

Forgive us our debts...

This is the only part of the Lord's Prayer that Jesus repeats for emphasis:

"For if you forgive men when they sin against you your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Matt 6:14 & 15

A biblical definition of forgiveness is to absolve, release, lift off or pardon in full!

Let's look at a story of amazing forgiveness. Genesis 50:15-21

The three major keys to experiencing true forgiveness

I. Release

- A. To forgive is to release of all offenses and charges. It is to declare acquitted, no longer guilty. It is to grant them a full pardon.
- B. We must not fear the power of manipulation.
- C. We must release others whether they repent or not.
- D. This allows the Lord to be the judge. Romans 12:17-21

II. Receive

- A. The greatest obstacle to giving forgiveness is never having fully received it!
"Freely you have received, freely give." Matthew 10:8
- B. The only way you can freely give is to freely receive.
- C. Beware of the danger of trying to earn forgiveness.
Isaiah 53:10-11

III. Believe

- A. For many of us, we just can't come to the place of believing that we can be totally forgiven.
"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12
"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." 1 Peter 3:12
"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Cor. 5:21
- B. When the Father looks at you, He sees the righteousness of Jesus. "Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God..." John 1:12

Small Group & Personal Reflection Questions:

1. As you study the Scriptures for today's message, do you believe that you have fully received the forgiveness that God made available in Jesus? Why or why not?
2. Are there people in your life right now that you have had difficulty forgiving because of their lack of repentance or remorse? What will you do about it?
3. Who is the one that is most affected by your unforgiveness? Therefore, what should you do about that?
4. Sometimes it is helpful to have another person agree with you that you have fully received the forgiveness of Jesus because of the power of His blood. Do you need to find someone like that and if so, when will you do it?
5. What are the benefits of being fully forgiven and also forgiving others?
(freedom from bitterness, anger, judgment, and allowing God to deal with the situation for starters...!)
6. Why do you believe that Jesus emphasized this one phrase of the Lord's Prayer more than any other?
Matthew 6:14-15