

"Forgive Us"

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[0 : 0 0] It's good to see you all here. I'm glad you have joined us this morning. This morning as we turn to God's Word, we're going to continue our series in the Lord's Prayer.

And if you want to turn with me there, it's in the Pew Bibles in page 761. We've been looking at this prayer in detail, and we're going to continue to do that. If you remember the first part of the Lord's Prayer, our three requests regarding God, that His name would be holy, that His kingdom would come, and that His will would be done. And then in the second half of the prayer, Pastor Nick preached about last week, praying for daily provision, for daily bread, for daily help, daily grace from our Heavenly Father in our various circumstances. And today we come to the second part of the prayer that is more us-centered, centered on our needs. And the prayer is, forgive us our debts. And so that's what we're going to be looking at this morning. So let me go ahead and read. I'm going to read the whole prayer and the two verses after because they're very relevant for this morning's text. So I'll start in verse 9 of chapter 6. We'll read it. I'll pray for God's help, and then we'll look at it together. Matthew 6, verse 9. Pray then like this, 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 also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Please pray with me.

Oh, Lord, we come to your Word this morning, and this is both a glorious and an incredibly terrifying text.

Lord, to look at forgiveness, Lord, is not easy. And so, Lord, I ask for your help this morning.

[2 : 4 1] Lord, I pray that you would be with me as I speak, that I would speak as I ought to. And Lord, that you would be with each heart, each soul in this room, that we would be ready to receive the truth of your Word. Lord, that our hearts would be willing to submit and recognize, Lord, the power of your Word.

Lord, that our minds would be able to understand your Word, that our wills would be moved to do as you have asked us to. Lord, we thank you that as we ask for these things, we know that your Holy Spirit is at work among us, and I pray that you would continue that work.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Jesus tells us in this request to pray, Father, forgive our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And so, we're going to explore this prayer by asking three questions of it. The first one is, what is forgiveness that we're asking for? What is it that we're actually asking for when we ask this question, or when we pray this prayer?

The second question is, why? Why do we need this forgiveness? And thirdly, it is, how do we understand our need to forgive others as well as to be forgiven?

- [4 : 11] What's the relationship between those ideas? So, that's what we're going to look at this morning. If you're a note taker, there's your outline. And so, I always look at Amanda, because I know Amanda's a really, I don't even know if she takes notes, but she's really organized.
- So, I figured she might be. Anyway, so those are your three points if you're looking for it. So, the first question we're going to ask is, what is this forgiveness that we are asking for?
- And I just want to go back to the very basic idea of what is forgiveness? It is when something is owed to another, and that thing that is owed is canceled.
- That's a very simple definition of forgiveness. So, for example, one of the easy ways to picture this is in a financial situation. A bank loans me \$10,000, right?
- I owe them \$10,000, right? I incur a debt when I borrow that money, and until I pay it back, I owe them this thing, right?
- [5 : 15] But if that bank comes to me and says, we have chosen to forgive your debt, what does it mean? It means the account is closed. It means the debt is no longer needing to be repaid because they have erased it or taken away the need for repayment.
- And they will no longer pursue me for that money. So, that's what fundamentally forgiveness is in a conceptual way.
- So, what does Jesus mean here when he says, forgive us our debt? Now, we might look at that word and think, does that mean that we owe God money? No, that's not what it means.
- This word debt is used regularly in the Bible to refer not to financial things, although it does refer to that, but it also refers regularly to spiritual things.
- We know this particularly because in parallel passages, the Bible uses different words in the same thing. So, in verse 14, if you look down just two verses later, Jesus is clearly talking about the same topic, and he uses the word trespass.
- [6 : 26] Trespass is to transgress or to cross over a boundary, to break a law. And this is what, this is the picture then of this spiritual debt that is incurred.
- If I break the law, then I owe the law keepers something. I owe society something. In the parallel passage of this prayer in Luke, it says, forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
- It's fascinating to see it there where you see both the word indebted, then paralleled by the word sin, right? And sin fundamentally means missing the mark, but biblically it means not meeting God's righteous standards, not being the people that God created us to be.
- And we may think about sin as doing wrong things, right? We cross a line. We miss the mark. We get a stain on our moral life because of something we do.
- But in fact, the Bible has a much grander picture of the problem of the debt that we owe to God. Because in the storyline of the Bible, we were created to know and have a relationship with our Creator.
- [7 : 46] And in that relationship, we are meant to love Him, to obey Him as a Creator King, to cherish and adore Him, to recognize Him as a loving Heavenly Father in all of those roles that we should then respond to Him with worship, with obedience, with joy, with love, and all these things.
- So sin isn't merely slipping up, but it's a much greater relational offense because what the Bible then says is, we have rejected that relationship with God.
- We have said, no, thank you, God. We want to go our own way. This is exactly what Adam and Eve did in the garden. God, thank you for all of these things, but I'd rather do it my way. I'd rather be co-equal with you rather than being under you in relationship.

