiving sins requires the shedding of blood.
 - 1. This is because
 - a) the wages of sin is death, and
 - b) the life is in the blood.
 - 2. Hebrews 9:22b ...without shedding of blood there is no remission.
 - a) if blood were not shed for me, for my sins, there could be no forgiveness or remission
 - B. Jesus said He was going to shed His own blood for the remission of sins
 - 1. Matthew 26:28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
 - C. And Jesus indeed shed His blood for us
 - 1. when the crown of thorns was put on His head
 - 2. when the whip scourged His back
 - 3. when the nails pierced His hands and His feet
 - 4. when, after He was dead, the spear was thrust into His side
 - D. His apostles explained that in Jesus Christ, through His blood, we have forgiveness or remission of sins
 - 1. Eph 1:7 / Col 1:14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
 - E. We are the ones with sin deserving of punishment, punishment by death; Jesus Christ is the one without sin, who deserved no punishment; but He took our sins upon Himself; He became sin for us; He took our punishment;
 - F. We are the ones with a huge debt, impossible for us to pay. Jesus Christ paid our debt with His own blood

IV. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins By Jesus Christ Shedding His Own Blood for Us Is Given Through Faith

- A. It might be expected that I would say “repentance” in this place rather than “faith.”
1. certainly that is of great importance
 2. I believe I have spoken to you about that several times; God willing, that will be the matter of the sermon soon, showing the relationship between “Forgive us our debts” and repentance
 3. faith and repentance are very closely related, and occur always together in anyone who is born again, because the Holy Spirit works them in regeneration
 4. so much are these two graces connected that the apostles sometimes said that the sinner is to repent and be saved, other times that he is to believe and be saved
 5. so, as other times I will show in the scriptures how forgiveness or remission of sins is given upon repentance, today I show you where the Bible says that forgiveness or remission of sins is given through faith in Jesus Christ
- B. Acts 10:38-44 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. (39) And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. (40) Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, (41) not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. (42) And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. (43) To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**" (44) While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.
1. v. 39 Peter preached that Jesus of Nazareth died on the cross, expressed in Old Testament language as hanging on a tree - see Deut 21:22-23; Gal 3:13
 2. v. 43 Peter preached that the Old Testament prophets witnessed to Jesus ahead of time
 3. Peter made it known to his hearers that whoever believes in Jesus will receive remission of sins
 4. Peter meant to go on preaching, but at that moment, before Peter could say any more, those who heard had the Holy Spirit to come upon them, demonstrating that they were saved through faith
 5. Peter, seeing their God-given faith demonstrated by the Holy Spirit causing them to speak in tongues, ordered they be baptized

CONCLUSION

V. What We Pray for In the Fifth Petition

- A. Believing in Jesus Christ, who shed His own blood for sinners on the cross
- B. We ask that God will not count our sins against us as transgression of His law, deserving of punishment, but will count our sins as punished already in Jesus Christ's death on the cross
- C. We ask that God will not count our sins against us as a debt impossible for us to pay, but will reckon the debt to have been paid by Jesus Christ, with his own blood
- D. We pray this, each person for himself; we pray this together with others; we pray it on behalf of others

Our Father, which art in heaven, for Christ's sake, forgive us our debts, forgive us our sins.

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 130:3-5

Alex - Scripture Reading - Psalm 51:1-10

Jeremiah - Congregational Prayer

Benediction

Bella - Prelude - Trinity 441 "Thy Works, Not Mine, O Christ"

Allison - Trinity 720 "The Child of a King"

Rita - Trinity 415 "God, Be Merciful to Me" - Andrew lead

Journey - Trinity 677 "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus"

- VI. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins By Jesus Christ Shedding His Own Blood for Us Is Given Through Faith and Symbolized By Baptism
- A. The primary thing symbolized by baptism is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - B. But one of the secondary things symbolized by baptism, derived from that primary symbolism, is the forgiveness or remission of sins
 - 1. as forgiveness of sins is derived from Jesus Christ shedding His blood for us on the cross
 - 2. so the symbolism of forgiveness is derived from the symbol of Christ's death
 - C. 1689.29.1 Baptism is...ordained by Jesus Christ, to be...a sign...of remission of sins...
 - 1. Mark 1:4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
 - 2. Acts 22:16 And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'
 - D. The symbolism, as spoken to Paul by Ananias, is this
 - 1. sin considered figuratively as defilement, uncleanness, being dirty
 - 2. forgiveness considered as washing all of that away
 - 3. water being used for common cleaning and for ceremonial cleansing
 - 4. immersion in water being a fit symbol for thorough, complete cleansing from the defilement of sin

- VII. Forgiveness and Baptism Are Preached Together with Repentance
- A. John the Baptist
 - 1. Mark 1:4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
 - 2. Luke 3:3 And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,
 - B. Jesus - instructions to His disciples
 - 1. Luke 24:46-47 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, (47) and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
 - 2. Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

C. Peter on the day of Pentecost - Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"

1689.29.1

...ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, as sign:

of his fellowship with him, in his death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him;

Romans 6:3-5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

of remission of sins;

Mark 1:4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

and of giving up into God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Westminster Confession Chapter 28 Of Baptism

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church; but also, to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life. Which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his church until the end of the world.

2. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.
3. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person.
4. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized.
5. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated, or saved, without it; or, that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.
6. The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited, and conferred, by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time.
7. The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered unto any person.

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 103:3-5

Alex - Scripture Reading - Psalm 51:1-10

Jeremiah - Congregational Prayer

Benediction

Bella - Prelude - Trinity 441 "Thy Works, Not Mine, O Christ"

Allison - Trinity 720 "The Child of a King"

Rita - Trinity 415 "God, Be Merciful to Me" - Andrew lead

Journey - Trinity 677 "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus"

Angie suggested we learn Trinity 77 (first tune), which is Psalm 23.

