

The LPG

Forgive Us Our Mess

January 24, 2021

Welcome to where we're learning to allow the Lord to lighten our load!

Ever play with a kid with a dirty diaper? You don't love 'em any less; but it sure throws a damper on things! I smell a smell small bear.



Well, we're learning to pray **the LPG** way, which stands for the **Lord's Prayer Guide**, and directs us to daily **adore our Dad**, **revere our Creator**, **discuss our hallowing** obedience and trust, **kneel to our King** to plan the advance of His kingdom, **pray for willpower** to *do* His will *by* His power, and then **ask for our daily dough** – not too *much* of the stuff that distracts, and not too *little* of the True that sustains. And on the heels of our daily bread, we say "And forgive us our debts".



Shar and I now have five grandsons. And know what our house has in abundance? Love! And dirty diapers. Last Sunday we saw how ...



The Father ... gave us birth by the Word of Truth, – James 1:16-18 NAS

And how the prophets picture Christ giving birth to the church on the cross.



I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. – Isaiah 42:1-14 ESV

... a woman in labor ... gasping for breath, stretching out her hands and saying, "Alas! ... my life is given over to murderers." – Jeremiah 4:31 NIV

And how the True Bread of God not only represents Jesus' body broken and blood poured out at the cross, but also the um ... Biblical connection through His living Word.

The True Bread ... the Bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. ... I am the Bread of Life. ... Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains *in* Me **[like in the womb]**, and I *in* him **[like an umbilical cord]**. ... The Words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are Life. – John 6:32-69 NIV

[Now I want to add what Ezekiel wrote in His Word to God's chosen] Your mother was like a vine in your bloodline ... fruitful and full of branches – Ezekiel 19:10 NKJ

[And then Jesus said] I am the True Vine ... I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides *in* Me **[like in the womb]**, and I *in* him, bears much fruit; – John 15:1, 5 NKJ

Like a mother whose life is inside the child while the child is inside her womb.

When you were dead in your transgressions ... He made you alive **[like a reborn baby]** together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt ... having nailed it to the cross. – Colossians 2:13-14 NAS

And what “daily debt” does every new life owe it’s loving Creator? Love, in return. *Pure* love.

Be imitators of **[Father]** God, therefore, as *dearly loved* children and live a *life of love*, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a *fragrant offering* – Ephesians 5:1-2 NIV



Nothing seems quite as *fragrant* as a freshly washed and powdered baby. Because in that moment **that new-baby-smell is like pure love**. Conversely, nothing is quite as off-putting and pungent as the reason that same baby needed their “debt” wiped clean. A few months ago we talked about living debt free in regard to sin; and I said that **a weight is lifted when a debt is paid**. Well, **same goes for a diaper that’s been changed**.



Whenever we buy into the lie that we can walk in our Father’s blessings without following His warnings, we quickly rack up and pack on a debt load with Dad. Just like what we saw happen when His chosen children took advantage of His grace and made a mess of Dad’s daily manna.



It bred worms and *stank*. – Exodus 16:19-20 NKJ



Today we’re dealing with the debt we pile up with *our* disobedient stankies. Because, we start each day owing Dad 100% of our heart. And if we hold something back, we owe Him something else. **Know what we owe? Unconfessed sin. That’s how He wipes our slate clean.**

What’s the first thing we check when a baby wakes up? Their diaper. Why? Because there’s usually some cleansing that needs to occur right then and thrrr. Well baby, as God’s *spiritually* reborn-children, **it’s up to us to check our own, alone with Dad**. Because, correct me if I’m wrong, but didn’t *Jesus* compare the mess we make with our heart and mouth to the mess we make at the other end? Except of course, saying that our heart and mouth mess is much *worse*?

“Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. “Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of a person’s *mouth* come from the *heart*, and *these* defile them.” – Matthew 15:17-18 NIV

And so we **PRAY**, forgive us whatever debts we’ve carried over till morning; and we **PAUSE** and sniff to get a good whiff of what came out of our heart and/or mouth since the last time we met. And we **PERSONALIZE** this portion by confessing anything that doesn’t pass the smell test.

But **be sincere and keep it simple**. Complete but concise. No one wants to linger over that. Just let Dad see the mess you’ve made, and then let Him do what only He can do, and what He does best. Cleansing us and changing us. Because, **Sin leaves a stain that only the Lord can wipe away**.

As King David cried out after his messy affair:

Wipe away my wrongdoings according to your great compassion! Wash me completely clean of my guilt; purify me from my sin! – Psalm 51:1-2 CEB

You burden Me down with your terrible sins. **[says the Lord]** But I *wipe away* your sins because of who I *am*. And so, I will *forget* the wrongs you have done. – Isaiah 43:24-25 CEB

He not only wipes away our sin, He then wipes His memory bank. He doesn't wipe away the consequences of our sin (no one grows without those), but the wedge it would otherwise drive between us. Makes sense. I mean, **how long do you think about a dirty diaper you tossed in the bin?** If the answer isn't, "Not very long," there's something very wrong!



Imagine getting to Heaven and trying to dredge up some old sins He's cleansed. I think He'd say something like, "You seriously want to dig *those* out of the trash!" Like a debt that's been paid, or a diaper that's been tossed, **our sin and shame is only a thing till it's clean**, and then, like Johnson's Baby Magic, it's gone.

And we're restored to our former fragrant offering of 100% pure love. So, be quick to **recognize**, and **acknowledge**, and **confess** *all* your filth. Because, once that baby's been refreshed, renewed, and recovered, **the rotten is forgotten and our focus is on the fragrant offering**, even though we totally know it's only a matter of time till it's fecal matter time!

