

**WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH**  
**SHORTER CATECHISM, LESSON # 51, Q4LES12**  
**THE LORD'S PRAYER, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> PETITIONS**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Bible reading: Exodus 16: 1 - 15**
3. **Review:** In our last lesson, we discussed the second and third petition of the Lord's prayer. The second petition discussed God's kingdoms, asking that His kingdom here on earth, His kingdom of grace, be advanced, and that we and others be brought into it and kept in it, and that God's kingdom of glory, or His eternal kingdom, would be hastened. Implicit in this request is that Satins Kingdom be destroyed, as it is not compatible with God's kingdoms. The third petition is a request that God's will be done. God's will consists of the will of His precept, that is what He requires of us, and the will of God's providence, that is what He pleases to do to us. It is God's will, not ours, and we should ask that we be willing and able to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things.
4. **Introduction:** The Lord's prayer is God's special rule of direction for prayer. Jesus provides us with this prayer in His Word. Today we will continue our study of the Lord's prayer, discussing the fourth and fifth petitions, which are covered in SC q104 and q105.
5. **Questions & Answers:**

**Question 104: What do we pray for in the fourth petition?**

**Answer:** In the fourth petition (which is, "*give us this day our daily bread,*") we pray, That, of God's free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

**Question 105: What do we pray for in the fifth petition?**

**Answer:** In the fifth petition, (which is, "*and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*"), we pray, That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all ours sins; which we are rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

## 6. Fourth Petition, “Give us this day our daily bread,” (SCq104)

- a. The LC equivalent of SC q104 is LC 193. The question is the same, and the answer contains everything covered in the SC. But the answer begins with a reminder that we are born in sin. The first part of the LC q193 answer says: *“acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, **we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessing of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit, or by our own industry to procure them; but prone to desire, get and use them unlawfully.”***

There are several important concepts in this passage that we should look at. Remember, the thing being discussed are God’s “outward blessings” (**read again**). Let’s discuss the specific points made in this answer:

- Acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessings of this life,

Why have we forfeited our right to the good things of this life?

Because of our sin we are completely separated from God. All things of this life are of God, the good and the bad, and because of our separation from Him, we deserve none of the good things, or “outward blessings”. Does anyone remember SC q19? (What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell? All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.)

**(Gen 3:17 “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;”)**

- And deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them;

What does this mean, especially “to have them cursed to us in the use of them”?

God owes us nothing but damnation in hell because of our sin. That every outward blessing we try to obtain, or do, should be cursed by God. Also, without much effort, we can turn something good into a curse.

**(Jer 5:25 “Your iniquities have turned away these things, and you sins have withholden good thing from you.”)**

- And that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit or by our own industry to procure them;

This one is hard to understand. What is being said? There are 3 parts.

1. “that neither they (outward blessings) of themselves are able to sustain us,”

That even though God does give to us good things, we can not sustain ourselves by them alone, but need God’s assistance and guidance.

**(Deut 8:3 “And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”)**

And where does man find “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord”? In God’s Word, the Bible.

2. “nor we to merit,” (outward blessings) Back up to forfeiting, and SC q19. We do not deserve any of the outward blessings which God is gracious enough to give to us.

**(Gen 32:10 “I am not worth of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant.”)**

3. “or by our own industry to procure them;” This one is pretty easy, nothing we can do to obtain any outward blessing, can we obtain, without God’s permission.

**(Gen 8: 17 – 18 <sup>(17)</sup>And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. <sup>(18)</sup>But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.”)**

- But prone to desire, get, and use them unlawfully:

Is God suggesting here, that, of the many outward blessings which he has chosen to give us, that we, left to our own devices, would use them in a manner not according to his revealed will?

Yes, and, based on the scripture proof, more than that. Left to our own desires, even the things that we will ask him for will not be things that are according to his will, but things that we will use to an evil purpose.

**(James 4:3 “Ye ask, and receive not , because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.”)**

- b. The SC q104 begins noting that we should pray that, “of God’s free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life,”. The LC agrees with this, prefacing the statement with, “*waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best,*”
- c. What is meant by “God’s free gift”?

