

Day Ten

"Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.' -Matthew 6:9-13

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

This verse gives two sides for us to view. Each is seen from the vantage point of debt and indebtedness. Each is linked inseparable with view to God. We seek forgiveness from Him and we extend that same forgiveness to others. It is interesting to note that this verse is expanded upon after the completion of this prayer. We are told: *"For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. -Matthew 6:14-15* Ouch! That's a stinging rebuke of those who would hold a grudge! The consequences of which are severe and irreversible.

Some have wisely stated that the best revenge a person can have is to live a good life. You may have heard a remark that states, *"revenge is a dish best served cold"*. Our upbringing may have a great deal of influence upon us. Notwithstanding, we ought to remember the Word of God that states: *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. -Romans 12:19.*

In revenge we find a lack of forgiveness. When we say, *"I can forgive, but I can never forget"*, what we may in fact be saying is, *"I'll never forgive."* Forgiveness is much more than the mere mouthing of the words, it is the condition of the heart.

Jesus gives a rather revealing insight into the magnitude of the unforgiving heart in his parable of the unforgiving servant. When the servant who was forgiven the hugely vast sum of

debt was unwilling to forgive an insignificant amount the result was catastrophic for him. *"Then summoning him, his lord *said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart." -Matthew 18:32-35*

There's no wiggle room in the interpretation of this passage nor the verses that follow our model prayer in Matthew six. "If we will not forgive others, God will not forgive us!" period. The word that is inseparable from the character of God in our salvation is *"mercy"*. It is the Greek word, *eleeo*. It is sometimes substituted with compassion or pity. The same mercy shown us is to be extended to others.

Paul speaks of this same sentiment in his letter to the Colossians. *And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. -Colossians 3:12-14.*

In the Gospel of Mark we find Jesus speaking again on the subject of prayer and how we may receive anything we want in faith. The point of emphasis is also here stated concerning forgiveness: *"Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you. "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions." -Mark 11:24-26*

Prayer Thoughts: Father, even as You have forgiven us, let us forgive others from our hearts.