



Links Players

Teach Us To Pray - Lesson 5: Forgiveness

...forgive us our debts.... (Luke 11:4)

Golf clubs across the world are known for sharing certain standards. Upholding century-old customs of dress, for example, remains obligatory for most clubs. The “collar required” rule remains intact. Taking off one’s hat inside the clubhouse is the gentleman’s code. The “no denim” rule remains the standard.

One such standard I suspect finds universal support from golfers regards the issue of paying one’s debt. I’m not talking about paying our club bill. That’s a given. Rather, I mean paying those debts we incur when we lose a friendly wager on the course.

So, you can imagine the horror I experienced as a teenager one Saturday afternoon when I lost a sizable bet—one for which I did not have the means to pay. What was I to do? I couldn’t imagine being an outcast. The shame was more than I could bear.

After mentally rehearsing all my options, I pulled our golf pro to the side and privately explained my predicament. He grimaced, rolled his eyes, and loaned me the money. I spent the better part of the summer working to pay him back. It was a tough lesson to learn!

Not only do each one of us owe God an enormous sum, but we also owe him an infinite sum. It should go without saying that we are not talking about money. We are in debt to God without the means to “make it right.”

We owe him perfect love. We owe him perfect obedience. We owe him perfect worship. We owe him perfect gratitude. We owe him perfect honor (Romans 1:18-23).

This part of the story rightfully makes us squirm. We are sinners! We are debtors to a broken law. We are debtors to his perfect justice. Along with Adam and Eve, we are excommunicated east of Eden— driven from the presence and favor of God (Genesis 3). We are forbidden re-entry into his temple-palace. We are outcast.

We need someone to pay our debt. A debt we owe. A debt we cannot pay! This is the story of the gospel. The amount required to regain access into the place from which were banished is perfection—a perfect obedience. The penalty for failure to pay is death.

Jesus Christ is our representative. That is, he lived the perfect life, and his perfect righteousness is credited to those who place their trust in him. Jesus is also our substitute. That is, he also died an atoning death. For those who yield their lives to him in trust, his death paid your debt in full.

Prayer – Jesus! Thank you for paying my debt! I ask that you would forgive me for_____.

READING - Colossians 2:13-15; Luke 7:41-50; Luke 11: 4.

OPENING QUESTIONS: Have you ever wagered more than you could afford? Have you lost a bet for which you didn’t have the means to pay?

1. After reading **Colossians 2: 13-15**, what do we learn about: a) our condition before Christ saves us? b) the price paid so that we could be forgiven? c) by nailing our debt to the tree, who was disarmed? Discuss the significance.

2. After reflecting on **Luke 7:41-50**, what lesson(s) does Jesus teach Peter, and by extension, us? Ask yourself this question-are any of us forgiven little? Answer the question asked in the story-Who is this, who forgives sins?

3. After observing **Luke 11:4**, what does the “b part” of the verse imply? It reads, “for we forgive everyone who is indebted to us.” Does this teach that God’s forgiveness of us is based on the condition of our forgiving others? If not, then why not?
