

Forgive Us Our Debts, As We Forgive Our Debtors

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[0:00] We'll take your Bibles this morning and you can be turning in them to our passage, same passage we've been into in for a number of Sundays, Matthew chapter 6 and verses 9 through 13.

Matthew chapter 6 verses 9 through 13. And this morning I want to read our passage from another version of the Bible, the J.B. Phillips translation. And just kind of change things up, but I like the way he renders this verse.

And so you have your Bibles open. You might not be able to follow along exactly with this translation. And so just listen to how J.B. Phillips renders this verse.

Pray then like this. And I think that's a good way to put it because this is Jesus saying, here's a model. Pray like this. Our Heavenly Father, may your name be honored.

May your kingdom come. And your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day the bread we need.

[1:15] Forgive us what we owe to you as we have also forgiven those who owe anything to us. Keep us clear of temptation and save us from evil.

I think a good translation. Now, here is the portion of the prayer that we're going to be focusing on this morning. Forgive us what we owe to you as we have also forgiven those who owe anything to us.

All right? Now, two questions. What is it we owe God that apparently we're unable to pay?

And so for which we need His forgiveness? That's the first question. The second question goes like this.

What is it others owe us that is similar in kind to what we owe God that apparently we are called on to forgive?

[2:21] And if we don't, what we owe God will not be forgiven us. If I could distill those two questions down to one very pertinent question to begin with.

What is this debt? What is this debt we owe? Well, to answer that leads us to the sixth element or lesson in this lesson on prayer.

Prayer is about resting. We've seen that. Resting in God our Heavenly Father. Prayer is about reverencing, reverencing God. Prayer is about reigning, reigning in the Kingdom of God.

Prayer is about resigning, resigning to the will of God. Prayer is about requesting, requesting what we need from God. And this morning prayer is about releasing, releasing, the releasing of a debt.

That is, God releasing us from our debt and us releasing others. That's the lesson Jesus has for us in this portion of the prayer.

[3:40] But first, before we get into this, and I think this is important by way of introduction or lay a foundation. I think it will help us in supporting our understanding of the true meaning of this portion of the prayer.

First of all, let me just suggest to you, and maybe you've noticed, that this prayer, this, quote, Lord's Prayer, is a family prayer. Have you noticed that?

This is a family prayer. I don't mean family prayer in the sense that this is the prayer you ought to use when you get your own family together to pray. It's a family prayer in the sense that it's a prayer for the family of God.

That much is really very clear. How do we know that? Well, first of all, and I think the most obvious thing is that Jesus is clearly instructing us here to call upon our Heavenly Father.

That's the word He used. Father. We're to call upon our Heavenly Father when we pray. And so everything that we're taught to pray for here in this model prayer is to be prayed in connection with our family relationship with God.

[4:49] Our Heavenly Father. That's pretty clear. Second, and I think still obvious, and yet, and though you may not have noticed it. I did make mention of this kind of in passing a few Sundays ago.

But it's very obvious that all of the pronouns in this entire prayer, all the pronouns are plural. Except, of course, those that are used in direct relationship to God Himself.

All the rest of them are plural. Not singular. Our Father in Heaven. Give us our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And deliver us from evil.

See, they're all plural. This is a family prayer. You see, all of the things that we are praying to the Lord about have to do with our relationship and standing as members of the family of God both vertically, that is with God, and horizontally with one another.

[6:12] Isn't that clear? Isn't that clear? When you think about it? And so, let me ask you this. What is it that constantly jeopardizes that relationship? You're not sure, are you?

Some are. It's sin, of course. It's sin. And so, that is what this portion of prayer is all about. It's about sin.

Dealing with our sin. Both vertically and horizontally. Vertically, of course, when that sin comes between us and God. And horizontally, when sin comes between us and others within the body of Christ.

All of that is included in this one little line in this famous prayer. And we need to see that. And so, let's see what this is all about.

And first of all, consider this truth. I'm going to give you three truths about this part of the prayer.

Here's truth number one. The priority of this prayer is confessional.

[7:20] Our needs to start there. The priority of this portion of the prayer is confessional. We're praying to God our Father, our Heavenly Father.

And we're asking Him, Father, forgive us our sins. Or, as Matthew renders it, forgive us our debts. Our debts.

So, having identified this first point, we really need to go back and consider something I've already said. Though this may seem rather obvious to you, but I want us to think about it, even if it's obvious to you.

