

# The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:5–15

**MPSeries** Jesus teaches Christ-followers to pray as the source of all life with God, for intimacy, peace and power.

**SERIES INTRO The Lord's Prayer**, Jesus teaching us how to pray. **And what does He teach us?** Phrase-by-phrase, we are learning to deepen our practice of daily, practical prayer that changes our lives, and impacts the world by God's power. But one essential remains for all His teaching to matter for our living, we must obey. **Jesus teaches Christ-followers to pray as the source of all life with God, for intimacy, peace and power.** WE must PRAY!

## Prayer as Forgiveness

Matt 6:12

**MPS** True Christian prayer seeks God's forgiveness and forgives others to demonstrate His loving faithfulness.

**OBJ** Every person should practice forgiveness, both confess to receive it and giving it, because of four realities.

Let's begin today with one critical observation that informs our understanding. Recognizing God's provision as the source of all of life leads us into an even deeper, more intimate and ultimate reality in our relationship with Him, the forgiveness of our sin that eternally separates us from Him.

**True Christian prayer seeks God's forgiveness and forgives others to demonstrate His loving faithfulness.**

### READ Matthew 6:9-12

*9Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11Give us this day our daily bread, 12and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Matt 6:12*

### Outline the Appeal

"and..."

**Forgiveness is directly linked to provision**; two parts of one sentence, together a complete train of thought. Think about this. Until you receive all things come from God's hand, you will never be compelled to live and act as He has acted on your behalf. **Who we are and all that we have is only because of Him; therefore, how we live should be radically and distinctively marked by Jesus!**

**Recognizing God's provision in life becomes a catalyst for confessing our need for forgiveness for life.** Every recognition of God's good provision is directly linked to His grace in forgiving us our sin. The more you fail to recognize God's provision in your daily life, the less you will sense any regard to Him for the forgiveness of your sin. **Acknowledging God's provision in daily life is the most profound reminder of our need for God's forgiveness for true life in the Spirit.**

"forgive us our debts,"

**Seeking forgiveness recognizes that a wrong has occurred.** And we own for ourselves that the wrong done is mine. When we pray as this phrase teaches, we confess our sin that "puts people in the wrong with God and that only He can cancel out the offense and pardon it."<sup>1</sup> We admit that we know our sin puts us at strife with God, and with that knowledge we take personal responsibility for our sin as our own, and that only God can sufficiently forgive and cleanse, and lead us out of it. **Forgiveness always begins with God or it cannot get handled appropriately to remove its stain from us.**

**TRANS** King David helps us understand what this sounds like in Psalm 51.

### READ Psalm 51:3–5

<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to Matthew](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 147.



*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. 5Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Psalm 51:3-5*

When we pray for forgiveness, we admit that we are at fault, that my sin is my responsibility, that I alone am the only one to blame. When we pray for forgiveness, we admit that my sin is always, and first and foremost, against God, evil in every way against His perfect holiness. And finally, when we pray for forgiveness, we admit that our sin is not a result of any outside force or influence, but from the very core and nature of our being. *When we pray for forgiveness, we leave no opportunity for anyone or anything else other than self to take full responsibility for my sin.*

**TRANS** Once we've asked for forgiveness, we must understand what it means. *What does it mean for God to "forgive us"?*

**Forgiveness includes two simultaneous acts that God accomplishes for us** Rom4:7-8, one He does to us and the other He works in us. God no longer counts our sin, of which we are all guiltyRomans3:23, against us, but places them on Christ and covers them with His blood as atoned, paid once for all. In forgiveness, God cleanses us from our sin, removing it's stain and blight from our soul. God doesn't just "forget about" our sin, dismissing it as "no big deal" and moving on to act like it never happened. God is NEVER passive toward sin. He remembers our sin no moreHeb10:17 because it has been fully atoned, put awayHeb9:26 in the sacrifice of Christ, and buried it in the grave for us. God has no anger toward those who are in Christ NOT because He's just being nice. God has no anger because His wrath was consumed in the death of Christ. Those who are justified by Christ are saved from God's wrath and destined for eternal life.Rom5:9;1Thes5:9 *When God forgives, His work is comprehensively for us and in us, and complete in every way because of Christ' blood covering us.*