Now, this line in the LPG, "forgive us our debts", is not referring to the initial debt of sin that Jesus nailed to the cross to save us and unite us with our Father; that price was paid once for "all our transgressions". And because of this – Praise God! – **our daily debts, like dirty diapers, don't affect our standing as His children** or even our relationship with our Dad; because:

By one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who **[received salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and thereby]** are being made holy. – Hebrews 10:14 NIV

Like spiritual potty training. In the meantime, **in spite of our mess, He's still our Dad**. Just momentarily hindered by the result of unconfessed septic tanks of stanks: the **loss of closeness, pleasantness, harmony, and ability to bless**. But this is when Dad is ready to spring into action!



Because, **our messes don't ruin our relationship, but they sure hamper our fellowship!** Talk about a wet blanket! But just as our reborn relationship is established the moment we repent and receive it, our hampered fellowship is restored and forgotten the moment we confess it. So, **confess your mess so our Dad can bless**.

If you're a *genuine* child of God, **you can't soil yourself without feeling a little shame**. And, that's okay. Good even. It drives us to the only One who can relieve it. But sadly, many try to **repress** it, **rationalize** it, or just **run from** it.

Ever see a toddler keeping their distance and trying to play it off as though they haven't just packed their Pampers like an overstuffed steamer trunk?

Discomfort is our warning that something needs attending. So don't be a baby. Just follow your nose. Dad already knows. And He's ready with the hose! Because, you carry that load too long, and **discomfort becomes distress**; and in the end you'll be in the red with a rash of problems from trying to ignore the obvious skunk in your trunk.

Let Dad lift your sagging spirit. Because the guilt and shame that taxes our heart can only be lightened when we live doody free. And if you do, but still struggle to *feel* forgiven, keep in mind that our Dad *designed* parenting to help us understand *His* heart; and so we know **He wipes away our stankies the way a perfect parent would: immediately, and completely, and freely, and repeatedly.** And with His eyes on the prize of changing us for good.

We're in the process of "being made holy" you know; so He expects a little effort on our end. Because **a diaper isn't supposed to be forever.** Every parent knows what they signed up for, but they also look forward to that blessed day the potty training *takes*. We celebrate that day! And:

You know that He appeared to take away sins, and *in* Him there is *no* sin. No one who abides *in* Him keeps on sinning; [with zero growth or godly sorrow. And] no one who keeps on sinning [with no thought of ever being changed] has either seen Him [as the Father] or known Him. [as the Changer] Little children, let no one deceive you. – 1 John 3:5-7 ESV

It doesn't happen overnight; but it's what we aim for. I swear everything's automatically a pun.

Now if you seem to be stuck in a specific cycle of sin, even though your heart *wants* out, and your mouth *cries* out, **don't doubt Dad's forgiveness, recognize your role in pursuing change.** Take steps, get help, hold yourself accountable, chart your progress, and rejoice daily with Dad over every incremental victory. **Progress isn't defined by points of failure, but periods of victory.** As they grow longer, you grow more godly, and one day the potty training takes.

Ever wrestle with weird feelings of being undeserving of Dad's forgiveness? That lie can start a spiral. You see, **we don't want to feel "disgusting" in Dad's eyes, so we begin to hide our sin from ourselves.** And then, when we do, the "bad" we feel is the built-in alarm of living a lie.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive *ourselves*, and the truth is not in us. [But, as non-intuitive as this might seem] If we *confess* our [mess of] sins, He *is* faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins *and* to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness. – 1 John 1:8-9 NKJ

So, **we can only feel forgiven when we know that we know that Dad knows all our sin.** It might help to remember that God's hand-chosen children were *stubborn* in *their* sin.

They *refused* to obey, and they were not *mindful* of Your *wonders* that You did among them ... and *in* their *rebellion* they appointed a leader to *return* to their *bondage*. But *You* are *God*, ready to *pardon*, gracious and merciful, *slow* to anger, *abundant* in kindness, and did *not* forsake them. – Nehemiah 9:17 NKJ



Ever been so overwhelmed by the filth of your own sin that you can't imagine our perfect Father wanting to embrace you again? Well, **ever had a diaper so bad you just had to stick the kid in the tub? How'd it affect your love?** If it did – in any negative way – you're *nothing* like our Father. **He never tires of cleansing sin.** Not because He's indifferent or undisturbed; but because ...

For *this* purpose the Son of God was *manifested*, that He might *destroy* the works of the devil. – 1 John 3:8 NKJ

Because our Dad gave His kids freewill that needs to be patiently nurtured and trained. Because, **He's determined to have a family**, and specifically to have *you* in it! He's "*made* [you] perfect forever," now He's working on "[making you] *holy*." So just get in the tub if that's what it takes!

The Lord, the Holy One of Israel, saves you, and He says ... "I am the One who wipes away *all* your sins. I *do* this to please *myself*. I will *not* remember your sins. But *you* should remember *Me*. Let's *meet* together and decide what is *right*." – Isaiah 43:14, 25-26 ERV

If you're a genuine child of God, you can't soil yourself without something inside telling you that something's not right. And though we often underestimate the stench of our own sin, we all know, deep down, that we can't get away with it for very long. And **we sure won't outrun it!**

So, daily check that rearview mirror; and then let Dad do what perfect dad's do.

But for now, let's memorize together what we'll personalize alone.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. YOUR kingdom come. YOUR will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