



The Pardon of Prayer

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Focus As we confess our sins daily and freely receive God's grace, we're able to daily forgive others by extending that same grace to them.

Open Where were you born?

Read The Lord's Prayer is a pattern that teaches us how to pray. The portion to memorize for this week is Matthew 6:12: "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

God wants us to daily ask Him for forgiveness of our sins. This is not for the purpose of making sure all our past sins are covered. When we first believed in Christ and surrendered our lives to Him, the sins of our past were erased from our "account" with God, and we were made righteous before Him (Romans 4:3; 2 Corinthians 5:18–19, 21).

Our daily confession of sins is to cleanse our conscience from sins we commit as believers (Hebrews 10:22). It's a daily reminder that God has forgiven a debt we can't repay. We can't earn His forgiveness; we freely receive it as a gift.

As we freely receive God's forgiveness, God requires us to freely forgive others (Matthew 10:8; Matthew 18:21–35). Often, when we struggle with forgiving others, it's because we want them to *earn* our forgiveness. This is an indicator that we haven't freely received God's grace, but we're still trying to earn it. When we withhold forgiveness, bitterness takes root in our hearts. This leads to sin, torment from the Enemy and spiritual bondage in our lives (Matthew 18:34–35; Hebrews 12:15).

God wants us to forgive daily, repeatedly, and with the same intensity with which we might naturally impose revenge (Matthew 18:21–22; Genesis 4:23–24). The grace we receive daily for our sins enables us to extend grace to others.

Talk

1. Practice reciting Matthew 6:9–12 together as a group. Say it together out loud.
2. Have you ever thought of the Lord's Prayer as a *daily* prayer before? How has this sermon series changed the way you pray?
3. Why do you think we sometimes have trouble freely receiving God's grace? What causes us to want to earn His forgiveness?
4. Read Hebrews 12:15. When we miss God's grace and choose not to forgive, bitterness takes root in our hearts. What kind of trouble does bitterness cause?
5. Is there anyone you're having trouble forgiving? Without sharing names or details, ask the group to pray for you. If necessary, seek out a trusted friend or counselor or talk to your group leader in private if you need help with this situation.

Live

Pray the Lord's Prayer daily this week, giving special attention to confessing any sin the Holy Spirit convicts you about. Also, daily ask God for grace to forgive others. Keep asking until you have fully released anyone you might be struggling to forgive.

Pray

Thank You, Father, for freely giving us grace through Your Son, Jesus. We praise You, Jesus, for paying our debt of sin that we can't repay. Holy Spirit, please show us any sin in our lives today so we can confess it. Please give us grace to forgive others today and every day. Amen.