Forgiveness!!
“An Example to Follow”
Luke 23:34-45
Sermon Outline


1. **Understand the need:**
   
a) Jesus’ physical pain did not stop Him from doing what God said. The pain did not move Him to be self-centered.
b) Christ needs God’s mercy because He is on the cross when He requested God’s grace. All of mankind’s sin is upon Him when He prays to God.
   - We are not sinless when we talk about someone else’s sin (Matthew 6:12).
d) Despite the fact that these men never asked for forgiveness, Christ removed their debt towards Him so God could demonstrate His love for these lost men. At least one soldier’s heart was turned to God (Matthew 27:54).
e) Christ spoke to God first, not to the soldiers because to forgive starts with our need for God (Matthew 6:14-15; 1 John 3:19-22).
f) Christ did not come down from the cross and to have a wonderful relationship with these soldiers. His focus was for them to have a relationship with God. (Matthew 18:21-35).

2. **Reverence the source:**
   
a) God could be referred to as Father here because He is the one who is giving birth to a new group of spiritual children.
b) A caring Father and a loving Son. Remember God’s love caused Christ’s pain (Psalm 35:9-16).
c) Christ understood the power of God, the holiness of God, but also recognized His heart for man even when man was at his worse. To only remember God’s holiness can cause us to be unforgiving.
d) The only person that can save someone from God’s wrath is the person who has a relationship with God. Sometimes we want God to do something to those who offended us, just like David (Psalm 35:1-8), but we must remember that God is ‘slow to anger and abounding in love.’ (Numbers 14:18; Psalm 86:5; Jonah 4:2)

3. **Reverence God’s purpose:**
   
a) To be delivered from the penalty of sin that was imposed by God who is holy and righteous. This removal from the penalty of sin was comprehensively achieved due to the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. Forgiveness cost God more than it can ever cost us. (Luke 17:3-4; Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-35)
b) The soldiers were granted forgiveness without asking because they lacked Biblical knowledge; ‘they do not know what they are doing.’
c) Christ’s heart was one of reconciliation (Romans 14:19).

4. It Brought no Change to a Relationship:

  a) Remember they don’t even know where they are in their relationship with God (Matthew 22:36-40; 1 John 2:3-6, 9-10; 4:1-7). We would not get where we are without God and they would not either.
  
  - The soldier’s lack of a complete knowledge of Christ led them to do things that they probably would not do if they knew who they were crucifying. (Matthew 27:54).
  - The energy they are exerting is being done in complete ignorance.

5. Christ demonstrates the heart of a true Savior. He genuinely cared for the lost (Luke 19:10).


1. Matthew 27:44 and Mark 15:32 - They were speaking abusively towards Christ trying to make Him out to be as worthless as they were; “such statements were regarded by the Jews of biblical times as being harmful and injurious to the nature of God.”[1] The purpose of these kinds of statements was to be inflammatory.
2. These statements were being repeated continuously and were directed to Christ.
   a) They mocked Christ by sarcastically stating that if He is Christ, then He should have the power to deliver them.
3. The other robber responded to the insults and abusive words of the other robber on the cross. Everything stopped with this response.
4. The robber continuously found fault with what the other robber is saying.
5. The robber asked the other robber if he was not himself continuously intimated by the power of Christ. Christ power should lead him to back down from saying all the abusive things he was saying. This robber knew of the ministry of Christ before the cross and accepted it as real. It is not until now he knows he needs Christ. How many times it is not until a crisis that we reach out for Christ. The grace of Christ never holds this against us.
6. Once and for all compared to Christ they are continuously being paid back for what they have done.
7. Christ has repeatedly practiced no wrong. Again, this robber knew of Christ before the cross.
8. The robber repeatedly spoke.
9. The robber commanded Christ to remember him. This robber is demonstrating a conviction about whose Christ is because he said ‘when you come into Your kingdom.’ He accepted Christ as King.
10. The robber expects Christ to be in a place where He is king. He views Christ as still being in control even though Christ is on the cross.


1. Christ breaks his silence and responds to the robber’s request. Jesus made a conscious decision to not remain silent because of the thief’s faith.
2. It did not matter if the thief ask for this at the last minute.
3. Christ said amen – ‘so be it’ or ‘let it be so’. The love of God directs everything.
   a) This dying thief confessed his sinfulness.
   b) The dying thief testified to the innocence of the Lord when he said. “this man has done nothing wrong.”
   c) “Lord, remember me” – He saw Jesus as a Savior – a great act of faith.
   a) “When you come in Your kingdom” – He accepted Christ Kingship.
   b) Christ blesses this man for his demonstration of faith. This faith is demonstrated when Christ seem powerless and defeated. This is a tremendous act of faith. A faith that even Christ disciples did not have.
5. Jesus kept saying the same thing as if He did not intend to stop.
6. It is the dwelling place of God where committed souls go after death. It is also considered to be in the 3rd heavens based on 2 Corinthians 12:4 and can represent a park or enclosed garden.
7. Forgiveness takes us places that only God can provide.