And I want us to consider the depth of the meaning of this. Let me go back to something I said at the outset of this sermon. And I ask two questions. What is it that we owe God that apparently we are unable to pay and so for which we need, we desperately need His forgiveness?

What is it? And then I ask the second question. What is it others owe us or might owe us or on occasion do owe us that is similar in kind to what we owe God?

[8:26] And apparently we are called upon to forgive. And if we don't, the debt we owe God will not be forgiven us. What is it? What is this debt we owe to God and to one another?

It is sin. It's a sin debt. That is, we don't owe the sin. We owe the sin debt. We owe a sin debt. We have sinned against God and therefore we owe Him.

And others on occasion have and will sin against us and therefore they owe us. And though it's not directly related, but by implication, we also sin against others and we owe them, don't we?

That's very clear. The debt for which we need forgiveness is sin. It continues to be that in our life as a believer.

And the sin or the debt rather for which we need to forgive is sin. Now folks, that much is pretty clear here.

[9:37] Even though the word sin appears nowhere in the text. It's still very clear.

What does the Bible say about sin? That is in the sense of what does it teach us about sin per se, a theology of sin. I think it would be helpful for us to learn that from Scripture.

Did you know that there are at least five words in the Greek New Testament that refer directly to sin? You might want to learn these, jot these down.

And we could go to a number of passages, but the first one and the most common one appears in Romans 3.23, a verse that many of you probably know, have memorized, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

That's Romans 3.23, all have sinned. And the word there is hamartia in the Greek text. And hamartia is the most common word for sin in the New Testament.

[10:45] You'll find it all the way through the New Testament. Hamartia is the most common word, the most direct word for sin. It is the overarching word for sin, hamartia.

But you may know this or you may not, in Greek parlance, hamartia was a technical term for archery in the field of archery.

Possibly you've heard that. And so the word hamartia means to miss the mark. And you can imagine what that would mean, how that would connect to archery.

And you can visualize for yourself an archer positioning his arrow right in the proper place. And he pulls back the string and he sets his aim at the target's bullseye.

And he then releases the string and shoots his arrow straight and true. But he misses the mark.

That is, he misses the bullseye. Though he's aimed as carefully as he can.

[11:51] And with all of his skill and all of his training and all of his talent and his great eyesight and practice, he aims straight, but he misses the bullseye.

Misses it. It might be just a fraction off. But he still misses it. He's missed the mark.

That's hamartia. Hamartia. That's what the word hamartia means. Now, you know, we're not speaking here in Romans 3.23 of archery. We're not talking about the word hamartia and the secular use of the word.

There's a spiritual application. A theological application. And that's the case with many of these great words and significant words in the Bible. They not only have a theological significance and application, but they have, even before that, they had a secular use.

I've just given you the secular use. Now, what about the spiritual use? Well, it's pretty easy to make the connection. The mark is God's standard. His holy standard.

[12:53] That's the bullseye. His holy law. The mark, we could put it in another way, is God's moral perfection. Not just his own perfection, but it's the perfection he requires of us.

Perfect righteousness is God's standard for you, for you, for all of us. It's perfect. Perfect perfection. Moral righteousness. And so righteousness is God's bullseye. And we have all missed it. Every single one of us. Now, some may argue.

You might have even heard someone argue that they have come close. Come real close. But still, that person has missed it.

No matter how close you come. You may come real close, but you have come short of it. Because God demands and only allows perfection.

[13:57] And that's, by the way, why we needed a perfect Savior. And that's another subject. The second word is found in Ephesians 2, verses 1 and 2.

It's found in other places as well, but this is a good example. Ephesians 2, 1 and 2, the Bible says in you, He made alive, quickened, who were dead in trespasses.

Now, that's a little different word. Peripetoma is the Greek word, in case you care. But trespasses and sins. You were dead in trespasses, peripetoma, and sins.

And there, again, is the word hamartia, again in that verse. So both of them come together.

Hamartia is the general word, the all-inclusive word. But peripetoma is a specific word, and it's translated trespasses.

In some versions of the Bible, it is translated offenses. And it simply means to, it refers to sins, the breaking of God's law, through carelessness.

[15:06] Or even ignorance. And it's not intentional in that sense, premeditated, willful, disobedience.

And yet, we're still accountable for it. Because the Bible says you were dead in it. Dead in trespasses and sins. Trespasses, careless, unintentional disobedience.