I would rather be independent rather than dependent on you. John Piper describes sin in this way. Bear with me because it's a beautiful but fairly long quote.

He says that sin is any word or deed where the glory of God is not honored, the greatness of God is not admired, the wisdom of God is not esteemed, the beauty of God is not treasured, the goodness of God is not savored, the promises of God are not believed, the commandments of God are not obeyed, the justice of God is not respected, the wrath of God is not feared, the grace of God is not cherished, the presence of God is not prized, and the person of God is not loved.

[9 : 27] Who of us have not sinned? If this is what sin is, and it is, it is what the Bible tells us.

And so the forgiveness that we are asking for is of this great debt that we owe to our Creator of what we have done in ways that are in rebellion against Him and what we have not done in ways that would be to glory and honor and love and serve Him.

And that is true for all of us. And so Jesus is assuming this as He says, forgive us our debts, forgive us our trespasses, forgive us our sins.

This is why we need to pray for God's forgiveness. But some of you might be thinking, why? Why does God need to forgive this? Can't He just be like the bank and say, nah, it's okay.

No problem. I'll just overlook it. I'll just erase it. No cost to you. Can't He just do that for us? Well, we might think so.

[10 : 43] And we might want that. And of course, humanly, this is how we always think about it. Because we think, well, God understands. He knows what I meant.

He, you know, it wasn't that bad. All of the excuses that we come up with our own mind to minimize our sin. And then we think, why can't God just overlook that?

But then we look out at the world and we look at a sex trafficker or a rapist or a serial killer or, you know, there are certain things that we all in our society know are heinous crimes.

They are terrible abuses of other people. Typically, those are the ones that capture our heart, not tax evasion. But it's all sin, right? But these are the ones where we all have this sense, that's wrong.

And it's not just that's wrong, but I want those people to be punished. I want them to have to pay for their crime. And do you know why we have that instinct?

[11 : 51] We have that instinct because God put it in us. Because the God of the universe is a God of justice and mercy. And in His goodness, He cannot let sin stand in the world and not be dealt with.

Justice demands a response and there must be some kind of response. And so, we have this problem because we want God to just erase our little foibles, but then other people sin, well, we really want justice for that.

And it can't be that. God is either the God of justice everywhere or He's not a God of justice at all. Right? Imagine a state trooper who pulls you over and he says, well, did you see the sign?

The sign says 55. And you said, yeah, but nobody's obeying it. Why'd you pull me over? And he's like, oh, you're right. I'll just pass. I'll just forget it. Right? And then he keeps doing this over and over again.

Well, you know what? That means that there's no, that sign no longer has any value and there is no more functional speed limit on that road. And when we're asking God to simply absolve sin without justice, we're asking Him to say, actually, there is no righteousness and there is no way to call good, good and evil, evil.

[13 : 20] And friends, that is a terrible world and it is not the world that the Bible shows us. Instead, we have a God who is committed, committed to justice.

justice. So much so that the rejection of God, who is the author of life, results in, according to Romans 6, 23, death.

It says, the wages of sin is death. What we earn, right? What we end up owing is our very life. God says that when we sin, we then put ourselves under a condemnation of death and we are, we are caught in that, right?

Why is it so severe? Well, because God is so great. If we sin against our local public library by not returning the latest Tom Clancy novel, right?

That's bad, right? But what will they do? They'll fine us \$15 to replace the book or \$30 because of the restocking fee. And that's what it'll be. Because the public library isn't a great thing, right?

[14 : 31] It's a small thing. I mean, it is a great thing. Public libraries are wonderful. They're important in the world. But compare that with like treason against your country, all right?

