

# Series: **Seven Sayings of Christ on the Cross**

The Bible speaks about a cross that identifies an event in history where a tragic death occurred, but this death was no accident - God planned for it to happen.

**This is the cross that Jesus Christ was crucified on.**

**Often when someone dies, their last words are remembered.** Throughout this series of talks we will discuss the significance of Jesus' last words just before His death and what they mean to us.

## Part 1: **FORGIVENESS**

*Luke 23:34 "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing..."*

C.S. Lewis: *"We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it."*

**Forgiveness is NOT an EMOTION; it is a DECISION of our WILL!**

**Q: Do you find forgiveness hard to give? If so why?**

- Jesus' cry of forgiveness declares that no one is beyond the reach of His forgiveness.
- Jesus' cry of forgiveness highlights our greatest need.
- Jesus' whole purpose for dying on the cross was to create a pathway for us to have a relationship with God the Father.
- Betrayal is a difficult offence to forgive!
- Jesus forgave Judas' offence and refused to let it come between them.
- **How do we respond to people who betray or wrong us?**  
*Do we remain offended? Are we willing to let it go? Do we form a grudge?*

**It is better to FORGIVE than to RESENT!**

Unforgiveness is like a 'spiritual cancer', once discovered it needs to be cut out, otherwise it will spread and it will negatively influence our hearts and attitudes.

**Q: Describe what damage unforgiveness does in a person's life?**  
*(Share any personal experiences)*

**Matthew 18:15 nasb** *If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother.*

*Matthew 18:21 nlt* Then Peter came to Him (Jesus) and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?”

Every day we are candidates for someone to offend us. The issue is **NOT** whether we get offended! Rather, will we **CHOOSE** forgive them?

*Matthew 18:22 nlt* “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”

**Jesus was encouraging Peter to DEVELOP the HABIT of forgiveness.**

*Mark 11:25 nlt* When you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.

*Ephesians 4:32 nlt* Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

*Colossians 3:13 nlt* You must make allowance for each other’s faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

**Forgiveness does not AUTOMATICALLY mean we TRUST!**

- Forgiveness begins with a choice - a decision of our will.
- Trust has to be earned - through a process of accountability.  
*It may take a period of time for our heart to catch up to our choice to forgive.*

**Q: How do you know when you have really forgiven someone?  
Can you describe that feeling?**

**Will you RECEIVE God’s GIFT of forgiveness?**

*Romans 6:23 niv* The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Jesus took the punishment of our sin upon Himself through to His death!**  
Our sin, shame and guilt were nailed with Him on the cross.

*Psalms 103:12 niv* As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Remember, Forgiveness is **NOT** an **EMOTION**; it is a **DECISION** of our **WILL**!

*1 John 1:9 cev* ...if we confess our sins to God, He can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away.