

## 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.

***Q: How do you respond to people who betray or wrong you?***

*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.

***Hebrews 12:15 (nlt)*** Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no

*poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.*

**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 is 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?***

**Jesus took the punishment of our sin upon Himself through His death!**

**Our sin, shame and guilt were nailed with Him on the cross.**

*Psalm 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**!

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.*

*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.*