

The Debt Ceiling

This week, the news media has been focused on the approaching deadline for raising the nation's debt limit and how to pay for what we owe as a nation.

The Lord's Prayer is found in Matthew 6, and in many versions of the Bible (KJV, NIV, ESV, NAS), it is translated, "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." Other translations (ISV, NLT) say "And forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us." When we hold resentments and unforgiveness, we basically believe that someone "owes us." Their sin is a debt and repayment is owed us.

A wise "spiritual father" of mine, who knew accounting principles, long ago taught me to keep "short accounts." When I owe someone an apology, I need to do it immediately. When someone offends me, I need to write that account off as a "bad debt" as soon as possible. When I forgive from my heart, I no longer feel that the person who sinned against me owes me anything. The debt has been cancelled.

In the Kingdom, the debt that we owed because of our sin has been paid. It has been cancelled and removed from the account books. But, here is a problem that I see in so many men. We have so much pride that it's hard to accept that the debt was totally paid for us. Often, we keep trying to pay off the debt of our sin, especially those we still struggle with and fall into, even after Jesus paid the price for all sin, past and future. It's as if someone paid off our home mortgage, but we continue to make payments, because, out of pride, we never received that gift. When we do that, we deny that the completed work of Jesus Christ is adequate. In essence, just as Peter did, we deny Christ.

Paying off a mortgage that has already been paid is worthless work which drains and is hopeless. All that work steals from my joy and the energy of what I could really do in the Kingdom. Today, I pray that each of us may come to the revelation of the extent of God's grace and mercy and that we may truly receive the gift he has given us—the mortgage is paid!
