

Weekly Study Guide for October 19, 2025 | Forgive and Be Forgiven

What does “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” mean to you? In this lesson, we will attempt to answer this question by examining what is commonly known as the Lord’s Prayer, specifically focusing on verse 12. Let’s see what God’s Word has to say about it!

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins” (Mark 11:25).

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye” (Matthew 7:3-5).

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times should I forgive someone who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21-22).

“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’” (Matthew 18:32-33).

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.” “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!” Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” ¹Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you” (John 13:6-10, 14-15).

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all

unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10).

“My children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2).

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven” (John 20: 21-23).

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Questions:

1. What does it mean to ask God to “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”? Why do you think Jesus emphasizes forgiveness immediately after teaching the Lord’s Prayer? How does this reciprocal dynamic shape our understanding of grace?
2. Why is reconciliation with others prioritized before offering gifts to God? What does the metaphor of the “speck” and the “plank” reveal about our tendency to judge others while ignoring our own faults? How is this relevant to the understanding of forgiveness?
3. What can we discern about the spiritual consequences of harboring unforgiveness? How does un/forgiveness in our human relationships relate to un/forgiveness in our relationship with God?
4. How does the parable of the unmerciful servant illustrate the moral obligation to extend mercy? What does “seventy times seven” suggest about the limits—or lack thereof—of forgiveness? Is there ever justification for withholding mercy and forgiveness from another?
5. How does Jesus’ act of foot washing relate to forgiveness? What does “you should do as I have done for you” mean in the context of Jesus’ example? How does this relate to the verses in 1 John?
6. What does it mean that Jesus gives his followers the authority to forgive sins? What does it mean to be “Christ’s ambassadors?” How does all of this inform our role as agents of reconciliation in the world?
7. What does “forgiveness” look like in your daily life? How does forgiving and being forgiven impact how you live each day? What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassador, and how can you embody that in daily your life?

References: [Mt 6:9-15](#); [Lk 11:1-4](#); [Heb 4:16](#); [Eph 2:18, 3:12](#); [1 Tim 1:16](#); [1 Pet 2:10](#); [Mt 5:23-24](#); [Mk 11:25](#); [Mt 7:3-5, 18:15-35](#); [Jn 13:1-17](#); [1 Jn 1:8-10, 2:1-2](#); [Jn 20:21-23](#); [2 Cor 5:20](#)

Summary: These scriptures collectively emphasize that forgiveness is both a divine gift and a human responsibility. Jesus instructs us to ask to be forgiven by God, but to also to forgive others. In fact, receiving God's forgiveness seems to be inseparable from extending it to others, urging reconciliation before worship and limitless mercy in relationships. God's grace and mercy are available to all who humbly confess and seek it. In coming to Christ, the believer receives a bath. They are a new creation. However, sometimes walking around in this world, our feet get dirty. Jesus invites us to let Him wash our feet by asking for forgiveness. In the same way we are sent to wash the feet of others, by offering forgiveness through Christ. Followers of Christ are called to model forgiveness—serving, cleansing, and reconciling as ambassadors of God's grace. Ultimately, forgiveness is not just a personal act but a sacred participation in God's redemptive work.

Personal Reflection:

1. Do you have an assurance of God's forgiveness?
2. Is there anyone you need to forgive? Speck
3. Is there anything you need God to forgive? Plank
4. Is there any sin you are ignoring? Do not ignore any sin in your life. It will erode your relationship with God and hinder intimacy with Him.
5. Have you received a bath? Are your feet dirty?
6. What difference does this lesson make to your life? Are there any other takeaways or insights that stand out to you from this passage?