**TRANS** But, as often gets overlooked, there is a qualification placed on our forgiveness.

*"as we also have forgiven our debtors."*

**Jesus links our asking God for forgiveness directly with our forgiveness of others.** | [Pause] Listen carefully, friend. | We ask God to forgive our debts as we forgive those who wrong us or wrongly owe us. That little word "as" means we pray that the reality of our own forgiveness be contingent on truly acting in the reality of that forgiveness, that we extend it to others. *We are not satisfied to receive a "partial gospel", but desire all of God's wonder-working power to encompass the whole of our being, ready to live as His life is alive in us!*

**Notice also that the focus of the last part of the phrase is aimed at the person.** The aim in release is the offense of the other person in the relationship. Forgive means that you will no longer count that offense against them. Release of offense does not mean restore or reconcile, though it is the only first step toward reconciling. *Whether or not the relationship is ever reconciled, the wrong done is no longer credited toward the other person in your heart or mind, Jesus has it.*

**Forgive is NOT just a feeling toward another, but whole, spiritual healing.** Feelings may measure 'infection' within us and can be helpful in the whole healing process to measure our healing from the wrong done, but feelings can also require a long period of time to adjust to the decision one makes. *Forgiveness requires an intentional act, often repeated, whereby you make a conscience choice to place their offense against you where God applied the credit of your offense against Him, paid on the cross by Jesus' blood.*

*Does it mean that we are NOT forgiven by God if we do not forgive others?* This is a scary question to consider, and even more challenging to wrestle with personally, but it is not hard to know the answer to. Jesus is teaching His disciples, addressing those who are "in the faith". The issue here is not salvation, but fellowship and intimacy with God.

**First**, we can say that when we confess our sin and repent, turning to God by faith for obedience, that He is faithful to forgive us.1Johm1:9 This we know. But we can also know that refusing to forgive others reveals that we do not fully understand forgiveness. If we receive God's forgiveness and fail to extend it to others, then we are not really living in what He has done for us because any offense against us is so inconsiderably and incomparably less than our sin against God that it would be inconceivable to hold another's offense against them when we've been forgiven and cleansed from every one of our sins



against God. At the very least, and maybe most importantly, our lack of forgiveness means that we are not walking in the fullness of God's forgiveness, in the freedom and liberty in which He gives through forgiveness, when we refuse or fail to forgive others.

**APPL** We must, then, ask ourselves, "Considering all that God has forgiven in my sin against Him, why would I not forgive others?" This question, which answers itself, leads us then to ask, "What is preventing me from forgiving that I must surrender to God, trusting Him in all matters and people?" Every time we surrender fully our heart and life to honestly ask God these questions, God faithfully and graciously answers these questions to bring greater transformation within us.

**Something powerful shifts within us when we consider all that Jesus is teaching here.** We cannot go before God, make requests of Him and expect that He will work FOR us or ON us and we remain unaffected by Him IN us. No one encounters God and remains unchanged! Therefore, when we expect that God will work for us and on us, and it not make any difference in us, we hold an unrealistic expectation that stands in direct contrast to the gospel. Even more, the way Jesus connects these two aspects teaches that our prayers for God's forgiveness with no or little intention to be changed by His work, especially giving freely to others what He does for us, is to deceive ourselves; lip service without heart engagement, hypocrisy in its highest form. **Matt 15:8** When we walk by faith to release the pain of offense that someone else incurred against us, we catch a glimpse of the offense God removed for us.

**True Christian prayer seeks God's forgiveness and forgives others to demonstrate His loving faithfulness.**

**TRANS** When we live and walk in God's forgiveness, we hold only one debt, to love one another as a testimony of God's love. **Rom 13:8**

**OBJ:** Four Realities for intimacy, peace and power in prayer as forgiveness from God to others.

### 1. Forgiveness from God is the ONLY way to deal with our sin.

The biggest problem we have in all of life only has one solution, but it doesn't need anything else or more. God is the only one who can deal with our sin. But when God deals with our sin, "it is finished". **John 19:30**

