

Summary of the sermon – November 17th, 2013, 9h30

Reading of the Holy Scriptures: Psalm 32 Heidelberg Catechism – Lord's Day 51

Q. What is the fifth petition?

A. *Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

That is:

For the sake of Christ's blood, do not impute to us, wretched sinners; any of our transgressions, nor the evil which still clings to us, as we also find this evidence of Your grace in us that we are fully determined wholeheartedly to forgive our neighbour.

Theme of the sermon:

Happy living, for our debts become forgiven.

a. By our Father. b. By our fellow man and by ourselves?

1. Last item?

Do you sometimes forget to pray for forgiveness? It's normal for Christians to pray for pardon. But sometimes it's like a last item.

If the Lord should ask us: What sins or debts shall I forgive you? What will you answer?

This custom is not only negative. We feel and we believe: Without forgiveness we cannot live.

2. Essential

Together with our daily bread forgiveness is essential and needy. Jesus connects the fifth petition directly to the fourth. Praying and thanking we get an eye for our shortcomings.

The Lord is a forgiving God. See Exodus 34,6-7 and Psalm 86,5.

God gives us the promise of grace.

3. Wretched sinners

Every day we make our debts more to God. But like the prodigal son we may come back to the Father and confess: I have sinned to You.

Our account shows only red numbers by what we do wrong and through what we omit. So we are wretched sinners. Jesus wants we confess that honestly to our Father.

4. Congratulation

Through his blood Christ paid for our debts. Than we get a congratulation of David and the Holy Spirit. See Psalm 32,1-2. Remember also the words of Micah 7,18-19.

God throws al our sins in the deep sea. Fishing forbidden! No fishing to your old sins.

Forgiveness let a man relive. That's the experience of David, Psalm 32,6.

The Lord gives jubilee songs of redemption.

5. Clemency

Jesus ads something to the petition of forgiveness. "*...as we also have forgiven our debtors.*"

That's a very difficult thing to us. Gods clemency makes us other people: even forgiving as He is. We have to be fully determined wholeheartedly to forgive our neighbour. That's the evidence of God's grace in us. The Lord doesn't forgive us our debts on the condition of our clemency. See also Matthew 6,14-15.

6. Hard evidence

Jesus' lesson has a hard side. If we don't want to forgive our brothers and sisters, we miss God's grace in our life. See the lesson of David in Psalm 32,8.

Grace heals. When you bow your knees to God.

Sometimes it's almost impossible to forgive. For instance a victim of incest.

Confession of our debts is much more than saying: I'm sorry. Happily the Lord is much gentler than we are. See Psalm 103,12.

God's grace makes us graceful. So we can forgive the debts of our fellow people.

Great is the Lord!

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