

REFLECTIONS ON “Forgive Us Our Debts”

(Rev. William Harrell)

One of the things we are taught to pray for, as a petition to the throne of God’s grace, is forgiveness. Jesus tells us to ask God to: Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. We do well, therefore, not only to ask forgiveness of our God, but also to understand that for which we are asking. It is too easy for us to have vague and weak notions of forgiveness, and such notions undermine our apprehension of the precious potency of that forgiveness that we receive from God as well as the forgiveness that we give to those who have sinned against us.

A simple definition of the verb, to forgive, is to give away a right. The right arises from an injurious offense that one person receives from another. The injury gives the offended party the right, in accordance with the dictates of justice, to collect payment for damages suffered. The one who forgives relinquishes his right to receive such payment that is due to him from the party that offended him. It takes but a moment’s reflection upon this definition for us to sense how costly forgiveness is to the one who gives it.

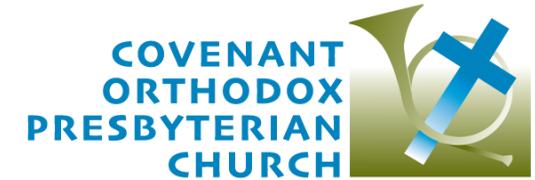
West SC: Quest. 105. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

Ans. 105. In the fifth petition (which is, And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors)(1) we pray, That God, for Christ’s sake, would freely pardon all our sins;(2) which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.(3)

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LORD’S DAY EVENING WORSHIP

March 1, 2026



GOD GATHERS HIS PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome

Salutation

Call to Worship

GOD’S PEOPLE RESPOND

*** Opening Hymn**

O, The Deep, Deep Love of Jesus
535 Trinity Hymnal (all verses)

1 O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free;
rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me.
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of thy love;
leading onward, leading homeward, to thy glorious rest above.

2 O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Spread his praise from shore to shore;
how he loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore;
how he watches o'er his loved ones, died to call them all his own;
how for them he intercedeth, watcheth o'er them from the throne.

3 O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Love of ev'ry love the best:
'tis an ocean vast of blessing, 'tis a haven sweet of rest.
O the deep, deep love of Jesus! 'tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;
and it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to thee.**

*** Invocation**

God’s Law

Exodus 17:1-8 (p 70 pew Bible)

Assurance of Pardon

Exodus 17:9-13 (p 70 pew Bible)

Congregational Prayer

GOD SPEAKS HIS WORD TO HIS PEOPLE

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings

Matthew 6:5-13(p 964 pew Bible)
Matthew 18:21-35 (p 979 pew Bible)

Sermon Forgive Us Our Debts as We Forgive Our Debtors

Prayer of Application

* Closing Hymn

One There Is, Above All Others
186 *Trinity Hymnal* (all verses)

- 1 One there is, above all others, well deserves the name of Friend;
his is love beyond a brother's, costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once his kindness prove find it everlasting love.
- 2 Which of all our friends, to save us, could or would have shed his blood?
But our Jesus died to have us reconciled in him to God.
This was boundless love indeed; Jesus is a Friend in need.
- 3 When he lived on earth abased, "Friend of sinners" was his name;
Now above all glory raised, he rejoices in the same;
still he calls them brethren, friends, and to all their wants attends.
- 4 Could we bear from one another what he daily bears from us?
Yet this glorious Friend and Brother loves us though we treat him thus:
though for good we render ill, he accounts us brethren still.
- 5 O for grace our hearts to soften! Teach us, Lord, at length to love,
we, alas! forget too often what a Friend we have above:
but when home our souls are brought, we will love you as we ought.**

* Benediction

*Please stand if able

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“Everlasting Consolation” from Forgiveness of Sin

Charles Spurgeon (Aug 11th Evening Devotional, “Morning and Evening.”)

2 Thessalonians 2:16– *Everlasting Consolation*.

A Christian man has received in his heart the witness of the Spirit that his iniquities are put away like a cloud, and his transgressions like a thick cloud. If sin be pardoned, is not that an everlasting consolation?

Next, the Lord gives His people an abiding sense of acceptance in Christ. The Christian knows that God looks upon him as standing in union with Jesus. Union to the risen Lord is a consolation of the most abiding order; it is, in fact, everlasting. Let sickness prostrate us, have we not seen hundreds of believers as happy in the weakness of disease as they would have been in the strength of hale and blooming health? Let death's arrows pierce us to the heart, our comfort dies not, for have not our ears full often heard the songs of saints as they have rejoiced because the living love of God was shed abroad in their hearts in dying moments? Yes, a sense of acceptance in the Beloved is an everlasting consolation.

Moreover, the Christian has a conviction of his security. God has promised to save those who trust in Christ: the Christian does trust in Christ, and he believes that God will be as good as His word, and will save him. He feels that he is safe by virtue of his being bound up with the person and work of Jesus.