

Forgiveness

“Father, forgive them”

Foundation

Bible passage : Luke 23.34

Forgiveness was a regular theme in Jesus' teaching, but it can be hard to forgive others when we feel we have been wronged. Often what we really want to do is strike back and get revenge. Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive when his brother did wrong against him and obviously thought he was being spiritual when he himself suggested seven times. But Jesus replied he should forgive seventy times seven (Matthew 18.21-22).

Some of the parables of Jesus also concern forgiveness. The Prodigal Son was forgiven by his father, but his brother found it very difficult. Whilst the Unforgiving Servant was forgiven much, but refused to forgive a little.

Jesus wasn't just someone who talked about forgiveness. When He hung dying on the cross, He prayed for those who had crucified Him saying “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” This has been an example Christians have tried to follow since beginning with Stephen, the first of many followers of Jesus who have been put to death for their faith. Stephen was stoned by a crowd who disliked what he was saying and as

“everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name”

he died, he fell to his knees and cried out “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” (Acts 7.60)

Jesus taught about forgiveness and forgave people, but even more importantly He died that others might be forgiven which makes His words on the cross even more amazing.

At the Last Supper, on the evening before the crucifixion Jesus passed around a cup of wine and said, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Matt. 26.28) It is not simply that Jesus says we can be forgiven, or prays for our forgiveness, but because He died, shedding His blood, that we might be forgiven (see also Ephesians 1.7 and Colossians 1.14). But this forgiveness is not just automatic, we must accept who Jesus is and why He died. Therefore “everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name” (Acts 10.43).

**Father,
forgive
them, for
they know**

**not what they do. Truly, I say to
you, today you will be with me
in paradise. Woman, behold,
your son! - Behold, your mother!**

**My God, my
God, why
have you
forsaken me?
I thirst.
It is finished.
Father, into
your hands
I commit
my spirit!**



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