

Lord Teach Us to Pray (Part 9) 3 Stages of Forgiveness (Mt. 6:12 -15)

Introduction: Jesus teaches us through this model for prayer *forgiveness can be experienced and extended*. In our text, Jesus is teaching the disciples about how to pray. *He says when we pray, we need to daily seek the Father's forgiveness for our sin as we forgive others for their sins against us*. It may help us to first understand, the definition of forgiveness: *Forgiveness (ours from God and ours for others), is the act of setting someone free from obligation (to God or to you) as a result of wrong done against God or you*. The word actually means "to dismiss or send away." Jesus here is speaking of the cancellation of debt (Ours to the Father and others to us). How does this work? Let's examine the three stages of forgiveness.

1. **Judicial forgiveness:** What is this and why do I need it?

Judicial forgiveness sees God as a Judge, who must judge sin and carry out its sentence.

A. **The sentence for all sin** – Death! (Rom. 6:23a) why is this the sentence for all men? (To answer this, we must go way back to the beginning of man's time.

1. Gen 2:5 Moses explains, ... Then God placed the man "Adam," (vv. 8-14)
2. Gen. 2:16,17 God commanded Adam and gave him a choice.

So, The Lord God, set Adam in the Garden to be an obedient servant, warning that before them was life or death, depending on whether they obeyed the commandment. Cf. (Deut 30:11-20)

3. Later God created Eve (the woman out of Adam) and gave her to him. (vv.18-24) Gen. 3:6 – 10 records the sinful fall of man. The happy couple disobeyed God's command. (Gen. 3:14) When the Lord confronts them *about what they had done, where does God lay the responsibility?* On Adam.

4. *Paul reminds us*, 1 Tim. 2:13,14 – *Adam was not deceived – he was disobedient!* What does that have to do with us? In his letter to the Romans, Paul explained: (Rom 5:12)

5. Since Adam, every seed of Adam, (which is every man and woman alive today), is born with a sin nature (Rom.5:12; 3:23; 6:23a) That means we are all born under the sentence of sin and death! While this should be the end of the story, it is not (Gen. 3:15)

B. The symbol – Gen. 3:21 God's response to Adam and Eve's confession of their sin and faith was to remove their flimsy man-made garments and clothe them with acceptable garments that He Himself provided (Isa 61:10).

1. **We know some sort of sacrificial system** was taught by God to Adam and Eve through this act – because they passed it on to their sons – (Gen. 4:2-5)
2. **We also know the sacrificial system** for God's people was later established by the law – (Heb.9:22)
3. **All of this was a picture** of what Jesus would do for sinners on the cross when He died as the lamb of God for a sinful world (2 Cor 5:21) (Heb. 10:1-10). (Obviously woman do not have seed – this is the first prophecy recorded in scripture – and it pertains to the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus – who would come forth from Mary, but not of Joseph – but rather the Holy Spirit) Cf. (Isa. 7:14; Luke 1;28-35)

- a. **The pronouncement** – God as Judge looks down from heaven and says of man – "You're guilty – You have broken My Law." Because of this you're under condemnation and must suffer the consequences.

b. The payment – Granted by God, on the basis of Jesus death on the cross. (As the animals stood in the place of the sinners according to the law and their blood was shed as a picture of Christ's death) Jesus – took our sins and guilt upon Himself (past, present and future) and completely forgave them!

c. The point of occurrence – This happens the moment we profess faith in Christ and invite Him to come into our lives. (Rom. 3:24 – 26) Eph. 4:32 – because Christ took all our sins and paid our penalty when we believe on Christ and accept His sacrifice, God judicially declares righteous from sins past, present and future.

C. The permanent sufficiency – This is a once and for all judicial forgiveness (Heb.10:10) there is sufficient forgiveness for all who will receive it by faith (2 Pe. 3:9; Rom. 10:13)

2. **Parental forgiveness:** (Jn. 13:1-10)

A. The lesson displayed Washing is a symbol of cleansing (ie.) forgiveness.

B. The lesson taught (v. 10) Jesus shows the disciples we don't need total cleansing we already have that...but we do need daily to wash the dirt off that we collect in our flesh to maintain right fellowship with our Father.

We have a relationship God protects that by His promise and character. We need to protect the fellowship with daily cleansing. *So, notice...*

B. The lesson we must learn - Notice (Mt. 6: 12a) Jesus is teaching His disciples or (believer's) – *So forgive us our debts is a daily reminder we still sin against our Father*

and we need (at least) a daily cleansing of that debt.

C. The lesson applied – How do I get a daily cleansing for my sin debts? (1 Jn. 1:9)

1. The word confess actually means "to say the same thing [about]." So, to confess sin, then, means to say the same thing about it that God says about it.
2. True confession is naming sin - calling it by name what God calls it: envy, hatred, lust, deceit, or whatever it may be. (It is getting down to business with our Father!)
3. When we do this, we find a Father who delights in showing mercy (Rom.5:20) every time! (Neh. 9:17; Micah 7:18)

3. **Conditional forgiveness:** (Mt. 6:12b, 14-15)

A. When this prayer is understood correctly, it is a prayer for God to extend forgiveness to me to the same degree that I extend forgiveness to others.

B. Jesus was not teaching that believers earn God's forgiveness by forgiving others; *for this would be contrary to God's free grace and mercy*. (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13; *Matt 18:21-35*).

C. Jesus shows us here, if I refuse to maintain fellowship with other believers in the family of God, it affects my own fellowship with God the Father. (Matt. 18:15-35).

D. The lesson is clear: If I expect the Lord to forgive me when I cry out to Him, then I must be quick to forgive those who have wronged me. (4:32; Matt. 6:14-15; Rom. 12:19; Lk 17:1-5; Col. 3:12-13; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; 1 Jn. 2:6; Prov. 19:11)

There are debts in our life that need to be cancelled out today. Some that are ours and some that are others against us. "*Father forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*"