# THE FIFTH PETITION OF THE LORD’S PRAYER

Ps 419:1,2 - 277:1,3,4,7,8 - 83:1,2 - 349:3,4

Scripture: Matthew 18:15-35; HC 51, Q/A 126; Belgic CoF 27

1. The need of forgiveness

2. The ground for forgiveness

3. The desire after for forgiveness

**QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION**

1. The fifth petition asks for *forgiveness*. Only someone who is guilty will ask for this. Therefore, to pray this petition is to confess your sin. What words does the HC use to confess that sin (four things)?
2. What do you think forgiveness is? How would you explain it in your own words?
3. Can God forgive us our sins without us confessing our guilt?
4. The HC speaks about “Christ’s blood”. Why is that necessary? Why can God not forgive without that blood?
5. The HC says “not to impute to us”. What does that mean?
6. Is it necessary for a child of God too to pray this prayer? After all, a child of God may know that their guilt has been fully forgiven in Christ, hasn’t it?
7. Calvin called the fifth petition *a dangerous petition.* He had the second part of the petition “as we forgive our debtors” in mind when he said this. Can you explain why he called the fifth petition thus?
8. Read Matthew 6:15. Is God’s forgiveness dependent on us forgiving others?
9. Is confession of guilt always necessary to be able to forgive one another?
10. Read the question and answer of the Catechism of Geneva (1560, Calvin) regarding the second part of the fifth petition. What can you learn from it?

***285. Question: When you pray that He may forgive us as we forgive our debtors, do you mean that in pardoning men we merit pardon from God?***

*Answer: By no means, for then pardon would not be by grace, and would not be founded, as it ought to be, on the satisfaction which Jesus Christ made for us in His death. But since by forgetting the injuries done to ourselves, we follow His gentleness and clemency, and so demonstrate that we are His children, God has given us this as a sign in confirmation that we are His children. On the other hand, He indicates to us that we cannot expect anything at His judgment but utter severity and extreme rigour, if we are not ready to pardon and show mercy to others who are guilty toward us.*