

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 the Lord's Prayer, as the fifth petition, our Lord Jesus teaches us to pray for forgiveness of sins or debts. Sometimes, in our Bibles and other literature, we find the term "remission," which means the same as "forgiveness." In the original New Testament Greek, the word means, literally, to leave something behind or to send it away.

When we pray, asking God for forgiveness or remission of sins, we are asking God not to punish us with the death penalty that we deserve for our transgression of His perfect law. When we pray, asking God for forgiveness or remission of our debts, we are asking God not to make us pay the impossibly huge debts we owe because of what we have done wrong.

We can ask this of God in all confidence because our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray this, has shed His own blood for us on the cross. We had deserved the death penalty for our sins, but He took our sins upon Himself, and received the punishment we deserved. He took our debts upon Himself, and paid for all in the currency of His own blood.

Now, by the will of God, whoever believes in Jesus Christ crucified will receive remission of sins, forgiveness of debts.

As we continue to consider the fifth petition, "And forgive us our debts" or "And forgive us our sins," today let us see the place of prayer in the doctrine of remission of sins as washing clean from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ, and the relationship of that washing with baptism, since we have the joy of baptizing someone this afternoon.

BODY

- I. Through King Solomon, God Spoke to Us of Forgiveness By Repentance and Prayer (1 Kings 8:46-50)
 - A. People sin against God (1 Ki 8:46)
 - B. Such sinful people repent and pray
 1. 1 Ki 8:47 repent and make supplication to You
 2. 1 Ki 8:48 return to You with all their heart and with all their soul...and pray to You
 3. NOTE: let this language from verse 48 be our working definition of repentance, of what it is to repent
 - C. God forgives all (1 Ki 8:50)
 1. He forgives His people
 2. He forgives all their transgressions
 - D. We learn here that forgiveness of debts, remission of sins, is not by mere prayer, but by repentance, out of which we pray for forgiveness
 - E. NOTE: The temple and everything in it represented Jesus Christ before He came. So to pray toward the temple, in those days, was the way to pray to God through faith in the Messiah. Now that Jesus has died on the cross, our prayers are not attached to any certain place.

Forgiveness by repentance and prayer

- II. Through the Prophet Isaiah, God Spoke to Us of Repentance and Forgiveness By the Figure of Washing
 - A. God will not hear prayers because of sins, figured as blood stains (Is 1:15)
 1. Is 1:2 ...they have rebelled against me
 2. Is 1:4 ...sinful...laden with iniquity...evildoers
 3. Is 1:4b ...forsaken the Lord...backward
 4. Is 1:15 ...I will not hear
 5. Is 1:15 ...Your hands are full of blood.
 - a) a murderer gets the blood of his victim on his hands
 - b) God indicts all sinners for their sins by this image
 - B. God commands repentance, figured as washing from stains (Is 1:16-17)
 - C. God promises remission of sins, figured as cleanness from that washing (Is 1:18)
 - D. Again, we learn that forgiveness of debts, remission of sins, is not by mere prayer, but by repentance
 1. prayer without repentance does not bring forgiveness from God
 2. forgiveness of sins from God can be proclaimed as being by repentance, without reference to prayer
 3. prayer is very strongly associated with repentance; it is firmly connected to it; the repentant pray to be forgiven; but prayer, if separated from repentance, is of no effect for washing from sins

Forgiveness by repentance and prayer

Repentance and forgiveness by the figure of washing

- III. Through John the Baptist and the Apostle Peter, God Spoke to Us of Baptism to Symbolize That Washing
- 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. Mark 1:7-8 And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. 8 I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
 - B. 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.
 - C. NOTE: In both cases, the preaching of this washing symbolized by baptism was in Jesus Christ. Last time, I spoke to you about forgiveness of sins being through faith in Jesus Christ, so I won't go into that here.
 - D. NOTE: There was also the promise of the Holy Spirit. That is wonderful and important, but we'll have to look into that more another time.

