

Forgive Us as We Forgive

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[0 : 00] All right, we're working our way through the Sermon on the Mount, and we're slowing down, working through all the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. And so we've just read the petition, Verse 12, forgive us our debts, God, as we have also forgiven our debtors. So let's dive right into it.

This petition says, God, forgive us our debts. So we ask first for God to forgive us. There's a vertical forgiveness that we need before God as we forgive other people. So then there's a horizontal forgiveness that we all have to offer in this life. So that's the two things to see, that there's a vertical dimension to forgiveness, there's a horizontal dimension to forgiveness.

So let's look at those two things. First, the vertical dimension. We have a need for forgiveness from God. Now, some of us tonight come with really big things that have been done against us. And for those really big things that have been done against us, we have to, we're being asked to offer big forgiveness. And all of us tonight have lots and lots of small things that have been done against us. And this petition is, God, help me to offer small forgivenesses every single day, all the time.

And we know that some of us have done really big things against other people that do require big forgiveness. And some of, and all of us, all of us have done lots and lots of small things every single day even against others in our lives that require lots and lots of small forgivenesses all the time. Now, when the Bible talks about forgiveness, it also talks about the opposite of forgiveness.

[1 : 43] And what's the opposite of forgiveness? Is it justice? Is forgiveness and justice opposed to one another? No, not at all. Not in Scripture. Not in the Christian view. Not at all. In fact, forgiveness and justice go hand in hand in the Bible. They go together. What's the opposite of forgiveness? The opposite of forgiveness across the Bible is revenge, retaliation, taking the matter into your own hands, seeking retaliation at all cost. That's the opposite of forgiveness. In the Lord's Prayer and then the parable that we read, the parable of the unforgiving, the wicked servant who wouldn't offer forgiveness after he had received it. What I want to suggest to you tonight that this petition teaches, that that parable teaches, is that Christianity actually offers forgiveness to the world. Let me say it like this. Christianity, the Christian gospel, gives a unique power that enables one to forgive in a way that actually introduces true forgiveness to the world for the very first time. In other words, it is the normal default of every society. It is the normal default of every single human heart, all of our hearts, not to offer forgiveness, but to seek vengeance. That retaliation is the norm in culture and world history. And that when the Christian gospel came into the world, preached all the way back in Genesis 3.15, it introduced forgiveness. It created forgiveness. It created, see, that what God offers when He forgives created the power, the possibility, a culture for horizontal forgiveness. That's changed the world. That's changed the world and makes forgiveness seem like something fairly normal in the world we live in, actually. And in this prayer, the Lord's Prayer, we're asking God, would you help us and teach us to forgive others because we realize how much we've been forgiven by you. See, in other words, the vertical dimension of receiving forgiveness makes possible the horizontal dimension of giving forgiveness and really is the power of giving forgiveness in this world. Now,

Christianity, I know it's a big claim, but I think it's fair to say that Christianity taught the world forgiveness. And Friedrich Nietzsche said exactly that. So, Nietzsche was an atheist philosopher in the 19th century, very famous guy. And Nietzsche, I'll just summarize it because he's not always fun or easy to read, but he said it like this. He said, once we realize there is no such thing as a moral order, once we realize that Christianity is wrong and there's no such thing as a moral order, we can get beyond the idea that there is such a thing as guilt and shame.

And he said, and if that would happen, if society could get beyond Christianity and beyond the idea that there is even such a thing as guilt and shame, he says, there would be no need for something

called forgiveness. And he says, there's no such thing as the debt of guilt, and therefore there's no such thing as forgiveness. It's something Christianity taught the world, he suggests. Now, he thought, like many 19th century thinkers, that 20th century society would get to a place where we got so past Christianity that the idea of guilt and shame would go away and there would be no forgiveness needed.

The idea that there is such a thing as the objective moral order, we could get rid of that, and we could realize we don't need things like guilt, shame, and forgiveness in our vocabulary at all. And of course, as you know, we're here tonight, that never happened. That never happened. Instead, what has happened is that we've taken God out of the equation in large measure in the secular West, but what's been left behind? Something very awkward. And what's very awkward is that secular people, maybe you're here tonight, you've experienced this, secular people still struggle with guilt and shame.