Like a couple of kids in our neighborhood. Not my kids. But some kids who live down a few houses from us.

The other day, I was out in my garage doing a little work. And I look, and here come a couple of kids bounding through my backyard. Now, don't think bad of me, all right?

But I don't really care for people walking through my backyard. Now, I wasn't mean or ugly. You'll just have to take my word for that. And I said to the two kids, a boy and a girl, I said, you know, I really prefer that you not walk through our backyard.

[16:10] Please don't walk through our backyard. You can go around the front. They're just finding a shortcut. You know, we live on a corner and their house is around the other side. And what could be more natural than for a couple of kids to walk through the backyard to get home quicker.

I'll give that to them. But I cautioned them. I said, here's the law. I didn't say that word. I said, in all authority, because it's my property, I said, I would prefer that you not walk through our backyard.

Okay? That's this word, peptoma. A trespass. Not willful. They didn't do that because they were spiteful or willfully disobeying my, quote, law.

Because they didn't know my law. But now they do. Okay. We'll get back to those kids here in just a minute. Because there is a third word. The third word is in James chapter 2 and verse 9.

But if you show partiality, you commit sin. That's hamartia again, but we're going to go on. And are convicted by the law as transgressors.

[17 : 21] That's how the New King James, I think, the King James renders it. Transgressors. That's a little bit different word. Parabates.

It's a totally different word. And yet it's a reference to sin. A more specific act of sin. It's transgression. Transgression.

And it carries this idea intentionally crossing the boundaries established by God's word. That is, it describes the person who knows what God has said on a certain subject and intentionally crosses that boundary.

The transgression. Transgression. A transgression. Not a trespass in an unwillful sense, but a transgression in the willful sense.

In a deliberate sense. Now let's go back to those two kids. Sherry, a few days after that. I don't remember if she was outside or looking through the window. Because we're always looking through the window to see who's doing things, you know.

[18 : 26] Anyway, here come those two kids walking through our backyard. Again. And it's a good thing that I didn't see them.

I'm just kidding. But Sherry, my beloved wife, we two are in total agreement on people walking through our backyard.

And so she felt the need to reissue the command, you know. Please don't walk through our backyard. Now this time it was not a trespass.

It was more than that. It was a transgression. Because they now know the law. Now it's just an illustration, okay. Don't get too uptight out there.

Your pastor is a really mean guy. I'm glad I don't live next to him. It's an illustration. The kids walked through the yard. This time it was a willful act of disobedience.

[19 : 28] It was deliberate because they know now. And yet they still disobey. That's a transgression. Now let's get to a fourth word very quickly because I'm spending too much time on sin this morning.

Maybe spending too much time talking about my neighbors. But here's the fourth word. In Matthew chapter 7, verses 22 and 23, Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?

And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. That's another word.

Or some translated iniquity. We're familiar with that word too. It's a totally different word. It is the word anomia.

From the word namas, meaning law, and what they call an alpha prefix, a negative on the front, a-law, that is, not law, no law.

[20 : 33] We have the word amoral, for example, and that does the same thing, means no moral. And so this is anomia. It's no law. It's to be without the law.

It is to be lawless, is how Jesus used it in this sense in this verse. Lawlessness. And it is sinning without regard for what God has to say about it, and it is direct and open rebellion against God. Not just His law. But it goes a step further, and it shakes its fist in the face of God and says, I will not obey because I do not like you.

I hate you. I am against you. That's lawlessness. That's pretty serious work. And hence we understand that from the passage, where at one point, there's going to be those who say, didn't I do this and thus and such for you, Lord?

And He says, depart from Me. I never ever knew you, you that work lawlessness. It's open rebellion against God.

[21 : 45] Now, how about those two kids? Now, they haven't walked through a third time, so if you're expecting more to that story, there isn't any more to it.

Not yet, anyway. But suppose those two kids a third time come walking through my yard, not because they forgot what the law was, not because they knew what it was, but they decided to

disobey the law, had no respect for it, but suppose they came through my yard because they don't like me.

And so here, I'm going to show that guy something. I'm going to show him I don't care anything about him and what he cares for, what he desires.

I'm going to walk through that yard anyway. That's lawlessness. That's lawlessness.

And that's another word for sin. And then finally, we have this word that appears in our text here in Matthew 6.12. And forgive us our debts.