**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9**  
Confession means we "agree" with God, both about sin and how it must be addressed and dealt with. Psalm 51:3-5 teaches that to rightly confess means we admit it is my sin, it is against God first and foremost, and it is not a one-off act but the very nature of who I am that must be forgiven and cleansed. I commit sins because I am a sinner by nature; I don't need medication, but a Mediator with God. Sin leaves me helpless in my offense; I don't need a therapist, I need an Advocate before God. Sin enslaves me in the kingdom of darkness; I don't need to move on, I need to be rescued and set free. Sin renders me hopeless in my guilt; I don't need a counselor, I need a Savior. Sin is a stain on my soul; I don't need a moral bath, I need a Spirit-cleansing of the soul. Sin is death; I don't need a better me, I need new life. My sin made me guilty before God; only Jesus makes me innocent and cleansed. I need Jesus for God's forgiveness. **Without confession, there is no forgiveness, no repentance and no cleansing from God; we remain in our sin. In true confession, Jesus forgives and cleanses us from all unrighteousness.**

### 2. Forgiveness is always the right thing to do.

Jesus teaches that forgiveness is always the right thing to do. Because of the cross of Jesus Christ and the gospel, forgiveness is always the right course of action, the right path for healing, but it is never easy. Some look on the cross with tears of sorrow at what has occurred (disciples). Others look upon the cross with amazement, convinced and convicted that the One who hung there was surely the Lamb of God (Roman Centurion; converted). Still, others look upon the cross with scorn and disdain at the One who hung there for them, convinced it was his own, stupid actions or decisions that got him there, and that this was exactly what he deserved. (religious leaders, political leaders, pagans, hard-hearted) But no one looks on the cross for forgiveness by grace through faith and fails to find it. Forgiveness does not mean your sin nor any



offense against you gets ignored or dismissed. Forgiveness means you give it to God, knowing that He has dealt with it on the cross. You will never control how another responds to your forgiveness, but that never determines whether or not you forgive. [Because of the cross of Jesus Christ, forgiveness is always the right thing to do but never the easy one.](#)

**“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32**

Forgiving others explicitly models God’s forgiveness of us in Jesus Christ. If we are to forgive, our heart must be so inclined, tender toward others as God’s heart is toward us. We must recognize that it is God’s kindness that leads us to repentance. Therefore, our kindness, displaying His toward us, can lead others to repent and turn from their sin too. [Forgiveness is always the right thing to do, because God always forgives us when we confess our sin.](#)

### **3. Forgiveness is a choice to release you from playing God.**

In the parable of the unforgiving servant, [Matt 18:21-35](#), Jesus teaches that it is wrong for us not to forgive others when our debt has been forgiven by God. When we fail to forgive, we choose to hold on to and carry another person’s offense, a weight too heavy for us to bear. We cannot carry, cleanse nor dismiss our own sin. We surely cannot do this for any other. A failure to forgive others only kills us, slowly and miserably, and infects and negatively affects a lot of other people along the way. When we fail to forgive, [we propose](#) that we are someone we are not, God; [we pretend](#) that we can do something we cannot, atone for an offense; [we claim](#) something we know not to be true of ourselves, that we are worthy to not forgive; and, [we falsely claim](#) about God, that He has not because He cannot do what He said He would. [Forgiveness is a choice that releases you from playing God.](#)

### **4. Forgiveness is an intentional decision that affects how you think to determine how you will act.**

Forgiveness does not mean forget, but to decide to not give attention or consideration to the offense. You charge the debt owed to you to another. The debt of the one who offended or sinned against you is now charged to Jesus, who gladly paid it. Some think that they have not forgiven because they still remember the act or offense. But forgive does not mean to forget. [ILLUS](#) Just because someone pays your credit bill at the store does not mean the store will or should continue to allow you to charge. They just will not hold that former charges against you.

When Jeremiah states God’s covenant with His people in salvation, He explains God remembers our sin no more.

[READ Jeremiah 31:33–34](#)

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. [For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:33-34](#)*

The word for *remember* means “to keep in mind for attention or consideration”. When God says He will remember no more, He tells us that He makes a conscience decision, an act of will and mind, to no longer consider or give it attention.

You must forgive. You can’t forget. But God can, by His divine work in healing us, remove the remembrance of it from us. It takes time, for us, and requires faith to make an intentional decision each time it arises, but God can and will cause you to remember it no more if you will let Him. [Choosing to forgive requires an intentional decision that releases you from carrying another’s offense, including it’s influence over how you think and act. And over time, even its memory in you.](#)

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