That you take away the idea of the objective moral order, you take away the idea of God, but you still have that experience of guilt and shame and the desire that you want to be forgiven, and you know you need forgiveness, right? And Christianity taught the world that that's real, that that's a reality, that every breath we take is in some sense God's mercy, right? So we have this lesson, I think, in the parable of the unforgiving servant that we read. So this parable begins, I think that in Matthew 18, this is just basically an exposition, this parable of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, forgive us as we forgive. And this is basically Jesus expositing that petition for us, explaining it to us. And so Peter comes to Jesus and he says, Jesus, how many times do I have to forgive my brother?

[6 : 35] Is it seven? Which Peter felt like was a lot. And he says, it's 70 times seven. Now, people have sometimes come to that and said, it's 490, you know? But if you get to 491, that guy is not getting forgiven again, you know? And no, 70 times seven, it's that number, that very important number in the Bible, seven, right? It just means complete, whole, big. In other words, he's saying there is never a moment when the Christian stops forgiving their brother and sister, right? That's Jesus' point here. And so he tells a parable to illustrate that. And in this parable, there's a king, and the king wants to settle his debts in the kingdom. And there is one servant who owes 10,000 talents to the kingdom.

Boy, I had to go do some research on this. 10,000 talents. One talent is about what a middle income worker in the first century would make in a year, all right? So this is saying Jesus is giving you 10,000 years of work of normal middle-class income. So according to our current middle-class income, what Google tells me at least, you know, that's about 40,000 pounds a year in the UK, right?

So on the low side. And so that, he's saying that this man owes 400 million pounds to the king, to the kingdom, right? Now, why this number? What's the point? The point of the parable, the point of this number is Jesus is trying to say, you've got to realize that before God, your need for forgiveness is absolutely beyond your ability to ever pay that debt.

You know, none of us could pay 400 million. There's very few in the world. But the point, it doesn't matter about the number. The point is that the debt is essentially infinite. So when you've accrued, that's why it's called debt here in this petition, you've accrued guilt, sin against other people, but also every time, Psalm 51, against you, God, you only have us sinned.

Every sin, everything we do, everything we fail to do in this life against other people and also God, sin against God. And David even says in Psalm 51, I've been sinful from my mother's womb.

[8 : 50] Imagine the debt. Imagine the accrual. It's an infinite debt before the infinite God. And he's saying here, you can't pay it. There's no possible way you could pay it. And so what does the man do? The man gets on his knees and he says, please, my king, let me work it off. That's what he says.

And the king says, no chance. That's the point. 10,000 talents, no way. And so he says, you're forgiven. The debt is covered. So it's not that the debt goes away. Where does the debt go?

The debt, the king has to take the debt on himself. The king has to, he has to swallow the debt. He has to take it into himself and lose what he's owed, right? So there's justice in the king's pain.

And the king says, you're free. And then the man goes out and he, a guy owes him money. In verse 28, the man that owes this man money, according to the text, if you translate it to today's money, he owes him about five to 10,000 pounds. So this dude has been forgiven 400 million and he goes out to the guy that owes him 5,000 pounds. And notice, it's not just that he doesn't, he doesn't forgive

the debt. It says that he grabbed him and he choked him, right? So it's quite extreme. And he's saying, you know, this, this guy is so greedy. This is mafia behavior, right? You go out and you're choking the guy that owes you money. And that's what he does to the man. And the king hears about it. And the king says, how could you? I forgave you 400 million pounds and you couldn't forgive your neighbor 5,000? He said, you have no place in the kingdom. And he puts him in the jail.

[10:29] So in the first century, if you owed a big debt, you would often go to prison for it. So there was debt slavery or debt imprisonment. And so that's what ends up happening. Now, there's a very hard question to answer. A lot of people have struggled with this question because when you read the Lord's prayer and then you go read Matthew 18, something comes up, maybe it's already come up for you.

I'll point you to verses 14 and 15 when Jesus picks up the Lord's prayer and he starts explaining it. And back in Matthew 6, he says, if you forgive others their trespasses, your father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive, your heavenly father will, neither will your father forgive your trespasses. And then you go to the parable and it says, boy, if you're not willing to forgive this man 5,000 pounds of debt, when you've been forgiven 400 million, then go to the jail.

I don't forgive you any longer, right? Is this coming and saying that the possibility of you being forgiven by God is conditioned on your ability to forgive other people?