This is a great offense against a much greater entity and that offense is greater. So imagine then what the weight of an offense is against the creator and sustainer of the world itself.

This is why death is the wages of our sin because it is an infinite offense against an infinite God.

So we need forgiveness. All of us need forgiveness because we can't pay that back except through death. And our only hope is that God might in His mercy forgive.

And of course, this, friends, is the very heart of Christianity. This is the very heart of the gospel because He has done this. He has both satisfied justice and shown mercy.

[15 : 47] And how has He done this? He has sent His Son, Jesus, the sinless one, the one who never incurred any debt against God because He was without sin, who came and lived His life among us and offered Himself up on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, dying the death that is the repayment to satisfy God's justice so that we might receive the benefit of forgiveness.

Many of you know the imagery. It's like being in a courtroom and you've been found guilty and you must pay a fine that you can't pay. And the judge bangs his gavel and says, condemned, you must pay this now.

But then He steps out of the judgment seat, comes down, and He says, and I will pay this myself for you so that you can go free. This is what God did by sending Jesus.

And so, Paul can write to Christians in Colossae in Colossians 2, 13, and you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. Friends, this is at the very heart of what Christianity is, that our God has worked to achieve both justice and mercy for us so that we might be forgiven of our sin because of Jesus.

[17 : 38] What good news this is, friends, this morning, if you are here and you don't know the forgiveness that comes through faith in Jesus Christ, I implore you, turn to Him, repent of your sin, confess that it's wrong, confess that you can't do anything to save yourself and trust in Jesus what He has done for you and know His forgiveness.

Now, some of you are sitting here thinking, okay, but I've been a Christian for a long time. I've heard this story before. So, why does Jesus ask me to keep praying this prayer?

Haven't I already been forgiven? haven't I already know that that's true? And yes, that's true in a sense that's very important. But, the short answer to that question is, you have to keep praying this prayer because it is right to do.

Because we need it. We do need to keep asking for forgiveness. That Christians are to pray this on a regular basis.

Why do I say this? Well, I'm going to turn briefly to the gospel or to the letter of 1 John. If you want to go with where you can, 1 John chapter 1 verses 1, 5 through 9.

[19 : 05] I want to read this passage to explain to you why Christians also need to continue to pray this prayer. John writes this, starting in verse 5.

This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaimed to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say 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.

Now friends, this letter was not written to the whole world. This letter was written to a church. This letter was written to people that the Apostle John assumes are followers of Jesus and understand the fundamental forgiveness that God has worked in Christ.

[20 : 22] But what He says is we need to continue to pray because this side of eternity we will continue to sin even as Christians. We never excuse it.

We never encourage it. We never coddle it. But friends, we will continue to sin this side of glory when we will be transformed and become without sin once more.

many people think that Christianity is about being good people and that being a good Christian is being better and better and better at not sinning. And that leads Christians to think well I need to hide my sin because I can't show that I've sinned or else people think I'm a bad Christian.

But what John says is we all sin. If we say we have not sinned we lie and the truth is not in us. But we say we have fellowship with a holy God who is without sin and this is an untenable situation.

So what's the solution? Verse 9 is the solution. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

[21 : 35] So for the Christian life this is meant to be not merely an entrance into but an ongoing practice of what Christians should be like. I've sinned against you.

I'm sorry. Will you forgive me? I've sinned. I repent of that sin. I know it's wrong. Will you forgive me? And we say this to God every day because we never meet that perfect standard that John Piper laid out for us earlier of doing everything for the glory of God.

and we do it with one another because we regularly sin against one another. We are selfish. We are proud. We are cruel.

And we are meant to be people who know that in our sin we have a Savior who has done all that is necessary for us to be forgiven. So we come back again and again and again to this practice.

And friends that should make a Christian community who are not proud and self-righteous and condemning of others who don't do well but instead a community of people who are humble and thankful and gracious and joyful and kind.

[22 : 58] God because when we know that we are sinners saved by grace when we know that we regularly practice this prayer forgive us our sins Lord as we confess and repent of them this makes our hearts the kind of hearts where the soil of the grace of God can flourish and grow.

So friends this is why we need to pray this prayer because if we have not known yet the initial forgiveness of Christ we need it desperately and if we have known that initial forgiveness of Christ we need it desperately we need it on an ongoing basis until glory so we need to be praying this prayer for all of us.

