

TRINITY 24

THE COLLECT

O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences; that through thy bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins, which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.



1. From what do we beseech God to absolve his people?
A. From their _____ (Daniel 9:19)
2. How are we delivered from the bands of our sins?
A. By God's bountiful _____ (Psalm 86:5)
3. What allows us to commit these sins?
A. Our _f_____ (Romans 7:18)
4. For whose sake do we beseech God to grant what we have asked?
A. For _____ sake, our blessed Lord and Savior. (Romans 7:24-25)

INTRODUCTION.

We are drawing near the end of the Christian year, and what have we learnt? (1) How even good deeds are stained by sin. (2) How hard it is to do the good we have learned. And so, in these last two Collects we pray that God will absolve us from sin, and loose our bonds, and stir us up to serve Him better. Today we are to think about the first of these things—Absolution. What does it mean? How may we get it and be sure that we have it? What good will it do us?

- I. EXPLANATION. What does it mean? Absolution does not mean the same thing as forgiveness. It is rather letting us *know* that we are forgiven.



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1. **Illustrations from Scripture.** 1.) *The sick of the palsy* was forgiven as soon as Christ saw his penitence and faith. He was absolved when Christ said, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” (St. Mark 2) 2.) *The sinful woman* was forgiven as soon as her penitence and faith brought her to Christ. She was absolved when Christ said, “Thy sins are forgiven.” (St. Luke 7) 3.) *St. Peter* again was forgiven as soon as he repented, and went out and wept bitterly. He was absolved when Christ restored him, and spoke words which assured him of forgiveness. (St. John 21)
2. **Illustrations in the Prayer Book.** So there is what we call the “Absolution” in the Church Service. The priest pronounces it. But Who really forgives? Who really absolves? “He (that is God) pardoneth and absolveth.” And whom does He absolve? “Them that repent and believe,” that is who fulfill the conditions.

II. EXPERIENCE. How can we get Absolution and be sure that we have it?

1. **Condition.** There must be repentance and faith and confession. We must tell God our sins, and ask Him for pardon. How did the sick of the palsy fulfill this conditions? By making his way to Christ with the help of his friends. How did the sinful woman show her penitence and faith? by the love which led her to seek Jesus and wash His feet with her tears. How did St. Peter show his repentance? When he went out and wept bitterly.
2. **How do we receive Absolution?** It is God speaking to our conscience—to our hearts—which absolves us. Sometimes by a message from His Word. Sometimes by giving us some work to do for Him. Sometimes by a friend showing us, and applying to us God’s promises. Sometimes through the ministry of His Church, through the voice of her ministers when they preach, when they baptize, and when they pronounce the Absolution. (2 Corinthians 2:7, 10) Sometimes ministers declare the conditions on which God would forgive (Acts 2:38, 13:38-39; 16:31; and in the Epistles).

III. THE EFFECT OF ABSOLUTION. What good does it do us?

1. **It looses us from the bond of fear.** We are no longer afraid of the threatening, “the soul that sinneth it shall die.” Christ has died for us, and he has set us free.
2. **It looses us from the bond of bad habits.**
3. **It looses us from the bond of bad companions.** As long as we keep back our sins we are in the power of those who know about them, and perhaps led us into them, That is the reason why bad people don’t want us to confess our sins. They know that when we do they lose their power over us; but what a relief it is to feel that we are free from such a bondage.

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