Is that what it's asking? Is that what Jesus is teaching here? Is it saying that the condition, the weight, the power upon which you exercise forgiveness to the people in your life that you need to forgive, that is the condition upon which God will measure whether or not you can be forgiven? Is that the teaching? And when you read the rest of the Bible and the rest of the New Testament, you have to come and you have to say that the Bible teaches that there is no amount of work, no condition, no condition for the satisfaction of God's forgiveness unto us that could ever be met by our behavior, right? So, when you read the rest of the New Testament, you realize that the gospel is not something I achieve, that God's forgiveness of me could never be conditioned upon my ability, my power, my exercise, my strength to forgive other people. No, it couldn't be based upon that because then I've taken the gospel and I've turned it into works righteousness, right? And we all know that we could say even if this man does go and forgive his neighbor 5,000 pounds, is there truly not a place deep down in the bottom of his soul where he has failed to truly offer forgiveness to this man, right? That he's holding a grudge, that he hates the man for it, that of course, right? And so, it couldn't possibly be teaching that our forgiveness before the Lord is conditioned by and based upon our ability to forgive other people. That can't be because that would disrupt the gospel, that would take away the good news. The good news then wouldn't be about what Jesus has done for you, but about what you do for other people, right? And instead, what is he saying here? I think it's this.

He is saying to be continually unforgiving to other people is to show that maybe you have failed to understand and accept God's unmerited grace to you. That maybe it's because you have yet to see how big your need is. And maybe it is that when you came to the king and you bowed the knee before the king, what happened there was not real repentance, was not real confession, and therefore not real forgiveness, right? So, this is a parable. It's about an earthly king, but before God. You see, what could the earthly king here not see? The earthly king here could not see that the man did not really repent. The man didn't really confess. He didn't really plead for mercy. Instead, it was just a masquerade, right? It was fake. But before God, God knows. God knows the heart of our confession.

[14:09] And so, I think what this prayer is saying and what Jesus is saying and what the parable is saying is that we've got to be aware of the reality of false repentance, of false confession, of masquerading.

Now, Paul picks up on this exactly in 2 Corinthians 7.10, where he calls false confession a masquerade. He says that beware of false confession. Beware of merely regretting your sins and not confessing them to God. And he calls it, he says, well, he says, that will bring death. So, merely regretting the consequences of sin in your life and not actually confessing brings death into our lives.

What does that look like for us? All right, let me give you four. Number one, what does false repentance look like? Number one, it looks like excusing. So, it looks like coming and saying, well, it may have been wrong, but I think it's probably what anybody would have done in my situation. So,

it's coming up with anything you can to basically pull the rug out from under the reality, the gravity of the wrongdoing, the sin against God and others. Excusing. Number two, blame shifting. These are all really types of each other. Blame shifting. What's blame shifting? Remember Adam and Eve. I did it, yeah, but it wasn't really my fault. You know, the reasons that I do the things I do is because of what you did.

Blame shifting. Number three, justification by personal suffering. So, this is a subcategory of blame shifting where we may say, I did do it, but the only reason I've done bad things in my life is because I've suffered a lot and a lot has been done bad to me. Number four, self-justification.

Self-justification says, I'm not greedy. You know, I'm thrifty. It says, you know, I'm a value shopper. I'm not a hoarder. I'm smart with money. It says, I'm not mean. I just tell the truth. That's self-justification. It says, I don't drink too much. I'm just a fun person.

Right? And repentance, God's forgiveness comes into your life with repentance. And real repentance begins when all excusing ends. And so, the Christian message of forgiveness is world-changing. It's life-changing. And it is the message that God really, really does forgive sins in a world, in cultures, in societies, in communities where people don't actually forgive very often.

[16:39] It's enormous. It's amazing. And so, how does it work? Let me give you a few ways that forgiveness actually works, and we'll move to the final point. If you go to Psalm 51, you can see how it works.

We're going to sing it in just a minute. But in verse four of Psalm 51, David says to God, Lord, against you and you only have I sinned. Step one, in real repentance, you take your guilt to God and you don't hide at all. You say, Lord, in all the ways I've failed to love you and other people, the acts that I've committed, commission, the acts that I've failed to do, omission against you and you only have I sinned. And I'm not hiding. I don't want to excuse. I don't want to blame somebody else. I don't want to self-justify. That's the first thing. David says in verse one of that Psalm, have mercy on me. So, really the first step is to say, I have such a big need for mercy because my debt is infinite before God. That's the step. That's the first step. Second step, to confess your specific sins before the Lord as far as you know them because you realize how big the debt is.