This then raises as we looked at this then we need to ask the third question because Jesus didn't simply say forgive us our debts and then move on. He said forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

How do we understand the relationship between our need for forgiving others and our being forgiven by God? When you're reading this in the English language verse 12 verse 14 and 15 make it even more explicit there is a very clear relationship between these two things.

Basically he's saying you cannot be forgiven if you don't forgive others. That's what he's saying. But what's the relationship here? Okay we're going to get into a little grammar word nerdery here because we've got to get into this to get it right because when we read this we typically think this is causal.

[24 : 56] This is an if then statement. If I forgive others then God will forgive me. Right? Because that's often how we read if then statements.

Right? But this is not actually in Greek. There are like four conditions of Greek if then statements. And you can talk to some of our Greek scholars about all of those.

But this one in particular is not I believe a causal. But instead it is a conditional statement. Here's a quote from a grammar.

Right? The if in verse 14 is used in conditional sentences to designate what is expected to occur under certain circumstances from a given standpoint in the present.

That is you would read it if as it is to be expected you forgive one another then God will forgive you. Here's an example to try to clarify this.

[25 : 58] If I went to my father and I said if I am your son I will inherit your I will get your inheritance. Right? There is an assumption because he knows that I'm his son and I know that I'm his son.

So it's not that there's this question of whether I am or not and it's not that my sonship is causing this inheritance to be triggered. It is a part of a whole conditional these things go together and cannot be separated out.

Does that make sense a little bit? How it's a little different from if a stranger walked in to the reading of my father's will and said well if I'm a son then I get the inheritance right?

Be like well no you gotta prove that you're the son. There's a lot I don't assume that this person walking in from the street is a son at all. Right? So there's an assumption that these things go together.

I might say they're more correlation than causation. They must both be true. Because here's the sting in forgiveness. One who cannot forgive others cannot truly know the forgiveness of God.

[27 : 14] And one who forgives can only do so because they know truly the forgiveness of God. Jesus tells us a parable in Matthew 18 and if you want to turn there we're going to look at this for just a minute just to flesh this out a little more.

Alright? Matthew 18 starting in verse 25. It's the parable called the parable of the unforgiving servant and I'm going to summarize a bunch of it and then read a couple of verses because it's a bit long.

A king wanted to settle the accounts with his servant and he found one servant who owed him 10,000 talents. Now there's a lot of discussion about how much 10,000 talents is but the sum is it's more money than anyone would reasonably have in a lifetime.

It is way too much for it to ever be reasonably paid back. And this servant fell on his knees before the king and begged, please, please be patient with me.

Don't cast me into prison because I owe this debt. And verse 27 says, out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

[28 : 30] So this servant then walks out and he finds his buddy, another servant, who owed him money. He still owed him a significant amount of money, 100 denarii, which is like 100 days wages.

You do the math on what that would be like today. It's a lot, right? So he owed him a lot of money and he said, you have to pay me now. You have to pay me now or I'm going to put you in jail.

And the guy said, please be patient with me. The guy said, no way, you're going to jail. And the king found out about it. Verse 32 is the summary of this parable Jesus is telling.

Then his master summoned him and said to him, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you.

And in anger his mercy delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.

[29 : 46] A couple of observations about this parable. First, forgiveness comes initially from the God figure in this, the king, right?

The debt was unpayable and owed and God forgave. And so we need to recognize that there is a sense where the first forgiveness is God initiating this towards us.

It is in response to God's forgiveness that we can be forgiving people. But it is also then a test. If we understand that truly as we relate to other people, how do we view them?

Have we allowed ourselves to become bitter, hardened, vengeful, those who hold on to slights, offenses, or deep, deep harm, clinging to it and holding it against people?

Christians can never say, I will never forgive that. One of the commentators, can't remember which one, this is off the top of my head, said that the reason why we can forgive incalculable sin against us is because we have been forgiven an incalculable debt before God.

[31 : 17] This is the power of forgiveness in the life of a Christian. This parable gives us a clue. When we see our sin rightly, when we see how great an offense it is, when we're not playing the game of comparing ourselves and thinking, well, their sin was worse than my sin and I don't have to forgive it because it was worse, but when we see our sin as an incalculable debt before God, then when others sin against us, we can still say, I forgive you because we have been forgiven a sin, forgiven our sin so greatly.

