

**Psalm 32, 51; Lord's Day 51**  
**PRAYING FOR FORGIVENESS**

- I. The guilt and shame.
  - A. To know forgiveness we must intellectually have a correct understand of what Scripture says about sin.
    - 1. Sin is any transgression of God's law (I John 3:4), i.e., any deviation from right, anything not to the glory of God.
    - 2. Sin, because it is against God, incurs "debt" (guilt), which makes the sinner justly worthy of punishment.
  - B. To ask to be forgiven is to be sorry, with godly sorrow.
    - 1. Godly sorrow admits that I did wrong and owe an unpayable debt, sees my sin and sinfulness without excuses.
    - 2. Godly sorrow works repentance (II Cor. 7:10): a change of mind and of life.
- II. Sorrow and repentance seeks forgiveness from the One against whom all sin is committed.
  - A. When God forgives, He does two things:
    - 1. He wipes out the debt or loses me from it, so it is as if they had never been committed (Psalm 51:1).
    - 2. And He imputes to my account the positive blessing of righteousness.
  - B. The only way God can forgive is if the debt is really paid (He cannot just forget sin).
- III. The joyful experience of being forgiven.
  - A. This petition is also asking for the assurance of forgiveness.
    - 1. God declares forgiveness and restores relationship only to those who sincerely confess and continually repent.
    - 2. God gives the assurance of forgiveness in our finding in ourselves the willingness to forgive all those who sin against us.
  - B. Our forgiving is the on-going striving, for God's sake, to cast from our minds all anger and desire for revenge.
  - C. Our desire to forgive is evidence of our having been forgiven, of the real change God has made in us.
  - D. Jesus shows the need for every child of the heavenly Father to be striving to forgive.