[22 : 57] Our debts. Ophilema. Ophilema is the word. And forgive as we forgive our debtors. It's the same word. Ophilema.

And it, of course, is translated debts. Debts. And I looked and it's translated debts in every translation I could find. Debts.

And so what does it mean? It just simply means something you owe to another party. It's just as simple as that. There isn't anything complicated about the word. And so you might be thinking, how do we know that Jesus was talking about sin then?

Well, I'm glad you asked that. There are two reasons why we know this. First, we know Jesus is talking about sin because, remember, Matthew 6, 9-13 is not the only place where you can find the Lord's Prayer.

Luke also included it in his gospel. We looked at that passage at my first sermon in this series. Luke chapter 11.

[24 : 07] We have this same lesson from Jesus on prayer. And here is how it is translated there. And forgive us our sins. That's what Jesus said.

Forgive us our sins, hamartia. For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And there's Ophilema.

So the two words are there, hamartia and Ophilema. And they come together in the same verse. And so it's very clear Jesus is talking about sin here. Our sin against God and those who might sin against us.

God asking God to forgive us. Asking others, or forgiving rather, others who have sinned against us. He's talking about sin. But there is an even better proof right here in Matthew chapter 6 that Jesus is talking about sin when He refers to a debt that we owe God.

What does Jesus say right after He concludes this prayer? Verse 14. For if you forgive men their trespasses...

[25 : 14] That's a word for sin. Pereptoma. If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. You see, what do we have here in verses 14 and 15?

Right after the Lord's Prayer. We have Jesus fleshing out what He means when He says, Pray this way. Father, forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.

The prayer is... Or that line in the prayer is the outline for the prayer. And then verses 14 and 15 is fleshing it out. Giving us the substance of it. And so it's clear that Jesus is talking about sin here.

Our sin against God and others sinning against us. You see, every believer must understand this. And I'm not sure that we all understand this. And even if we do understand this, we don't live like we do understand this.

Every believer ought to know that when you were saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, He bought all of you. He bought you out completely.

[26 : 22] Did you know that? He bought you out. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6.20, You are not your own. You're not your own.

For you have been bought with a price. Jesus bought you out. Every part of you. And so if you are born again Christian, the Lord owns you.

I'm sorry if that makes people feel uncomfortable. And I wouldn't want to be owned by anyone except the Lord. That's great news. But He owns you.

Every part of you. And so when you use your body, any part of it, from the feet, to the legs, to the hands, to the mouth, to the eyes, the ears, even the mind, if you use any part of your body for unrighteousness, then you are indebted to the Lord because you're His property.

And for you to use His property for sin or unrighteousness is to do something against His will, against His Word.

[27 : 35] And so when you pray this prayer, forgive us our debts, you are confessing your sins. You are saying, God, I have violated Your property.

And I've used it for something that is against You, that is contrary to You, that is against Your will, Your Word.

And I am confessing that to you. You see? You're confessing that the debt you owe God is more than you can ever pay. You are, in fact, you are confessing that the debt you owe Him because of your sin, your use of His property for unrighteousness, the debt you owe Him could never be paid. Never be paid. And so here's the good news. God is not demanding payment. Did you know that? When you sin, God is not demanding payment.

God is demanding confession. Open, honest, humble agreement with God that you've used what belongs to Him for sin.

[28:53] He demands confession. And He demands repentance. That is a full, complete, breaking away of that sin, a turning from it, an abandonment of that use of His body.

You're to repent of it. And with that, He graciously grants release of the debt. Total release.

It is forgiven and forgotten. 1 John 1, 9. For if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Forgiveness in the sense of He's releasing us from it. Prayer then is about releasing. And the priority of this prayer is confessional. It's confessional.

Naming each one of them. That's why, again, it's not proper to take this prayer and just simply quote this verse, forgive us our sins as we forgive others who have sinned against us.

[30:04] It's not just simply quoting that. You're to name them. You're to identify them. You're to lift them up to God and say, this is what I've done, God, with your body, your mind, your spirit.

This is what I've done with it. Forgive me. Release me from the debt I owe you. It's about confession. But there is a second truth we need to see about this aspect of prayer.

Not only is the priority of this prayer confessional, but the purpose of this prayer is communal.

Communal. Not salvational. That, of course, is not a word, but you understand what I'm saying. Not salvational, but communal.

Communal. That is, the purpose of praying, forgive us our debts, is not to restore or renew our salvation as if that were something we could lose.

