

## New City Catechism

Question 25: Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?

*Answer: Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God will remember our sins no more.*

2 Corinthians 5:21

Take the time to commit our answer to memory. The memory verse above is also a great one for every Christian family to learn. While it is not necessarily the verse that today's devotional will focus on, it captures the heart of gospel and is definitely worth understanding and remembering.

The Bible sometimes speaks of forgiveness using economic language (*explain this term to younger children*). For example, when Simon Peter asked Jesus a question about forgiving others, Jesus told him a story about a servant who owed his master a lot of money.

**Read Matthew 18:21-35** (since it is a longer passage, perhaps have several family members read a few verses each).

- What did the master mean when he said in v.32 "I forgave you all that debt?" (*He meant he "cancelled" the debt—he did not require the servant to pay it back*).
- Jesus is saying that when we sin against God, we acquire a kind of debt—we owe something to God that we have failed to pay. What is it that we owe to God that we have not paid when we sin against him? (*Our obedience*).
- Are we able to pay back our debt for the times we have failed to obey God? (*No. The most we can do is obey God in the future, but that does nothing to "pay back" God for failing to obey him in the past*).

Now have your family act out an economic skit. You will need either some paper currency (4-5 bills of any denomination would be sufficient) and three family members to play the roles of "business man/woman", "banker", and "philanthropist" (you can explain this term when the time comes).

Have one family member serve as the "business man/woman" starting a new business. He/she needs money to start the business—he has to purchase parts to make widgets to sell, but does not have enough money to get started.

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Have one family member serve as the "business man/woman" starting a new business. He/she needs money to start the business—he has to purchase parts to make widgets to sell, but does not have enough money to get started.

So, he/she goes to the “banker” to borrow the money (give the currency to the banker, who gives it to the business man/woman). Let’s say the loan is for 1 year. Have the banker write down on a ledger: “(Name) owes (amount) to be paid back on (date).”

Now let’s say a year goes by and business has been bad. Nobody wanted to buy the widgets. Our business man/woman has had bills to pay (give the money back to you [narrator] and you pass it under the table to the “philanthropist”) and now our business man/woman does not have enough money to pay the banker back. Our business man/woman is in trouble. He/she is going to have to sell everything he/she owns—house, car, personal belongings and he/she still will not have enough money to pay our banker back.

This is where our “philanthropist” comes in. He/she offers to pay the banker back for all our debt. Of course our business man/woman is grateful to the “philanthropist” (now you can explain the meaning of this term) and little choice but to accept his/her gracious offer.

- Can the banker still hold our business man/woman accountable for the debt? (No. *The debt has been fully paid by the “philanthropist.” It would be illegal to require it again from the business man/woman even though they were the one who owed it to the bank. Their debt has been “cancelled.”*)

#### **Read Colossians 2:13-14**

- Why was God able to “cancel” our debt? (because it had already been paid by Jesus).
- What did God do with the record of our debt after he cancelled it? (nailed it to the cross).
- Why did he put it there? (because that is where it was paid).

Spend some time in prayer thanking God for giving us his Son to pay our debt of failed obedience through the cross. Thank Jesus for being our “philanthropist.” Make use of the Prayer for Q25 in the New City Catechism app or website. It is a good one!

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Commentary, Video, and Prayer as you see fit.

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