Forgiveness by repentance and prayer

Repentance and forgiveness by the figure of washing

Washing by the symbol of baptism

- IV. Through the Apostle John, God Spoke to Us of That Washing As Being In the Blood of Jesus (Revelation 7:13-14)
- A. 1 John 1:6-9 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 - B. Rev 1:5 ...Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.
 - C. Rev 7:13-14 washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

CONCLUSION

Sinners are forgiven when they look to Christ, repent, and pray
Sinners repent and are forgiven, thinking of it as washing and being clean
Those who experience such a washing show it symbolically by baptism
We believe in Jesus Christ for that washing, understanding it to be in His blood

Where is each of you in all this?

Are you like the Israelites in exile in Babylon? Have you sinned, and found yourself far away from where you should be, far away from the Lord Jesus and His church? Have you felt God's chastisement on you; are you hurting from how God has let you suffer some of the painful consequences your sins have brought you? Look to Jesus; return to God with all your heart; pray to Him, that He forgive you your debts, your sins. And for Christ's sake, He will forgive you, and bring you back from your exile.

Are you as the ancient Israelites, trying to worship God, trying to pray, but you are not repentant? Your prayers will not be heard while you are like that. Return to God with all your heart, wash yourself clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, and God will forgive you. Call on Jesus Christ; pray to God the Father, "forgive us our debts," and He will forgive you.

Are you as Paul was at first? Have you realized that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and He is Lord, but you are not sure what to do? What are you waiting for? Arise, be baptized; wash away your sins in the blood of Jesus Christ, calling on the name of the Lord. This afternoon, our sister Cecily is to be baptized. She told her parents that she believes in Jesus Christ, as having died on the cross for her sins. Then she told me. She professed the good profession. She said she believed Jesus died on the cross for her, to save her from going to hell for her sins. What about you? Have you understood the truth about yourself as a sinner, and Jesus Christ as the Savior, but you haven't yet done anything about it? What should you do? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Have you been praying, "forgive us our debts" with little thought of Jesus Christ? From now on, when you pray to be forgiven, pray with Him in mind, remembering that the washing for which you are praying is a washing in His blood, that He shed for us on the cross.

Have you repented, been baptized, prayed to God in the name of Jesus to be forgiven, yet still seem to carry the weight of guilt for your sins, still feel like you are filthy with your sins? Rejoice in the forgiveness that is yours in Jesus Christ! Praise Him with the saints in heaven, knowing that all your sins are forgiven, that you are forgiven!

Stephen - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Ps 86:1-6

Jeremiah - Scripture Reading - Isaiah 1:1-20

Roel - Congregational Prayer

~~Allison~~ Rita - Prelude

~~Allison~~ Rita - Trinity 432 "Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 431 "Just As I Am" - ~~Alex~~ lead

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

9:30 a.m. Bible Study - Repentance - 1689.15.1

of riper years

Titus 3:1-7

1689.15.1 Such of the elect as are converted at riper years, having a sometime lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers lusts and pleasures, God in their effectual calling giveth them repentance unto life. (a Ti 3:2-5)

This is quite different from WCF. It is exactly from 1658 Savoy Declaration of Faith 15.1

1662 Book of Common Prayer

Preface: “an Office for the Baptism of such as are of Riper Years: which, although not so necessary when the former Book was compiled, yet by the growth of Anabaptism, through the licentiousness of the late times crept in amongst us, is now become necessary, and may be always useful for the baptizing of Natives in our Plantations, and others converted to the Faith.”

John Flavel: *The Mystery of Providence* 1678

Chapter 3: “The Work of Conversion”

<http://articles.ochristian.com/article18632.shtml>

John Flavel (1627-1691) Puritan, Presbyterian

But lest any poor soul should be discouraged by the display of this Providence because he cannot remember the time, place, instruments and manner when and by which conversion work was wrought, I will therefore premise this necessary distinction, to prevent injury to some, while I design benefit to others.

Conversion, as to the subjects of it, may be considered two ways; either as it is more clearly wrought in persons of riper years, who in their youthful days were more profane and vile; or upon persons in their tender years, into whose hearts grace was more imperceptibly and indiscernibly instilled by God's blessing upon pious education. In the former sort, the distinct acts of the Spirit, illuminating, convincing, humbling, drawing them to Christ and sealing them are more evident and discernible. In the latter, these are more obscure and confused. They can remember that God gave them an esteem and liking of godly persons, care of duty and conscience of sin; but as to the time, place, instruments and manner of the work, they can give but a slender account of them. However, if the work is savingly wrought in them, there is no reason they should be troubled because the circumstances of it are not so evident to them as they are to others. Let the substance and reality of the work appear, and there is no reason to afflict yourselves because of the lack of evidence of such circumstances.

