

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS

Jesus is our example to follow as a believer. Therefore, as His believers, we must learn to be merciful, to forgive, to not be vengeful or try to get even or become bitter and harbor anger in our hearts. God will touch our hearts and enable us to be capable of forgiving; yet, it still comes down to *our choice to forgive*.

Not only does our Saviour provide for all our needs, which most of us seek first to take care of our material needs, but Jesus provides beyond our material needs to what we can't buy—peace, love, forgiveness, contentment and eternal life. We can be assured that each day God will take care of us for God will never break His promises to His children. He knows each need that His children have and hears as they cry out to Him for help!

Forgiveness is a wonderful thing and is a very important part of our daily prayer. I know I fail so easily and therefore, so often need to be forgiven. It is assuring that everything that God does for us is based upon forgiveness through the mercy that is in Christ Jesus. I love the Lord the most when I reflect upon the forgiveness I receive when I am the least loveable. When I fail again and again, yet, Jesus loves me and seeks me out. This love allows me to come to Jesus, turn from my sins and turn to Him. We need to understand that it wasn't just a *onetime event*, our salvation experience, but forgiveness is ongoing as we learn to live a life of repentance; learn to turn daily from our sins and to Him. Jesus provided the way.

I have memorized, trusted and walked in 1 John 1:7-9 throughout my Christian life and will continue to do so until the Lord takes me home. *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

As our prayer group has been studying The Beatitudes—Matthew 5:3-12 and The Lord's Prayer—Matthew 6:9-13, I came face to face with unforgiveness in my own life that I thought had been taken care of years ago. After all, I had prayed through the pain and trauma, or so I thought, until through our sharing in group, unforgiveness flared up within my heart. It was unsettling to say the least; I thought it was in my past. But I have learned down through the years of serving the Lord that He wants His children totally free; healed completely from the damaging results of mistreatment at the hands of others.

Somehow a remnant (A small part or portion that remains after the main part no longer exists) had escaped detection, which didn't surprised me, for I hid those pains in the deepest confines of my heart where no one would be able to touch them. I hid them in the *forbidden area*, covered them over with camouflage, surrounded them with wire fences and tried to forget them. But the Holy Spirit knew this remnant remained and needed to be addressed that I might be totally free in heart, mind and spirit.

Matthew 6:12 kept flashing across my mind like a ticker tape playing over and over; I had to address it. I knew it wouldn't go away until I did. The Holy Spirit was trying to alert me to a sin (small as it may appear to be) still hidden away and I had better pay attention. Not only did these words keep flashing across my mind, they were play havoc with my heart as well. *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* God and I had more healing work to do.

Now I know that prayer for forgiveness can only happen if you are willing and chose to forgive personal injury. Therefore, I had to seek the Lord as to what He wanted me to see. I remember reading some time ago this statement; it resonated deep within my heart and remained there for future reference. *There is only one thing that will keep you from following God and that is your sins; and there is one thing that will allow you to keep following God, and that is the daily confession of your sins. And so Jesus told us to pray, Father, forgive us.*

A believer may walk many paths before the final journey is ended and the Lord takes us home, so we must make sure that the paths we walk are ordained of God and not from our human weaknesses and lusts of the flesh. We should remember how weak we are without God's help and never forget the power that is available to the believer to overcome temptation, if we but yield and obey the Lord's commandments. If you are not walking with God you are headed for trouble. No one stands still! You are headed somewhere, so lets make sure that we are headed in the right direction and upon the path that God laid out for us.

So Lord, I cried out in my quiet time with God as I sought Him as to what remnant still remained that the Holy Spirit saw hid away, and knew I needed to release. I was directed to Matthew 5:7-8, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* As I sat reading these scriptures over and over, then sitting quietly before the Lord; I waited.

At first seeking, nothing came, and then I saw the face of one who had betrayed and deeply hurt me. The Lord told me to not be afraid, to trust in Him to open the hidden recesses to my heart and together we would pull out the pain I had hid and didn't want to face. It had been so many years ago, I had forgotten the situation has even happened, but the Lord knew what I had done with it and as I look back, I could see the adverse effects it had and was still causing in my life. God wanted me totally free; no sin to remain hidden; forgiveness needed to be given.

I prayed, forgave the person and released the painful situation to the Lord. Instant peace filled my heart and soul. It was done; the area was cleansed. I could now move on. As I again read The Lord's Prayer out loud and came to verse 13, my heart leaped for joy for truly God had deliver me from the evil one and *Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Matthew 6:-15, *But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray:*

Our Father 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 forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Verses 14-15, *For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*