The blessings we receive from Him are free. As stated in the LC and the SC answers, they are “God’s free gift”. There is nothing that we can do to obtain them or to deserve them. They are provided only by the suffering of Christ for us.

- d. What the Lord’s prayer calls “our daily bread”, the catechism classifies as “outward blessings”. What is meant by “our daily bread”? **(Psalm 132:15 “I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.”)**

TV defines “our daily bread” as “*all outward provision for our daily sustenance.*”

Is this a good definition?

- e. Jesus teaches us, in the Lord’s prayer, that we are to pray for our daily bread, or daily sustenance. Yet he also tells us to “ask and ye shall receive”. What are the things that we should pray for? What is it lawful to ask God for?

TV says: “*in praying for “our daily bread”, we do not ask plenty, but a competent portion of the good things of this life, such as God seeth to be necessary and most convenient for us.*” I think an example given several weeks ago is a good answer. When talking about what we should pray for, the example was given of a car. In this day and age, a car is a necessity, and if we need one, we can pray for one, but maybe a Corvette or Mercedes is not what we should ask for.

**(Prov. 30:8 “Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:”)**

- f. In referring to our “daily bread”, do you think Jesus was referring back to the manna God gave His people with Moses in the wilderness? How is this applicable?

- g. How should we interpret God's will when we see ungodly people, who mock God and do not even try to obey Him, living high on the hog, with riches and everything that many people want in this life?

## 7. Fifth petition, "and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," (SC q105)

- a. This is what it is all about. Jesus came to earth to suffer and die just for this purpose.

Once again, the SC q105 and the LC q194 are in agreement. And, also, once again, the LC answer contains a initial statement reminding us that we are sinners, It says: *"acknowledging, that we and all others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God; and that neither we, nor any other creature, can make the least satisfaction of that debt:"*

This is pretty clear. By our sin, of which we are guilty, we have become debtors to God's justice, and that neither we ourselves, or any other human, can satisfy that debt owed to God.

- b. The SC answer says, *"we pray that God, for Christ's sake,"*.

The LC expands on this, saying, *"we pray for ourselves and other, that God of his free grace would, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith,"* This is the basic principle of our faith. It can't be said any better than Paul said it in **(Rom 3: 24 – 26 <sup>(24)</sup>Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: <sup>(25)</sup>Whom God hath sent forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; <sup>(26)</sup>To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."**)

Our debt to God is paid through Christ, and through Christ alone.

- c. What is the debt we have, which can only be paid for by Christ?

TV states, *"By "our debts" is meant our sins against God (violations of His revealed will), whereby we are indebted unto his justice, which we can not otherwise satisfy than by undergoing eternal punishment."*

- d. The answer to SC q105 says in part, *"would freely pardon all our sins, which we are rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others"*.

What is meant by the phrase “*which we are rather encouraged to ask*”?

In the Lord’s prayer Christ tells us to pray “***and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.***” Here, Christ is telling us to pray for forgiveness of our sins.

- e. This part of the answer to SC q105 asks that Christ would freely pardon all our sins, “*because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.*”.

What are we talking about here? Does this mean that before our sins can be forgiven, we must, “from the heart”, forgive others? It says “*by his grace,*” indicating that our capability to forgive will be a gift from God. It is not always easy to really and truly remove all feelings of ill from one’s heart.

**(Matt 6: 14 – 15 “<sup>(14)</sup>*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: <sup>(15)</sup>But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will you Father forgive your trespasses.*”)**

**(Matt 18:35 “*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*”)**

Does this mean that if you do not truly forgive all your enemies from your heart, you are condemned to hell? The ability to truly forgive is a part of sanctification, and, as you are renewed in God’s image, you will learn to truly forgive your enemies.

## 8. Summary

- a. In the fourth petition to the Lord’s prayer, we pray that God would bless us with a competent portion of His free gift; not abundant wealth or poverty, but a competent portion of the good things of this life.
- b. And in the fifth petition, we ask that God would freely pardon all our sins, which He directs us to ask for; and that He would enable us, from the heart, to forgive others.