

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 18

Question 1

- a) A debt either has to be paid off or released from.
- b) Sin either has to be paid for: *“the wages of sin is death”* (Rom 6:23) or paid by someone else [**Col 2: 13-14**]
- c) Those who offend us may not deserve our forgiveness in our view; but neither do we deserve God’s forgiveness.
- d) When we ask for forgiveness we are recognising that there is no other method by which to wipe out the debt. It is a plea for grace.

Question 2

- a) Remembering that this is a prayer that only Christians can pray; such a plea for forgiveness cannot refer to the point of our conversion.
- b) Having said that, ‘forgive us’ implies that we have done something for which we need forgiveness.
- c) David sinned when he committed adultery but came back to God in repentance for forgiveness. In Psalm 51:14 he pleads: *“Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God...O God of my salvation”*.
- d) David affirms that God is still the God of his salvation but that he needs to come back for forgiveness.
- e) John touches on this in his first letter [**1 John 1:5-10**]. The confession and forgiveness John writes about in verse 9 refers to those who are seeking to walk in fellowship with God and have already been cleansed (v7).

Question 3

- a) In the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, the forgiveness (or lack of forgiveness) on the part of the first servant is measured against that which he had experienced from the master.
- b) That is why both in the parable and in the Lord's Prayer the two are inextricably linked: forgive because you have been forgiven.
- c) *"There is none so tender to others as they which have received mercy themselves for they know how gently God hath dealt with them"* (Thomas Manton).

Question 4

- a) This is not intended as a tit-for-tat arrangement: I will only forgive you if my sins have been forgiven first...or I have forgiven someone else which means God will now forgive me.
- b) If this is what Jesus is saying then forgiveness of our sin would no longer be based on grace, but on our merit in forgiving others [**Eph 2:8-9**].
- c) We are going back to a key theme in the previous passages of the Sermon; that of attitude.
- d) If we are unforgiving then it shows that we were never fully repentant ourselves.

Question 5

- a) This is not a prayer for an easy life.
- b) We need to be clear that God does not tempt His children [**James 1:13-17**].
- c) There are times when He allows us to be in difficult situations but that is not the same as Him tempting us.
- d) In this part of the prayer Jesus is encouraging us to ask the Father to guide us so that we will stay within His will; thus avoiding places of temptation [**1 John 5:18**].
- e) *"The meaning is, that God would not suffer us to be overcome by temptation; that we may not be given up to the power of temptation, and be drawn into sin"* (Thomas Watson).

Question 6

- a) This follows on from the previous clause in the verse and the two together express the vulnerability of those following Christ; and our ultimate dependency on Him for avoiding sin.
- b) We recognise that God allows us to make mistakes but we must pray that we will recognise these things and avoid them.
- c) Paul is open in his assessment of our liability to be led astray and to fall. But he also shows that there is a way back by the grace of God [**1 Cor 10:13**].
- d) While verse 12 concerns those things that have already happened; verse 13 anticipates what is to come. We need forgiveness for those sins committed; and guidance and strength to avoid those that potentially lie ahead.