David says here, you are blameless, God, in your judgment against me. I am sinful from my womb. And so, the second step is to realize, man, my need is so big, I could never cover the debt myself. The forgiveness I need could never be achieved by my good works. I could never accomplish this. I could never pay the debt. Let me give you an illustration of this. Imagine that you borrow somebody's car and you wreck it. And you, you know, you take their car and it's a nice car and you go and you smash a Tesla or something really expensive. And justice has to be served, right? Justice has to be served in that moment. And in that moment, the act that you've committed accrues debt. But how far do the debts go? So, first off, you've got the debt of the person's car that you wrecked. How much is that thing worth? Secondly, you've got the debt of the Tesla that you hit. How much is that thing worth to repair? Then you've got the debt of maybe the injury you might have caused to somebody else. But then you've got the debt maybe that they can't work any longer.

[18:53] Maybe you've got the debt beyond that there's something even worse happened, right? And so, you see how quickly the debts start to accrue. But when you're talking about sin from your mother's womb till now against the infinite God, boy, it's an infinite debt. And you got to come and you got to say, have mercy on me, oh God. I've got no excuses. My debt is so big, I could never pay it. Number three, then what happens? We saw this in the parable. We see this in Psalm 51. God turns to you and he looks with compassion. That's what the parable says, that the king took pity and compassion. So, when you plead for mercy to God, it's that God looks at you with compassion and he longs to forgive. He loves you so much he wants and he yearns to lavish forgiveness upon you. And then finally, fourth, the question is there. How can he do it? Does God forgive willy-nilly? No, not at all, right? And so, what does David say?

In Psalm 51, do you remember that the occasion for this psalm of confession and repentance and seeking God's mercy, this prayer for God's mercy, is that David had had an affair with Bathsheba and then he had gone and he had killed her husband, murdered her husband. So, it's a big debt. It's a big deal, a really big deal, right? And he says this. He says, God, do not cast me from thy presence.

And he appeals to God's steadfast love. He says, don't cast me away because of your steadfast love. Now, that idea of steadfast love is covenant love in the Old Testament. And covenant love is the love that God has placed on you from the very moment that you were ever a twinkle in your

parent's eye.

And it's suggesting that even before Jesus Christ ever came into the world, God wanted to forgive. He wanted to meet mercy with justice. He wanted to be able to lavish justice on Jesus so that he could lavish you with forgiveness. And so, when David prays, do not cast yourself, do not cast me away from your presence, Lord, because of your covenant love. What is he saying? He's saying he doesn't know all that's going to happen, but what he's talking about here is the fact that one day, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will be cast away from the presence of God the Father. He says, do not cast me from thy presence, but give me your covenant love. And that's pointing to the fact that one day, the Son of God will be cast away in utter justice on our behalf from the presence of God, entering into hell itself, what we deserve for our infinite debt, so that we could be in thy presence, God's presence, right? So that we could have this lavish forgiveness of our sins. Now, you can respond to that.

Let me finish this point with this. You can come to that, and you can have done that, you can have received that, and you can still struggle in a way with a lack of receiving God's forgiveness. What does this look like for some of us? This looks like the inappropriate reaction to God's lavish forgiveness through self-flagellation. And what is self-flagellation? Self-flagellation is when we are unwilling to accept the mercy of God in our lives. And unwilling to really believe that God has taken our repentance and cast our sins as far as the east is from the west. And what does that look like? That looks like you constantly struggling with the sins of your past, and feeling the guilt of the sins of your past over and over and over and over again, and never being able to forgive yourself.

[22 : 38] And so you're self-flagellating. And what you're doing, you're trying to turn the gospel back into works. And saying, I don't want to receive a gift, I want to be able to pay the debt. And you can't pay it. And instead, you've got to receive God's mercy. That's the only way you can respond, is just in receipt. And you've got to ask the question, if the cross of Jesus Christ was big enough, the justice was real enough for God the Father to forgive. If God the Father looks at the cross and says, the debt is paid, the victory is won, all sufficient merit, then are you not willing to let the cross be enough in your life to forgive yourself? Are you not willing to let the cross do its work on you and let the debt go? And say, I really am ready to receive God's mercy. Now, we can say, we can say, if you've experienced this, the words of Charles Wesley, long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night, God's eye diffused a quickening ray, and I awoke the dungeon. Filled with light, blazed with light, my chains fell off, my heart set free.

