

The source of forgiveness is found in God's limitless forgiveness toward His creation. Our failure to forgive is a heavy burden to bear. The parable makes it clear that forgiveness is beyond calculation. The parable is an exposition of the Fifth Petition: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Do you find it interesting that the slave doesn't ask for forgiveness? He asked for time to work out his debt. The master is the one who recognized the impossibility of the request and received the request as repentance to which he granted forgiveness. We are led by God to repent just so that His forgiveness in Christ applies.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise You that from Him Your whole family in Heaven and on Earth is named. We worship You for Your manifold wisdom, Your mighty works, and Your perfect Holiness. We especially praise You for our reconciliation to You through the suffering and death of Your dear Son. In the event of our being received in Him, You established and set in place the eternity of forgiveness in which we live. We, through faith in Him enter with confidence into Your presence to bring You our prayers and petitions.

Out of the infinite bounty of Your surpassing goodness, grant Your Spirit and grace, to we who stand in constant need of Your help and mercy. Bestow on us the intelligence that leads to a sense of Your majesty and power and the knowledge which is the foundation of all true wisdom. Unfold to us Your overflowing Love by providing for the wants and needs of this present life. Let Your mercy descend on us as the morning dew, giving us life and breath, health and contentment, and deliver us from every kind of danger to body or soul.

As You are able to do more than we are able to think of or ask for, according to the power that works in us, increase in us Your grace and enlarge our trust so that we will unfailingly come to You in prayer with believing hearts, asking You for all our wants and needs, but especially for Your mercy and deliverance. Give a special measure of Your power to those who are in sorrow or mourning, to those in pain or sickness, to those who may be in temptation or peril, that they will receive Your blessed aid. Although we have deserved nothing but your punishment and correction, help us receive that which comes to us through faith, knowing that You are Love and in all things You work for the good of the people of Your kingdom.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

These and the all things we should ask, but in our fear or ignorance did not, grant to us in the name of Jesus our Lord.

© Amen.

PROPER NINETEEN

Chant Tone



Introit

Deliver me from my enemies, — O Lord! *
I have fled to You for — refuge!

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my
pleas for — mercy! *

In your faithfulness answer me, in
Your | righteousnes!

Enter not into judgment with Your
— servant,*
for no one living is righteous
— before You.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

Deliver me from my enemies, — O Lord! *
I have fled to You for — refuge!

(Antiphon, Psalm 143:9;
Psalm 143:1-2)

Collect of the Day

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Oh, fear the Lord, | you His saints,*
for those who fear Him | have no lack!
Many are the afflictions of the — righteous,*
but the Lord delivers him out | of them all.

(Psalm 34:9, 19, alternative)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: From all that is within us, O Lord, we bless Your Holy name. You forgive all our iniquities and heal our diseases. You redeem our life from destruction and crown us with loving kindness and tender mercies. For all these blessings, O Lord, we give You thanks. By Your Spirit help us to reflect Your mercy toward others. Make us confident that You will take our mistakes and turn them into blessings. Be with the lonely, comfort the sick and weary among us and bring the assurance of Your forgiveness to the penitent. This we ask in the name and for the sake of Him who taught us how to forgive, even Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

SIN AND FORGIVENESS. Of all the possible topics for our Sunday's lessons to take up, sin and forgiveness must be among the more revealing. Our attitude toward forgiving others certainly belies our attitude toward receiving forgiveness from God. Peter ascertained that the (holy) number of seven times of forgiveness must be enough to never have to deal with a sinning brother again. Jesus says that we are to forgive 70 times 7, (or as often as repentance seeks forgiveness.) We are led to repentance for forgiveness by God, Who then freely forgives us. We can forgive others equally as often. We say a big thank you to everyone who has joined us for worship this day. The blending of our hearts and minds in praise of our risen Savior is the one thing that sets this place and this gathering of people apart from all other gatherings of peoples the world over.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Forgiveness

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 143:9;) Psalm 143:1-2

Psalm 143 was written by David. Saul (the first king of Israel) was trying to have him killed, because he realized that David was going to take over as king. David pleaded for God's kindness and for relief from his affliction. David mainly prayed for deliverance from his weakness of doubt and fear.

COLLECT

The members of the Church are in a constant battle of good versus evil. We ask that during this persecution we would remain faithful.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Genesis 50:15-21

When their father died, Joseph's brothers were wondering if he was going to punish them (for having sold him into slavery.) Joseph assured his brothers with the comforting words that they didn't need to worry. He would not judge them, he had already forgiven them. Joseph framed everything in the perspective of God's sovereignty. Joseph had accepted the will of God for his life, and was willing to allow the grace and mercy of God to guide him in forgiving his brothers. Joseph lived in God's grace and was simply extending that grace to those who sinned against him.

GRADUAL—Psalm 34:9, 19 alternative

We use Psalm 34:9 and 19 to remind ourselves of fearless faith which comes to us in the power of Jesus. Jesus came into the world to make satisfaction for our sin. Our afflictions of being sinned against come from Satan, the world and our own sinful flesh. Yet we are delivered and freed from sin, to forgive and free others.

EPISTLE LESSON—Romans 14:1-12

In all of life and death we, as Christians, belong to God—we are never alone. All that we do, from our faith, is done through the Lord Jesus Christ. We are accepted by God for Jesus' sake and therefore we are able to accept the weaknesses in others (the sin committed against us) as in fact being committed against Jesus and not being committed against us. It is Christ's death and Resurrection that makes it possible for Christians to live and die to the Lord. Christ died and rose so that His people might not live self-centered independent lives, they live and die for Christ. They belong to Him because He paid the price with His blood. Through Baptism we are all united (together) with Him. All actions done in faith are acceptable to God for Christ's sake. We forgive to stay united.

GOSPEL LESSON—Matthew 18:21-35

Peter grasped the implication of Jesus' words from verse 15, so he crafted some, what-if, questions. He asked if there might be a limit on forgiveness.