

**My Trash Basket**  
**Lord's Prayer – Week 3**  
**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**Matthew 6:9-13; 1 John 1:8-10**  
**October 5, 2014**

Let's begin today by recalling the structure of the Lord's Prayer. It has 8 parts:

Invocation

3 "Thy Petitions" – because they begin with the word "thy" and they center on God

3 "Us Petitions" – because they center on "us"

Doxology

Today is the third week of our series. The first week we talked about the Invocation, the first "Thy Petition", and the Doxology. Last week we addressed the other two "Thy Petitions". Today we will talk about the "Us Petitions".

Today I want us to look at the particular phrase "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Most versions of the Bible read, "forgive us our debts." In our church we pray forgive us our trespasses. Essentially these are the same thing. Our debts, are what we owe God because we have violated his command or disobeyed him in some way. Many churches have gone away from the word debts because in our modern culture we tend to relate this to owing money, instead of relating it to sin. Many years ago, we began using the word trespass instead of debts. To trespass means we have traveled where God doesn't want us to be or we have done something which God doesn't want us to do. We have trespassed on God's perfect will. Our contemporary culture might replace trespass with the word sin to help us understand the fault.

Whatever word we use; debts, trespasses, or sins, it means we have done something we shouldn't, we have violated God's command, we have avoided doing something God wants us to do, or we have broken a relationship.

Whichever way you learned it: trespass, debts, or sins... it all means the same thing. One particular four-year-old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

So what does this phrase mean?

In life, we all have burdens to carry - trash baskets, if you will. The weight of our baskets depends on what's in them. Life puts trash in our baskets just because life is hard. And often, we foolishly put trash in our own baskets by sinning and making other foolish mistakes. And sometimes, people put more trash in our baskets because they're mean, or they were simply insensitive and didn't think. From whatever source, trash keeps piling up in our baskets, and it's only natural for us to feel a little anger toward the people that put trash in our baskets, including ourselves.

So if this is my trash basket- my pile of burdens that I carry... This is Eric's trash basket.

So if I do something bad or wrong Eric in some way, I have trespassed against him... I have added "trash" into my basket because of my sin and his trash basket because of the burden or scar he might now carry.

So for example... Maybe I lied to him and told him that I did not buy a new pair of beautiful shoes. Also if he sins against me, he has added trash into my trash basket and into his because of the sin. So for example... Maybe my wonderful husband here, said something mean about my mother.

So later on in the day I am impatient with him. Then maybe he didn't listen to me. Or maybe I went to a friend's house and gossiped behind his back. And then he bought \$500 worth of tools and told me he only spent \$100. You get the idea... And this doesn't even mention the big sins like murder, stealing, or adultery...

Now sometimes we add trash into our own trash baskets. I am holding on to a grudge. I can't let go of my anger. I can't let go of a worry. I did not read my Bible or pray. You get the idea... And this doesn't even mention the seven deadly sins of Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Lust, Sloth, Greed, or Wrath.

Now we have these full trash baskets... what do we do? Do we just hold these burdens forever? Can we ever undo our trespasses? The simple answer is no we cannot undo our trespasses, because they have happened. But we can seek forgiveness.

Andrew Robarts writes, the Lord has taught us to forgive and seek forgiveness. We must forgive ourselves, we must forgive those who have trespassed against us, we must seek forgiveness from those that we have trespassed against (willingly or accidentally), and we must seek forgiveness from the Lord, and here's why: Forgiveness lifts burdens.

We need to empty our trash baskets. God wants us to forgive and to be forgiven... To receive and offer forgiveness...

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude." Accepting and giving forgiveness may be one of the most important aspects of living.

Now, what exactly does it mean to forgive? Well, the main idea behind both the Greek and Hebrew words that are translated into "forgive" is; to release an offender from guilt and to restore the personal relationship to its original status before the offense. That's what Jesus meant when He said that we have to forgive our brother "from our heart." Now Jesus is not saying that we have to become close friends with the offender, He doesn't even say that we have to necessarily "like" them--only love them.

