

## **Forgive Us Our Trespasses**

Sermon, July 18, 2021

**Scripture Readings:** 1 John 4:7-11 & 18-21 & 1 Corinthians 13:1-8a

**Golden Verse:** “Love never fails.” 1 Corinthians 13:8a

Forgive us our sin, debts, trespasses, as we forgive those who sin, are indebted, trespass against us.

The first question this morning is: where is your heart when we pray this prayer. “forgive us”?

Forgive me. How do we feel when we say this sentence? How easy or how difficult is it for you to ask for forgiveness? Most people would say: to ask for forgiveness is not easy at all.

The first reason why we have difficulties asking God for forgiveness is because we compare ourselves with others. It might be easy to recognize that we are better people than those who steal, lie, or murder. But if we would come closer to the light of God, we would see ourselves more clearly, and we would realize that we too are making mistakes, we too sin, and we too need God’s forgiveness for all our small and big mistakes.

As a young man, I was very proud of myself because I did not behave like some of my colleagues, and I felt self-righteous. I thought that if everybody would be as good as I am, in this world there would be no problems.

Once, as I first met my mentor’s wife, Julia Visky, I told her how glad I was that I did not have ridiculous sins like others. A bit later, she asked me if I would be ready to face with my own REAL PICTURE looking into the mirror of God? As I was listening to my mentor, the Holy Spirit showed me that small sin is a sin as well. Then she invited me to pray together, coming to the Lord, to continue our conversation with God. As I turned to the Lord and I stood in front of Him with an open heart, I realized that I was not an as good person as I thought I was.

Moreover, I saw my sins more clearly. The Holy Spirit started to show me my mistakes and my weaknesses. My sins started to lay on my shoulder and on my heart as a heavy stone. I never felt that heaviness of sin before. That was the weight of my sin and my bad conscience. At one point, I thought I would collapse under that weight. At that time, I said to the Lord and to my mentor’s wife that I think I am the worst person in the world. Quoting Apostle Paul, I said that amongst the sinners I am the foremost. Then my mentor smiled at me and said: No Frank,

you are not the first among the sinners, because Paul took that place 2,000 years ago when he said: *“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.”* (1 Timothy 1:15) And with a bright smile and laugh, she said to me: “But Frank, you can take the second place after Paul, if you want.” And then she gave me a huge hug.

After that life-changing conversation I saw myself totally differently. I did not become perfect, but I was more humble and I was very careful not to judge others.

### **What do you see when you look in God’s mirror of truth?**

Dear beloved, it would be very helpful for all of us to look into God’s mirror, which would show us the true self. Paul calls it the mirror of truth.

My brother, my sister, would you take the time to come to the presence of the Lord to take a look into the Holy God’s mirror? Would you have the courage to take a piece of paper and write down what God told you? Dear beloved, in those moments, we might get shocked to see how much darkness we have in our hearts, and who we really are as human beings, being constantly under temptations. But facing the reality would bring our soul salvation, peace and freedom.

Last Sunday, we heard that we are debtors because we do not give God what we ought, what we should – the glory and respect he deserves.

We are also debtors towards each other because we do not give each other what God is expecting us to give.

Jesus said that we should love one another as He loved you, and we should give unconditional love. We sin and we trespass God’s law when we cannot give each other UNCONDITIONAL LOVE.

If we would come to the realization that we did not love one another as we were supposed to, then we would feel like debtors forever. Let’s not think **only** about those wounds we caused to each other, but may the Holy Spirit help us to recall even those wounds we caused without even noticing.

Dear beloved, it is so sad that people, who are so close to us, often became sad and emotional because of us, and we did not even realize how much they suffered because of our words or actions. Or maybe they even cried, and we did not even notice their tears.

If you would ask me what our biggest enemy is today, what is destroying relationships, friendships, and families, I would say the **lack of love**. Most people love only themselves in a very selfish way and most of the time they do only those things which are good for them, and they don't care how those things might impact others. Very often, we forget to give to each other what we should: selfless LOVE. This is why the whole world is suffering around us. We did not and we don't love each other as we ought to love.

I often hear people complaining and accusing their parents, saying that their parents did not love them, they did not receive enough love, and this is why they cannot flourish today. But these people have a hard time to realize that they cannot and do not want to love either.

Dear beloved, let us confess together, here and now, with an open and honest heart, that we owe LOVE to so many people, because in the past we did not love them enough.

If we will not take the time right now to make this confession, I am telling you, that the time will come, when on a sleepless night this feeling, that we did not love each other enough, will sit on our pillows and then on our hearts, and will hurt like hell.

I saw people crashing at a hospital bed, confessing that they did not give enough love to their loved ones. At their sick beds, they made all kind of promises to God and to their loved ones. I saw people crashed next to a casket, confessing that they did not love enough, and at that point, they realized they were too late with love. Also, they realized with bitter hearts that they could not turn the clock back and they had to carry their debt of love for the rest of their lives.

Since we are humans, our love-debts are not getting less but it is growing, and we cannot do anything else but ask our heavenly Father: Lord forgive me my debts, my trespasses. Forgive me the love I never shared. Forgive me that I was not able to love with an unconditional love.

Are you wondering what God wants to do with the huge amount of our debts? Nothing but to forgive them. This is why Jesus Christ came into the world, that following His sacrifice, God should forgive us our debts. When on the cross Jesus cried out "It is finished", He paid everything off.

We have nothing to do at this moment but to realize and acknowledge that, because of Christ, we are forgiven. He paid all my debt. He forgave you and me. It is because of Jesus that we can ask God: “forgive us our trespasses, our debts”.

We need the daily forgiveness as much as we need the daily bread. Without bread, our bodies would die. If we would not receive forgiveness, our spirits would die and we would never inherit God’s everlasting glory. As our body needs the daily bread, our spirit needs the daily forgiveness.

Let us continue to pray, not only for the daily bread and for all we daily need, but also for the daily forgiveness. Knowing that, for us as God’s children, the forgiveness is offered through the cross of Jesus Christ. To God be the glory alone.  
Amen