It is through the lens of our own forgiveness that we are able to be a forgiving people. Now, there's a lot of detail for us to work through in what interpersonal forgiveness looks like in the human realm, right?

And I'm going to give a few thoughts and then I'm going to point to this. Tim Keller wrote a book on forgiveness. It's awesome and it will be for the first person who comes up and asks me after the service.

You can have it, take it home and read it, but you have to promise to read it and then give it to someone else. But what happens when we have to forgive?

There are a few things I just want to say to clarify what forgiveness of sin is. First is that we have to recognize that sin is what must be forgiven.

[32 : 51] If I make a mistake, if I have, if I am late because 95 was closed down and the traffic was stopped and I was late to, I have not sinned against those that I came late to because truly circumstances outside of my control, there are things that are not sin in the world.

We wrestle sometimes with the word sorry. Sometimes when you say I'm sorry, it means I empathize with the pain that you're feeling. Sometimes when we say I'm sorry, I'm sorry because I recognize this has caused inconvenience to you.

These are appropriate uses. There are other times when we say I'm sorry, will you forgive me? In fact, in my relationship with my wife, we've learned we have to be a little more specific to say will you forgive me when we are confessing I have sinned against you.

I have been selfish. I have been uncaring. I have been cruel. I have been whatever it is that we have been. So we need to recognize that it's not just misunderstanding or human fallibility.

It's not just... And here's the thing. We can sin and not mean it too. It is possible for us to sin against other people unintentionally because one of the things we tend to do is say, but I didn't mean it that way.

[34 : 20] And that should be taken into account. That's a part of the interaction. Oh, well, if you didn't mean it that... But it still can be sin if I'm living an incredibly selfish life and that has all sorts of consequences for you like you're abandoned.

I forgot you at... You know, I forgot to pick up my kid at school again because I'm... I was working out of the gym and I was just on a roll, you know, and I... Did I mean to? No.

But did I sin against them? Well, if I did it once, maybe it is an honest mistake. But if I do it as a pattern, then I have a sinful heart that's neglecting a relationship and I have a sinful transgression where I'm not keeping my word.

And I need to think through how do I do that? Right? So forgiveness needs to clarify what the sin is. Right? Second thing is that forgiving a sin begins by pointing out that it's wrong.

Right? What you did to me was wrong. Only when we recognize that are we able to then say, but I release you.

[35 : 28] I forgive you of that wrong. wrong. And I let go. Tim Keller has a great section in his book about what forgiving of sin is not.

And I'm just going to read through a bunch of this list. It is not excusing other people saying, well, you know, it's okay because I understand there are lots of reasons. That's not forgiveness.

That's just recognizing there's a legitimate excuse. And that's okay. forgiveness is not denying or whitewashing. That is, oh, yeah, it didn't really hurt or it didn't really cut.

It's no problem. No big deal. We like to say, but that's not forgiveness. That's just whitewashing it. Forgiveness is not merely refraining from revenge while holding on to bitter resentment or suspending judgment saying, this time I'll forgive, but next time you're done.

You're done. forgiveness is truly releasing from the debt that is owed. Forgiveness is not proud condescension, forgiving others as if we also don't need forgiveness.

[36 : 49] Forgiveness is not also abandoning justice by seeking revenge or simply avoiding confrontation. We might have different ways in which we seek to forgive in a way where we want to inflict on other people something terrible.

And finally, forgiveness doesn't mean that we restore immediate trust or prevent reasonable consequences.

So this is tricky. This is where we realize forgiveness is a heart attitude. Right? I might forgive my son of being late coming home from curfew.

This is a hypothetical. This has not happened. But if he came home from a curfew, right, I might forgive my son because he said, Dad, I just disobeyed you and I recognize that and I'm sorry.

Will you forgive me? Son, I forgive you that. You're still grounded for a week because you need to learn. Right? Now, if I do that vengefully, if I do that with bitterness in my heart, if I do that with my heart hardened towards my son, then I'm not really forgiving him.

[38 : 02] But he may still bear the consequences. Right? Someone you might forgive, you know, there's this amazing story and you all know it, Rachel Denhollander and the story of the sexual abuse in the gymnastics community.