Isn't that what he said? Behold, I rose and I followed the amazing love, how can it be? Amazing love, how can it be that every single debt I've ever accrued against God and other people in my life could be wiped away? As far as the east is from the west, God really does forget in a culture where people don't forget.

So secondly, very briefly, if you've had that experience in your life, you now have the power to forgive other people as well. And that's what this prayer is saying. Lord, teach me to forgive others as you have forgiven me. And so let me just say a word about that.

If we fail to be gracious to other people after we've been forgiven for so much, there's an incongruity, right? And this petition is pointed straight at our hearts to ask, is there an incongruity in our lives where we have received such a big forgiveness, but we're not willing to give it away?

So that's really what the parable is asking us to look at. You may know the story of Amber Geiger. Amber Geiger was a Dallas police officer in the United States and Texas. And in 2017, she walked into her apartment, her flat, and she saw a man there in the flat. And she pulled out her gun.

[25 : 11] She was a police officer. She was coming off duty. She pulled out her gun and she shot the man and killed him. And the man was named Botham Jean, and he was not in her flat. He was in his flat.

She had not gone through the right story. She was one level down. And she shot a man in his flat while he was watching TV and eating ice cream. And at her sentencing, at the verdict, there was people all outside the courtroom and they were protesting. And this was a white woman that had killed a black man in Texas. And so there was a lot of vitriol, especially about the racial issues involved in that. And many of you will know of all the issues in the U.S. around those things. And people were protesting and wanting the harshest punishment for her, you know, the biggest punishment that she could get for murder. And what happened, this became very famous in 2019, because what happened inside the courtroom while people were raging on the outside, the victim's brother named Brant Jean, he got into the witness's dock and he said, Amber, I forgive you. I do not

wish any ill will upon you. I want what is truly good for you. And he asked the judge, can I come down and give her a hug to tell her I've forgiven her. And that's what he did. He came down. It's a beautiful moment. You can watch it on YouTube.

Go watch it tonight. And he said to her, I choose not revenge or retaliation. I choose forgiveness. But the response, the biggest vitriol that came after that was not against Amber any longer. All the hatred went to him, Brant. People were so angry. And they said that he was a black man, but he was perpetuating a cycle of white privilege, they said. And he was turning the victim into the perpetrator. And he was placing hurt upon hurt by offering forgiveness to somebody who had done something so wrong. And you see, retaliation and revenge is the default of the human heart. In every society of world history, cancel culture demands atonement, but will never offer forgiveness. It will never offer mercy. And thanks be to God that the real God is far, far more forgiving than human beings are, right? And there is such a thing then, you see, as Christian forgiveness.

[27 : 43] And it's when you've so experienced the forgiveness of God vertically that you can extend it horizontally, and you won't be surprised to find out that Brant, Jean, and his brother that was murdered were deeply devout Protestant Christians that were members of a church in Texas.

How do you forgive people? Number one, you've got to identify with them as sinners. When you've been sinned against, you've got to be able to say, but boy, I know who I am as well.

That's the first step. That's the ability to show compassion like God shows compassion. Number two, you've got to internally pay the debt. So where does the justice go? Is it just that justice goes out the window?

No. When you forgive somebody, where does it go? You swallow it. The justice actually goes down in you, and you have to eat that. Like the cross, you have to take that pain.

There's a cruciformity to forgiving somebody, because you're paying the debt. You're taking it into yourself, right? Number three, you have to then say, I do indeed will your ultimate good, whatever that may be.

[28 : 46] Sometimes that ultimate good includes horizontal justice. Amber Geiger was sentenced to 10 years in prison. She deserved that, the court decided, right? Sometimes it does include a horizontal justice.

Sometimes it includes that justice completely dying within you. There's a beautiful story of this in the famous book that we've mentioned from the pulpit too many times, *Les Miserables*, where the prisoner, Jean Valjean, he's on parole, and he's living in the bishop's house, remember?

And he, in the middle of the night, after being given room and board and hospitality, he steals all the silver, and he runs off, and the police catch him, and they bring him back. And what does the bishop do? This man's facing life in prison for this in 18th century France.

And what does the bishop do? The bishop says, he didn't steal it. I gave it to him as a gift. And he says, now, he turns to Jean Valjean and says, With this silver, I redeem thee.

What is he saying? He's saying, because I was willing, the bishop's saying, because I'm willing to take the debt into myself and forgive you, know that I want you to walk. I will your good.

