

loses the comfort and confidence derived from the Gospel; therefore it is ceaselessly necessary that we run hither and obtain consolation to comfort the conscience again.

⁹⁰ But this should serve God's purpose of breaking our pride and keeping us humble. For in case any one should boast of his godliness and despise others, God has reserved this prerogative to Himself, that the person is to consider himself and place this prayer before his eyes, and he will find that he is no better than others, and that in the presence of God all must lower their plumes, and be glad that they can attain forgiveness. ⁹¹ And let no one think that as long as we live here he can reach such a position that he will not need such forgiveness. In short, if God does not forgive without ceasing, we are lost.

⁹² It is therefore the intent of this petition that God would not regard our sins and hold up to us what we daily deserve, but would deal graciously with us, and forgive, as He has promised, and thus grant us a joyful and confident conscience to stand before Him in prayer. For where the heart is not in right relation towards God, nor can take such confidence, it will nevermore venture to pray. But such a confident and joyful heart can spring from nothing else than the [certain] knowledge of the forgiveness of sin.

⁹³ But there is here attached a necessary, yet consolatory addition: As we forgive. He has promised that we shall be sure that everything is forgiven and pardoned, yet in the manner that we also forgive our neighbor. ⁹⁴ For just as we daily sin much against God, and yet He forgives everything through grace, so we, too, must ever forgive our neighbor who does us injury, violence, and wrong, shows malice toward us, etc. ⁹⁵ If, therefore, you do not forgive, then do not think that God forgives you; but if you forgive, you have this consolation and assurance, that you are forgiven in heaven, not on account of your forgiving, for God forgives freely and without condition, out of pure grace, because He has so promised, as the Gospel teaches, but in order that He may set this up for our confirmation and assurance for a sign alongside of the promise which accords with this prayer, Luke 6:37: Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Therefore Christ also repeats it soon after the Lord's Prayer, and says, Matt. 6:14: For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, etc.

Congregation at Prayer Week of February 16, 2025

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of Heaven and Earth

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life + everlasting. Amen.

VERSE OF THE WEEK

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" Psalm 51:5

Small Catechism The Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer

P *What is the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer?*

C And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

P *What does this mean?*

C We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

Matthew 20:1-16