We need to realize that "holding a grudge" against someone can be very detrimental to a Christian life. It is, in itself, a form of hate and any kind of hate is like a cancer in our soul that continues to fester and grow until it totally consumes us.

It's much easier to ask God to forgive the sin in our lives (our personal trash basket.) but oh how much harder it is to forgive those who sin and trespass against us! The ones that put their trash in our basket of life. But we do need to forgive them.

They wronged me but I continue to hold resentment. We need to find a way to eliminate this tendency from our lives. We need to forgive in the same way that God forgives us. We say, I forgive....but I'll never FORGET. But God says; "I will remember your sins no more."!

Why is forgiveness so important? Well, it gives us the ability to start a "new" life. Some people believe that we've amassed such a huge debt of sin that we could never even think of approaching the Father for forgiveness. But that's just not true! God continues to forgive, and so should we.

I didn't say it was easy. I find myself reminding myself that God has forgiven and loves the people that hurt me. Because the reality is that Christ died for their sins too. Not just mine. God deals with my trash, their trash, and your trash everyday-and He can handle it. Our trash baskets don't faze God a bit and what's inside of them doesn't change His love for either of us. That's a pretty cool thought.

There's a great verse that sort of helps me see that God just might be the great trash taker-out-er. It reads: And as far as sunrise is from sunset, he has separated us from our sins. Psalm 103:12

Michael Hawn writes, Forgiveness is not only a personal way of living, but also an attribute of societies. How many times do we observe centuries of hate and hurt that, because of the inability to forgive, continue to fester and cause suffering, death, and destruction?

So when we let go of our resentment that Eric did this or that, then we can empty our trash basket of that.

So when I forgive Eric for saying something mean about my mother, I empty an item from my trash basket. When he forgives me for lying about buying a new pair of beautiful shoes, I empty an item from my trash basket. I forgive Eric for not listening. He forgives me for my impatience.

And remember, it's not just other people we need to forgive, we need to forgive ourselves too! And we need to ask God for forgiveness for what we have done.

I let go of a grudge, I empty an item from my trash basket. I ask God for forgiveness for my anger, I empty an item from my trash basket. When we pray and leave our worries, frustrations, anger, and resentment at the feet of God, we have emptied our trash basket.

Forgiveness is also a good thing to pass on because it helps everybody. When we trespass against someone (especially including God), that places a burden of guilt and shame on our backs, but when they forgive us, the burden of our guilt is removed.

God loves us. He wants to forgive us. He wants to help us, and He wants us to help each other, and He certainly doesn't want us to pile up more trash in our own and everyone else's baskets. Sometimes trash just happens. Sometimes it's our fault, sometimes it's so-and-so's

fault, sometimes it's nobody's fault. Whoever's fault it is, we'll only add to our burdens by blaming people for them. It will make our burdens lighter if we forgive the people who are responsible for them. And that includes forgiving ourselves. It won't take all of the burden away; there will always be more trash in our baskets, but at least it'll help make our burdens more bearable, and it may help other people bear up their burdens as well.

So, a person wronged you. They put a big piece of smelly, heavy trash in your basket. It's quite an unpleasant burden to carry. But resentment, anger, and bitterness are another kind of burden - one that we put in our own baskets when we feel that people have trespassed against us. When we try to hold that burden over the offender's head, we're also putting more weight on our own shoulders. But if we forgive them, or at least try to, it may not get rid of the burden they placed on us, but it will get rid of the burden of resentment that we put on ourselves.

If we forgive another person, forgive ourselves, or ask God to forgive us for our debts, sins, and trespasses... then we begin to empty our trash baskets.

How is your trash basket? Is it full of sins, resentments, or anger? Are you adding to other people's trash baskets? Do your burdens and trash baskets need to be lightened and emptied with forgiveness? NOW is the time to take out the trash. Amen.