

## JESUS' FIRST WORDS FROM THE CROSS

### Luke 23:34

**Introduction:** To the Christian, there is no brighter light on earth than on Calvary, for there is the birthplace of his/her hope. For there the penalty for sin was paid, there was the example of supreme love displayed, there is where pardon can be obtained, there is where the sinner is accepted, there is the example of devotion and obedience to God, the Heavenly Father is displayed. *"...Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..."*

### I. JESUS' LOVE TO SINNERS SHOWN

1. Jesus came to earth *"...to seek and to save..."*
  - Jesus searched for sinners when He was healthy and strong and spent His active life doing that.
  - In His last hour Jesus is still thinking about the lost sinners, about to die, yet He was still seeking the lost.
  - Unable to preach and teach anymore He could still pray for sinners and that's what He did with His very first words from the cross.
2. It was not pain and agony that He felt from the nails that Jesus thought about, He gave no thought about Himself, but His concern was still for those He came to seek, the lost, the unsaved.
  - It is natural to pray for friends and family and the sick.
  - It is unnatural to pray for those who scorned you, spit in your face, scourged you with lashes, mocked you and then nailed your hands and feet to a cross, suspended you between heaven and earth on a cross.
3. Yet the very first words out of the mouth of Jesus were: *"...Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..."*

### II. HOW JESUS SHOWED HIS LOVE TO/FOR SINNERS

1. Jesus could have done anything He wanted to, even from the cross. How did Jesus prove His love in His last hour?
  - It was by prayer.
  - If Jesus would prove His love for those sinners and sinners today (us), He does it by praying for sinners (us).
2. Prayer is of extreme value.
  - From the cross Jesus prayed an intercessory prayer for sinners, proving His love for all sinners.
  - If Christians pray for sinners, it proves their love for sinners also.
  - *"...Father forgive me...Father forgive them..."*
  - How can any Christian not pray for him/herself and others when Jesus leads the way?
  - Is there not someone YOU could pray for this very moment?

### III. JESUS PRAYED FOR SOMETHING SPECIFIC

1. Jesus asked His Heavenly Father to forgive them.
  - Jesus would pray the very same prayer for us today for it is just as suitable now as then.
  - People had nailed Jesus to the cross, they needed pardon for killing their Savior.
    - Those how cried out "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" needed to be forgiven.
    - Any who did not know who Jesus really was and had a part in His crucifixion.
2. What about US today? Have not all of us sinned also with our heart, mind, tongues, omission?
  - Are these sins nothing? Is there no feeling of sorrow and regret for sins?
  - Jesus' prayer covers us today as well as those who put Jesus on the cross.
  - Praying our very best prayer, don't we also ask God to forgive us of our sins?

### IV. WHO DID JESUS MAKE HIS PRAYER FOR ?

1. *"...Father, forgive THEM, for THEY know not what THEY do..."*
  - Jesus mentioned NO names:
    - Not the four soldiers who nailed Him to the cross but He meant them.
    - Not the names of those who cried "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" but He meant them.
    - Not the ones who had beaten, scourged and spit upon Him, but He meant them.
    - Not the religious leaders who hated Him, but He meant them.
    - Everybody who did not know WHO He really, actually was.
2. Jesus did not say, *"...Father, forgive them, for they know not what they DID...or what they SHALL do..."*
  - Jesus put everything in the present, which included past sins and future sins, therefore all sins.
3. "Who" is included in His word *"...them..."*?
  - Those who did not know who He really was.
  - Who has had a part in putting Jesus on the cross?
    - What about YOUR own sins?
4. There are some who cannot be included in Jesus prayer for forgiveness.
  - People like Judas, who willingly, deliberately sold Jesus, knowing who He was.
  - People like Pilate, who knew exactly what he was doing when he condemned Jesus to the cross.
  - People who deliberately sin, openly defying, denying, ridiculing, laughing at Jesus Christ and His great sacrifice on the cross, not caring who Jesus says He is.
  - Thus people who are like this commit the "unpardonable sin..."
5. Jesus' prayer is for all who sin ignorantly, not knowing, not fully understanding who Jesus really is and what the results of their sin will bring/cause.
  - Breaking laws must be paid for and Jesus paid for those who broke God's laws, not knowing the effects and results, or even knowing that they broke God's laws.
  - Who among us knows the full extent of what our sins can do?
  - To pray, "Father, forgive me of my sins" and mean it is to recognize that sin has been committed and it needs to be taken care of, deleted, forgiven.

## CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus' prayer was not for those who knew exactly what they were doing.
  - Some sins committed against spiritual light and knowledge harden the heart to the extent that a person just will never repent and he/she will go to hell.
  - Some have heard the Gospel over and over and have constantly said "no, no, no" to God's call and their hearts have become hardened to the Holy Spirit's call.
  - Some people know exactly what they are doing, such as listening to the sermon on Sunday, saying "I'll try to do better" but through the following week, it was back into their sinful way of living, deliberately choosing to sin.
  - There is a point in people's lives after deliberately choosing to do wrong (sin), knowing it was wrong (sin) with conscience bothered and the Holy Spirit convicting, yet they deliberately choose to give up Jesus, heaven, pardon of their sins, they have chosen hell.
  - There are those who know exactly what they are doing, taking the hammer and nailing Jesus up on the cross, taking a spear and piercing His side and do it all knowing what they are doing and making fun of Jesus, the cross, His blood, and the Word of God and His Church, what can be said of and for these people?
  
2. Jesus' prayer calls and warns.
  - It calls the ignorant, "***...Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do...***"
  - If YOU have been living a life of sin and you knew it was sin, but you did not know that it was nailing Jesus to the cross, you did not realize that Jesus was really who He said He was. You did not mean to sin against God so as to crucify Jesus, then Jesus says "***...Come to me, come to me, I have prayed for you, you unknowing one...***"
  - If YOU are among those who have been living a life of sin and enjoying it, knowing it was not what you should have been doing, knowing that your sins were nailing Jesus to the cross all over again, you deliberately have made fun of the Church, the Cross, knowing Jesus is who He says He is, then a warning to you for you may not be forgiven of such sins.
  
3. Christians, Jesus' prayer is an example for us. He constantly thought of others and even in His dying moments, His thoughts were not on Himself, but on those who had put Him on the cross.