[31:09] Which it is not something you can lose. It's not about that. Not about salvation. It's about communion with Him.

But now, someone might say, you know, Pastor, I'm saved. I know I'm saved. And am I not already forgiven for all my sins?

Have you ever entertained that argument? Or maybe heard someone else suggest that. You know, I'm already forgiven. All my sins, past, present, and future, they're all forgiven and forgotten by the Lord.

And so then, why do I need to pray every day, God, forgive me for my sins? Aren't they already forgiven? Well, the answer to that question is yes, they are.

The answer is also no. They're not. Let me give you an illustration. In a very real way, my family is representative or illustrative or mirrors the relationship of the believer to the Heavenly Father.

[32:20] Every family is to mirror that and does, at least in this one sense that I'm going to give you. Sherry and I have been blessed with four sons.

We have four sons. Two of them here this morning. And really, no one can dispute that fact that Matthew and Timothy and Christopher and Jonathan are our sons.

These boys are my sons. They're mine. And Sherry's. Nobody can dispute that. And listen, they did not have to earn the right to be called my sons.

They didn't have to earn the right to do that. They were born into that relationship. I mean, it's pretty basic, isn't it? To say the truth of God's Word is basic. God has given us many living illustrations here in our lives that help reinforce the truth of Scripture.

And this is a very profound truth. My boys were born into their relationship with me. And I believe, further, they were born into that relationship by the grace and providence of God.

[33:37] I don't think it's just strictly a biological thing. God gave them to us. They're born into our family relationship. And listen to this. It is not even within their power to maintain that relationship with me.

That son relationship. It's not within their power to maintain it. They had nothing to do with the beginning of it. And there is not anything they can do to maintain it.

To keep it. That is, nothing they could do or fail to do has any effect whatsoever upon the relationship they have with me as their father or with Sherry as their mother. And yet, I assure you that my sons have on more than one occasion sinned against me. Oh yeah, they have.

I'm not going to mention those right now. Actually, I've forgotten them. But they've sinned against me.

[34:47] They have disobeyed me. They have displeased me. On occasion, they have dishonored me. They've done all those things. But, I'm still their father. Right?

I'm still their father. And they are still my beloved sons. But now listen. their sins do have an effect. Do they not? They do have an effect. Their sins against me as their father can and do come between us.

Every time it happens. Life sometimes is not happy between us. Life sometimes is not close. Between us. Life sometimes is not peaceful.

Between us. Not when there's sin between us. You can't have any of those things. You can't enjoy any of those things when there's sin between us.

[35:51] Now, of course, the relationship is still there. The relationship can never end. It can never be violated and destroyed. Now, that's a fair illustration of the believer's relationship with God, is it not?

In terms of relationship, the born-again believer is a child of God. We're born into the family. Spiritually born.

And nothing we did merited that relationship with God the Father. Not anything we did merited that. Brought that about in the sense of deserving it.

That is our part of it. Nothing. It was unmerited. It was the grace of God. The grace of God that worked in us through faith in Jesus Christ.

And it is not within our power. Now, listen to me. It's not within our power to maintain that relationship with God. I'm talking about relationship. That is, nothing we could do or fail to do has any effect whatsoever upon the relationship we have with our Father, our Heavenly Father.

[37:03] And yet, I assure you that every single day, not a day passes, that you do not sin against your Heavenly Father. Not a day passes.

Don't ever get the idea, well, I think I could go a day without sinning. You can never do it. Not a day goes by. We disobey Him daily. We displease Him daily.

We dishonor Him daily. Sometimes we know it even before it happens. Sometimes we know it right after it happens. Sometimes we are kind of unaware of it until the Holy Spirit comes and strikes our heart with conviction.

But every single day we do these things and in multiple ways we do these things. We sin against Him. But our relationship to Him has not changed.

Indeed, it can never change. Never change. We remain His favored children. And yet, our sins do have an effect.

[38:03] Don't they? Our sins can and do come between us. Between us. Life sometimes is not happy between us.

Us and God. Life sometimes is not close. Life sometimes is not peaceful between us. not when there is sin between us.

Now, of course, the relationship is still there. That can never end. That can never be violated. Never destroyed. But fellowship?

What about that? 1 John 1 7, but if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. And so, when we sin, we're not to deny it, not to try and hide it, and rather we're to drag it out into the sunlight of God's Holy Word.