But where the circumstances as well as substance are clear to a man, when we can call to remembrance the time when, the place where, the instrument by whom that work was wrought, it must needs be exceedingly sweet, and they cannot but yield a fresh delight to the soul every time they are reflected upon.

Daniel Evance: *A Baptismal Catechisme Shewing Unto What Persons, Whether of Riper Years or As Yet Infants...* 1655

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A38765.0001.001/1:1?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>

“men and women grown up to years”

“those that are grown into years”

“men of years”

“those of years”

1664 Samuel Crossman *The Young Man's Monitor or A Modest Offer Toward the Pious, and Virtuous Composure of Life from Youth to Riper Years.*

1671, Joseph Alleine *A Sure Guide to Heaven*

<https://hopebaptistchurch.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/sure-guide-to-heaven.pdf>

Call to mind your omissions and commissions; the sins of your thoughts, words, and actions; the sins of your youth, and the sins of your riper years.

1688 Owen, John *The Mind of the Spirit or the Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded* Chapter 17 “Decays in Spiritual Affections”

There may be a decay in affections themselves as to their actings towards any objects whatever, at least as to their outward symptoms and effects; and on this ground, their operations toward spiritual things may be less tangible. So men in their younger days may be readier to express their sorrow by tears, and to express their joy by tangible exultation and motion of their spirits, than those in riper years.

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.'

Revelation 7:9-14 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, (10) and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (11) All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, (12) saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen." (13) Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" (14) And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

1689.15.3

This saving repentance is an evangelical grace, whereby a person, being by the Holy Spirit made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, doth, by faith in Christ, humble himself for it with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-aborrency, praying for pardon and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavour, by supplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well-pleasing in all things.

Baptist Catechism

Q. What is repentance unto life?

A. a saving grace whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavour after new obedience.

Boyce: Abstract of Systematic Theology 33.2

To set forth explicitly what Christian Repentance is, it may be stated that it includes:

1. An intellectual and spiritual perception of the opposition between holiness in God and sin in man. It does not look at sin as the cause of punishment but abhors it because it is vile in the sight of God and involves in heinous guilt all who are sinners.
2. It consequently includes sorrow and self-loathing, and earnest desire to escape the evil of sin. The penitent soul does not so much feel the greatness of its danger as the greatness of its sinfulness.

3. It also includes an earnest turning to God for help and deliverance from sin, seeking pardon for guilt and aid to escape its presence.

It is also accompanied by deep regret because of the sins committed in the past, and by determination with God's help to avoid sin and live in holiness hereafter. The heart heretofore against God and for sin is now against sin and for God.

From these facts it will be seen that

1. The seat of true repentance is in the soul. It is not of itself the mere intellectual knowledge of sin, nor the sorrow that accompanies it, nor the changed life which flows from it; but it is the soul's apprehension of its heinous character, which begets the horror and self-loathing which accompany it, and the determination to forsake sin which flows from it.
2. That true repentance is inconsistent with the continuance in sin because of grace abounding.
3. That true repentance consists of mental and spiritual emotion, and not of outward self-imposed chastisements. Even the pious life and devotion to God which follow are described not as repentance, but as fruits meet for repentance.

The Scriptures teach that the author of true repentance is God operating by truth upon the renewed heart.

[Acts 5:31](#). Christ is said to have been exalted "to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins."

[Acts 11:18](#). "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."

The means used is the preaching and other exhibition of the truth. Repentance like faith comes through the hearing of the word. By this men are exhorted to that duty, and gain the knowledge of the truths taught by God, through spiritual apprehension of which men are led to the truth.

Dagg: Manual of Theology; Duty of Repentance

Genuine repentance is a deep-felt and abiding sense of sin, a condemnation of ourselves before God on account of it, a turning away from it with abhorrence and loathing, and a fixed purpose of soul never again to commit it, or be at peace with it. This sense of sin drives the soul to Christ, and unites with the exercise of faith in Christ, to distinguish genuine religion from the counterfeits with which the world abounds.

