

“Forgive Us Our Debts As We Have Forgiven Our Debtors” Matthew 6:13

Whatever you may think about this clause in the Disciple’s Prayer, this much is certain: Our Father’s family is a family of forgivers! It is a kingdom saturated in forgiveness and filled with the forgiven! In other words, there is no “room” in our Father’s “house” for storing unforgiveness, for keeping records of unpaid debts.

It seems to me this clause is more descriptive than conditional (and that even more obviously so in Luke’s version of this prayer – Lk 11:4). One – forgiving others – is a living demonstration of the other – that we have been forgiven. And that is the main point of the “sermon on the mount” – Jesus presenting one illustration after another – not of New Covenant laws – but of New Covenant realities for the people of God. We are literally “dead” to keeping score, and literally “alive” to forgiving any and all indebted to us. We are learning to let go of the sins and debts of others as quickly and as fully as God has let go of ours.

If we think of ourselves in separation from the Full and Perfect Forgiver, this idea seems to be fully and perfectly impossible. However, with Jesus Christ – Our full and perfect Forgiver – joined to us, we may see what is a terrible burden to me is no burden to Him at all. This directive is neither an order to become perfect in our behavior nor is it meant to be an impossible standard that will smash our will power – it is an invitation... a call to freely and fully participate in His Life of grace and mercy. It is no call to a sin-consciousness – our own sin or someone else’s. It is a clear and present call to Christ-consciousness. Who He is, where He is, and what He alone can do... fully and perfectly forgive!

It may sound something like this: “It is not longer (just) I who forgives, it is Christ who forgives. And the person I now forgive, the debtor I now release, I do so by the forgiving and self-giving Life of the Son of God in me, Who loves and forgives and gives Himself up for this one.” God’s purposes – like forgiveness – always require God’s power! Godly forgiveness requires Godly grace, Godly mercy. To forgive an enemy, release one from an unpaid debt, bless a law breaker is so God-like. We take what He has given us and freely give it away. All day, every day. All persons, each person. We no longer treat others on the basis of what they’ve done, but on the basis of what they need. (And Who does that sound like?)



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Praise Reports & Prayer Requests



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Greetings


In the past month I have been in the muggy bayous of Louisiana and in the snowy squalls of New York. I have been with men and women, singles and couples, new believers and believers into their seventh decade in Christ. I have celebrated with the joyful and mourned with the grieving. I have watched old things come to a close and new things begin.

Sounds like life, doesn't it? Differences... fluctuations... change... variations... adjustment... mutability. Do you know what the people in all these places have in common? An innate desire for immutability - something constant... reliable... steady... trustworthy... incorruptible.


Why that desire? We were made by Someone immutable - made in the image of One Who is a holy constant... a reliable source... a steady anchor... a trustworthy foundation... an incorruptible Lover.


So why not stop our incessant obsession with the differences, the fluctuations, the changes, the variations, the adjustments, the mutability of things here today and gone tomorrow? They are there, they are real, they are not to be ignored. How about we spend this month looking through them, into the Greater Reality of God our Father, Christ our Life, and the Spirit our Holy Supply? Let's tether ourselves to the One Who changes not, Who is no fluctuating Source, Who is the same every day, Who is unbending Truth and unending Love, Who will never leave or forsake us? Then maybe we'll be a bit more willing to trade in our "stories" of what's going on in the world for His Story of what's going on in the world!

Praise & Prayer


 The Forgiveness of all our sins

 Our Immutable Source and Supply

 All things changeable that magnify His unchangeableness

 Those who are indebted to us

 For our "anti-entropic" Life in Christ

 Grace sufficient for walking through the changes to His glory

Calendar

APRIL

9	Alachua Study
26-28	The Hill, Hardin, KY (270-437-4172)
30	Ocala Study