[29 : 55] I want you to know that in this moment, you've got to go live as a changed person. You've got to go live the redeemed life, because I have just taken the debt. Where does the debt go? What happens to the silver? The bishop loses it.

He takes the pain. There's a little cross-bearing moment in that, right? And in forgiveness, you've got to take the debt like Jesus took the debt. And you've got to swallow it. And you've got to will the other person's good, and whatever that might look like.

And you've got to number four, seek reconciliation if wise and if possible. Not always wise, but if wise and if possible. We'll wrap up.

Brant, this is what he said. Let me just quote you the full quote from the courtroom. He said, Amber, if you are truly sorry, I can speak for myself. I forgive. And I know today that if you go to God and you ask him, he will forgive you.

And I don't think anyone can say it. Again, I'm just speaking for myself. But I love you just like I love anybody else. And I'm not going to say I hope you rot and I hope you die just like my brother has died.

[31 : 00] But I presently want the best for you. I want the best for you because I know that's exactly what Botham, my brother, would want you to do and know. The best thing today would be to give your life to Christ and to ask God for forgiveness, he said.

I'm not going to say anything else. I think giving your life to Christ would be the best thing. And I know Botham would want you to ask God for forgiveness today and receive it. That's what he said. In 1907, final word here. In 1907, in Korea, South Korea was not a very Christianized place. Today in South Korea, it's really, in some sense, the epicenter of Presbyterianism today.

The biggest Presbyterian churches in the world are in South Korea today. But in the 19th century, that was not the case. So more Christians than not lived in North Korea in the 19th century. And there was a missionary from Canada and a missionary movement from Canada to South Korea in the late 19th century.

And this one kind of central missionary in that time, he writes about all that took place in South Korea in the early 20th century. And there's a very famous revival that occurred in 1907.

[32 : 08] And how did it start? The missionary, the famous missionary, he writes about it. He says, there was not much happening there for years. He said it was very slow. Nobody was coming to faith in Christ.

And then he came to a gathering of Christian leaders and the few Christians that were in South Korea. And he said this from the teaching pulpit. He said, I realize that my ministry has failed because I relied too much on me and not enough on the Holy Spirit.

So he came and he confessed that. And he said, I've been trying to get this done by strategy and technique. And I've not relied on the Holy Spirit. And he confessed that. But there are many of us in this room today who have relationships that you feel like can never be healed.

Right? You feel like, I know some of them. I know some of you. I know my family, your family maybe. There are relationships you think. I don't think there could be forgiveness. And this guy got up in 1907 and he said, I confess that there's been no fruit because I've just completely tried to do it myself.

I've not simply asked the Holy Spirit. Have you asked the Holy Spirit to come in and teach you in some broken relationship what it might mean to seek forgiveness and reconciliation?

[33 : 24] When he confessed that in this meeting, a man stood up, a man that he had been working with, and he confessed in the congregation to the pastor, I have hated you ever since you arrived here.

And in that moment, in that room, they had been working closely together. They reconciled and they hugged one another. And after that, really, a revival broke out in 1907.

And this is what he writes about it. He said, I couldn't believe it. This man I had worked with so close hated me. And then he asked, the man asked, will you pray for me? So I prayed, Father, Father, I could say no more.

And then it was as if the roof lifted up off the building and the Holy Spirit came in and a mighty avalanche of power as we had never experienced before. And Gavin Ortlin comments on this. He says, reconciliation can be forced or fake. But when it's real, there is nothing like it. There's nothing like it. When it's real, evil strongholds are broken.

[34 : 24] Enemies, the enemy loses his grip. The spirit is unleashed. What can you do with this? You've got to come and realize in the Lord's Prayer, forgive me, O God, as I forgive other people, is a daily prayer.

How do you become a person who can forgive every day and see a movement of the gospel, a movement of the spirit? You've got to make sure that God's mercy to you is new and fresh every day.

So you come every day and say, Lord, forgive me. Prayers of confession should be every day. And only on that basis will you have the power to forgive other people. And we've learned over and over again in the cycle of world history that prayers of confession and repentance and the seeking of reconciliation has quite often been the beginning of a movement of the gospel, of revival itself.

Let us pray. Father, we ask that you would give us hearts of confession, hearts of repentance, Lord. And so give us that now as we come to sing exactly one of those Psalm 51.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.