

Name: _____



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course
Lesson 51: The Lord's Prayer

LORD'S DAY 51

Q. 126. WHICH IS THE FIFTH PETITION?

ANSWER: "AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS"; THAT IS, BE PLEASED FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST'S BLOOD, NOT TO IMPUTE TO US POOR SINNERS, OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, NOR THAT DEPRAVITY WHICH ALWAYS CLEAVES TO US (A); EVEN AS WE FEEL THIS EVIDENCE OF THY GRACE IN US, THAT IT IS OUR FIRM RESOLUTION FROM THE HEART TO FORGIVE OUR NEIGHBOUR (B).

(A) PSALM 51:1, 143:2, I JOHN 2:1, ROMANS 8:1; (B) MATTHEW 6:14

Sinners

What is the definition of a poor sinner? A sinner is one who misses his mark. He does not serve the purpose for which God created him, which is to live to the honour of God. He also lacks the means to correct this deficiency with the Lord. All he has is guilt which becomes greater by the day. That is why he is called a poor sinner. He lacks everything needed to pay the debt. In daily life such a one is declared bankrupt. The poor sinner experiences the bankruptcy of his life. All that then is left over is begging for grace and begging for forgiveness.

Does he seek for alleviating circumstances? There are none. David prayed in Psalm 25:11: "*For Thy Name's sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity; for it is great.*" In our answer, sins are called "transgressions," not just pardonable lapses or errors. The word "transgression" does not only apply to the wicked deed of the murderer, who therefore deserves death, but applies to every sin, no matter how small they may be. It applies to the wrong things we think, speak, and do, but also to the sins of omission. We also sin when we fail to do the good that we ought to do.

The old man

Yes, there is still more: the depravity which always cleaves to us. That is that old man of Lord's Day 33. As long as a child of God lives, sin is present in his heart. He is polluted with it. By itself, this already makes him guilty before God. Also for this, forgiveness is needed. Therefore the request is made that God also would not impute this debt to our account. That is possible because Christ took upon Himself the debts of all His children and paid for them on the cross. That cost Him His blood. The expression "with His blood" here means His merits, acquired by shedding His blood. He who uprightly confesses his guilt and pleads on those merits may be assured of the hearing of his prayer.

If we, by the grace of God, are willing to forgive our neighbour, how great God's willingness must then be!

This gave David the freedom to ask: *"For Thy Name's sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity; for it is great" (Psalm 25:11).*

Questions:

1. *What does the word "sinner" mean?*

2. *What is meant here by the blood of Christ?*

Evaluator: _____

Meditation: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I John 2:1

In the glass of God's righteous law we see what an unholy and unrighteous sin is; it is hateful in the eyes of a pure God; has separated between God and the sinner, and tends to his eternal destruction. The Gospel in no wise renders sin less odious to God, less heinous in His sight; far from it. Yea, rather, it paints sin in the blackest colours, and shows its deepest malignity by the gracious method of its atonement. View the holy Lamb suffering for sin on the cross; see the streaming blood, and hear His bitter groans on account of sin; and say, O believer, is sin a little matter, a trifling thing?

Learn daily sin's evil, by its remedy; sin's poison, by its antidote; the hell it deserved, by the Person Who redeemed. And ever, O my soul, ever hold fast this as a sacred truth, though God loves thy person in Christ, yet He hates thy sins; though reconciled to thy soul through Him, yet He never can be reconciled to sin; though at peace with thee, through the blood of the cross, yet ever at enmity against thy sins. Hence the beloved disciple declares, "These things write I unto you, little children, that ye sin not." Beware of sin as the worst evil, your most deadly foe; strive against, oppose, resist it, in the power of the Spirit, as your greatest enemy, and most hateful to your best Friend.

But if any man sin, (for none are perfectly free from sin in their nature, nor exempt from it in their practice,) what then? Must he lie down and despair? No: "we have an Advocate with the Father:" Jesus Christ pleads the cause of sinners, though He is not an advocate for sin; for He is "the righteous". Therefore, He doth not deny the charge that we are sinners, He extenuates none of our sins, but owns every accusation brought against us by a perfect law and strict justice, with every aggravating circumstance which can be urged. But against all charged upon us, He pleads His own righteous work. Have His people sinned? His blood has atoned. Have they deserved the curse of the law? He has borne it for them. Have they deserved hell? He has opened the kingdom of heaven. Are they unrighteous? He has fulfilled the law for them, and clothes them with His perfect righteousness. Therefore He pleads, that sin may not be imputed to them; but that pardon of sin and peace of conscience may be bestowed on them by the Word and Spirit; and that they may be sanctified in Him, and glorified with Him. Thus saith our dear Lord, "I will not leave you comfortless." John 14:18

Taken from: "A Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God" by William Mason