If you want to go see, she has some really good stuff written on this. But she writes about saying to the abuser, I forgive you, but you need God's forgiveness and you need the consequences.

You need to bear the consequences of your sin. These are right and true and we need to recognize that happens on a global scale.

It happens interpersonally. where forgiveness doesn't mean now I'm going to completely trust you in everything at all times. That trust may need to be rebuilt over time.

Final thought just on the nature of forgiveness interpersonally is that we need to recognize that it is both a decision and a process. And it's not.

[39 : 14] There are times when when we are needing to process through with the Lord the hurt that we feel, the offense that we feel, those sorts of things.

But it is good and right to decide I am going to forgive this person and to allow our heart to catch up with our decision.

it is good to decide I will do this and then I will continue to act as if that were true and I will continue to think about that person as if I have forgiven them while my heart emotions which we know don't always follow as quickly to our will as we want them to work through with the Lord and with others the feelings of hurt, the feelings of desire for revenge that we often have.

And so we need to recognize that it may be a process but I think the Bible is telling us we can't withhold it while I get to the point where I'm feeling good about this.

Sometimes we need to say I don't feel good about this but because of Christ I say to you I forgive you and I ask for your prayers to help me really mean that.

[40 : 37] So that's just a beginning because I know because I've walked with some of you through hard things and the process of forgiveness is long and difficult and weighing out some of these things about how do you restore a relationship or how do you deal with the issues of trust how do you work through these things is tricky and so I just want to acknowledge all of those things but then to come back to the weight of what Jesus said he says we are to ask God for forgiveness as we forgive those who have sinned against us and this means we recognize that forgiveness is always costly.

The bank when it cancels the debt it eats ten thousand dollars it doesn't get back the ten thousand dollars that it loaned me if it forgives my debt it just says I've lost ten thousand dollars that's the cost.

If someone sins against us we bear the pain of the offense and we give up the satisfaction of seeing punishment happening of revenge we give up those things.

when we forgive others it is costly to let go of an expectation of repayment.

The cost for you to forgive ones who have sinned against you may be great. I don't know all of your stories. Some of you may be thinking this morning this is too much.

[42 : 28] He's asking me for more than he knows and I just want to acknowledge that. I know that some of you have been very very deeply sinned against and you bear scars and hurts.

And my prayer for you is that as you recognize that that it will drive you back to the gospel that we begin with.

Because what great cost did God bear for your forgiveness? He sent his very own son who did nothing but obey and love and bring glory to him in all that he did.

Who came proclaiming his kingdom, exhibiting it by all that he did in all of his interactions, seeking to help humanity come to know the greatness of God again.

But at the end of the day he knew. He came to die for us. He came to free us from the debt that we owe to God by dying in our place, paying the penalty of death for us so that we might not die because of our sin but so that we might live.

[43 : 57] The second person of the Trinity, the one who was there in creation, the one who will sit on the throne forever and ever in the new heavens and the earth, he was a lamb slain from the foundations of the earth for us, for our forgiveness.

forgiveness. Oh, friends, what great mercy that has God shown us. What great cost has he paid for us and for our forgiveness?

forgiveness. Kim read earlier, Psalm 32, David, a man who knew the joy of his sins being forgiven.

Blessed is the one whose transgressions is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the one against whom the Lord counts no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Friends, do you not hear the call? Come and see. Come and confess your sin. Come and know the great joy that we have.

[45 : 20] The forgiven heart is a free heart. It means no more hiding, no more shame, no more guilt, no more bitterness. forgiveness. There is freedom in our relationships to confess to one another because we don't have to hide ourselves because we know who we are.

We can have empathy and sympathy towards others who sin, have mercy on one another, and forgive when we have been sinned against. There is freedom for us to obey God because we are not running on the treadmill trying to repay God by doing enough good things, but instead knowing that we are forgiven, we joyfully say, God, my life is all yours.

What can I do to bring glory to you? And there is freedom in our worship because we worship a God who knows all of our sin.

There is nothing that is hidden from his sight, and yet he loved this world so much that he sent his son so that whoever believes in him would not perish but have eternal life.

They would not be condemned for their sin, but they would be forgiven through faith in Jesus. This is a God worth worshiping.

[46 : 40] And this is what we are going to do.