In all the ministry of the gospel, this is the first duty required of men. Without it, not a step can be taken in the way of return to God; and, without it, there is no possibility of obtaining the divine favor. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." It is, therefore, of the very highest importance to understand what repentance is, and to have such views of truth as will tend to produce it in our hearts.

Faith

There is something else that comes right with faith.

Consider how unsuitable it is to believe in Jesus Christ for remission of sins, when you intend to go on sinning just like before.

Turn again; turn back; turn

Is it, then, as simple as that? Just pray that your debts be forgiven, and they will be forgiven?

- I. In the Old Testament Prophecy, God Proclaimed Remission of Sins As Cleansing, By the Figure of Washing Away Blood Stains
 - A. God will not hear prayers because of sins, figured as blood stains (Is 1:15)
 1. Is 1:2 ...they have rebelled against me
 2. Is 1:4 ...sinful...laden with iniquity...evildoers
 3. Is 1:4b ...forsaken the Lord...backward
 4. Is 1:15 ...I will not hear
 5. Is 1:15 ...Your hands are full of blood.
 - a) a murderer gets the blood of his victim on his hands
 - b) God indicts all sinners for their sins by this image
 - B. God commands repentance, figured as washing from stains (Is 1:16-17)
 - C. God promises remission of sins, figured as cleanness (Is 1:18)
- II. In the New Testament, God Again Proclaimed Remission of Sins As Cleansing, By the Symbol of Baptism
 - A. By John the Baptist
 1. Mark 1:4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
 - B. By the apostles

1. 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.

III. By others

- A. 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.'
- B.
- C.

INTRODUCTION

forgiveness/remission
sins/debts
shed blood of Jesus
faith

Several things about God forgiving us our debts, about remission of sins, are taught together in the scriptures:

- repentance and forgiveness
- prayer and forgiveness
- baptism and forgiveness

Forgiveness of sins is connected

TEXT

BODY

- I. Forgiveness Is Granted Upon Repentance
- II. Forgiveness Is Prayed for By the Repentant
- III. Forgiveness Is Symbolized By Baptism

Repentance is invisible; but God knows it; He forgives sins on the occasion of repentance

Repentance is our spiritual, invisible acknowledgement of our sins, and our need to be forgiven

Prayer is our verbal acknowledgement of our sins, and our need to be forgiven

Baptism is our ceremonial or symbolic or formal acknowledgement of our sins, and our need to be forgiven

IV. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins Is Preached Together with Repentance and Baptism

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"

V. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins Is Granted Upon Repentance

A. In the OT

1. Solomon's prayer - 1 Kings 8:46-50 "When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near; (47) yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of those who took them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'; (48) and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name: (49) then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause, (50) and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and grant them compassion before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them
 - a) note relationship between repentance and prayer
 - (1) v. 47 repent and make supplication
 - (2) v. 48 return to You...and pray to You

2. God's answer - 2 Chronicles 7:14 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 will forgive their sin and heal their land.
3. Isaiah 1:16-18 "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, (17) Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. (18) "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.
4. Jeremiah 36:3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

B. In the NT

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,

C. Jesus - instructions to His disciples

D. Not prayer, absent repentance

1. it is very common for someone to pray, but not be forgiven
 - a) (develop w definition of repentance)
2. but it has never happened, not even once, that someone truly has repented, and was not forgiven

E. Repentance consists in

1. acknowledging, confessing, not hiding - Psalms 32:3-5 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. (4) For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah (5) I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah
2. abhorring - Job 42:6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes." [ESV - despise]
3. turning - Jeremiah 36:3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

VI. Forgiveness or Remission of Sins Is 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

Pendleton, 1867:

p.13 We solemnly commemorate the burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and are ourselves symbolically buried to the world. In baptism our sins are *declaratively* remitted---*formally* washed away. Washing in water frees the body from literal impurity. Baptism is a *symbolic* release of the soul from the defilement of sin. There is an *actual*, a *real* remission of sins when we believe in Christ---there is a *declarative, formal, symbolic* remission in baptism.

[as seem following for relation of baptism to church membership]

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.