

Forgive Us as We Forgive

by Sandra Brese Rice

Forgive us our sins, just as we also have forgiven those who sin against us. –Matthew 6:12 NIV

When Jesus' disciples, or followers, were with Him, they asked Him how to pray. They asked Him what words they should use when talking to God. Jesus gave them the Lord's Prayer as an example of what we should say in our prayers. It doesn't mean we have to always say that exact prayer, but the Lord's Prayer shows us what we could talk about when saying our own personal prayers. Our Bible verse for today is part of that prayer. **(Reread the Bible verse.)**

The word *grace* has an interesting meaning. When God shows us grace, He loves us, cares for us and forgives us, even though we don't deserve it. We sin and break rules all the time. We don't deserve grace. We think bad things, hurt and disappoint others. We don't deserve grace.

- Can you think of a time when you didn't sin for a whole week? **(No, of course not!)**
- Does God love you anyway? **(Yes!)**

Once, there was a puppy named Casey. Casey was a stinker! She had trouble being good. She didn't want to learn how to sit or stay. She would eat everything in sight and she barked at everyone. She wasn't what people would call well-trained. However, no matter what Casey did, her owner loved her dearly. She cared for her and forgave her, even though she didn't deserve it.

- If you have a pet, what kind of pet is it? What is its name?
- If you don't have a pet, what kind of pet would you like to have?
- What if your pet did not behave; would you love it anyway?
- Why would you love it?

God loves us all the time. God shows us His grace because we are His children. We belong to Him. Even though we don't deserve it, God loves us, just like the pet owner loved Casey.

In our Bible verse today, Jesus says to forgive others just as God forgives us. He wants us to show grace and love to others, no matter what they do. Sometimes this is hard. Sometimes it is hard to forgive others.

- Have you ever had trouble forgiving someone?
- What can you do if you are having trouble forgiving someone?

Prayer

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus into the world to die and save us from our sins.

We are now forgiven!

Help us learn how to practice grace with others by forgiving them and loving them.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