[39:10] We're to expose it to the light of God's truth, and we are to confess it for what it is, and we are to deal with it as sin, and we're to deal with it in prayer.

Heavenly Father, forgive me. Forgive me. Now listen, when you consider what God did in your behalf, what God did so that your sins could be forgiven, the great length He went to, when you remember the cost, Jesus' cost, when you realize just what your sin does to your fellowship, your communion with a loving Father, every sin ought to break our hearts.

Every sin ought to cause us to pray, oh dear Father, forgive me. Forgive me. Release me from this debt, a debt I cannot pay, and my only hope is that you would release me.

Forgive me. And so the priority of this prayer is confessional, the purpose of this prayer is communal, to have sweet communion with the Father.

And then third and finally this morning, the promise of this prayer is conditional. We had to get to this part of the prayer.

[40:43] It's not the part we like, but the promise of this prayer, the promise that God will answer it, is conditional.

It is conditional. Look at it. And forgive us our debts, we understand that part, our sins against God. But how about this word? As, as we forgive our debtors, as we forgive them, as those who have sinned against us.

More literal translation would be this, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Now, that's bringing the full meaning and grammar of the language out into the English. Have forgiven. forgiven. There's a word here, a priority.

[41:46] That is, there's something else that must come first. It's not mentioned first, but it does come first. Father, forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.

That comes first. Now, I think you would agree with me when I say that this is not the part of this prayer that we really care much about, or really like. Do you know what Jesus is saying here? Jesus is saying that God will measure His forgiveness to us the same as we measure our forgiveness of others.

That is, His forgiveness of us is conditional. Oh, yes, it is. It's conditional. If you expect the Lord to forgive you your sin debt, when you cry out to Him for forgiveness, then you must be sure you have forgiven those who have sinned against you, who have wronged you.

If not, God will not forgive you. He will not forgive you. He will not. Now, you may not like this, but the truth could not be more clear in this passage.

[43:03] If you refuse, I'm not trying to be redundant or belabor this to the point of annoyance, but we need to get this truth.

If you refuse to forgive your brother or sister in Christ for their sins against you, then you should not expect the Lord to forgive you of your sins against Him.

That's just what it is. You know, quite frankly, there are many Christians today who are confused and perplexed about their current dry and non-existent spiritual communion with God, and they're wondering about that and confused by that and frustrated by that, and they have no real communion with God, no sense of His presence, no sense that He's answering your prayers, and it's just dry and spiritually dead, and many Christians are wondering about that and perplexed about that, but they should not be.

They should not be. The problem may be unforgiving, unforgiving sin. You say, Pastor, I've confessed my sins. I've repented of those sins.

I've turned from those sins. I'm done with that. Good. Good. Good. But have you forgiven your brother? Have you forgiven your sister in Christ?

[44:39] Then God will not forgive you. There's no other way to interpret this. It is straightforward and clear. God will not forgive you.

I heard a story of a famous preacher who was preaching on sin and forgiveness. Afterward, as a lot of people will do, this lady came to him afterward and shook his hand and said, Preacher, I really enjoyed that sermon.

And I want you to know that I have forgiven everyone of their sin against me except for this one person. And Preacher, I'm sorry, but I can never, ever forgive her for what she did to me.

Never. never. And the preacher just said to this lady, very matter-of-factly, he said, then lady, I hope you never sin because neither will God forgive you.

That sounds harsh, but that's exactly what Jesus is saying here. And in case you're questioning this truth in your own hearts and minds, look at what Jesus taught right after this prayer.

[45:59] In verse 14, I quoted part of this verse. Look at it. Chapter 6, verse 14, For if you forgive men their trespasses, their sins, that is, sins against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive them their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

There it is. Plain English. It's not a question of relationship.

In case you're thinking, preacher, I'm a little confused. It seems you're saying that if I won't forgive someone, then God won't forgive me, and that means the sin is still held to my account, and that means when I die, I'm going to hell.

I'm not saying that at all. We're not talking about relationship. We're talking about fellowship.

Talking about sweet communion with the Lord. We're talking about sharing the sure daily guidance of the Lord in your life.

We're talking about the satisfying provisions of the Lord in your life. That's what we're talking about, and all of it is based upon our release from the sins we have committed against God, and it is all conditioned upon our release, our forgiveness of those who have sinned against us.

[47 : 20] that's all based upon you. Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors.

I'll see you next time.