



death by love

4. The Sound of Mercy

Luke 23:34

- “Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”
- Shocking words

1. A Great Mercy

Mercy in the Request – “Father forgive them”

- He keeps on praying for those harming him
- Foretold in Isaiah 53:12
- Shows that no-one can be too bad for forgiveness
- Jesus is praying for time for them to repent
- When we doubt our forgiveness we need to stand and hear these words

Mercy in the Reason – “for they do not know what they are doing”

- They didn’t grasp that he was God – 1 Cor 2:8
- Ignorance is no excuse – forgiveness still needed
- But ignorance allows for forgiveness – 1 Tim 1:13,14
- What patient mercy was shown to us time and time again

2. A Great Opportunity

- Note: Jesus isn’t forgiving them, more like announcing the opportunity of forgiveness from the Father
- We see the response in Acts 2-4 – thousands of people turning to Jesus.
- Acts 3:17 – they had acted in ignorance. Forgiveness was being held out
- Make sure you have accepted this offer

3. A Great Substitute

- Jesus was well capable of forgiving sins – Matt 9:2,6; Luke 7:48
- Why not here?
- He is on the cross as sin-bearer not sin-forgiver
- He is my substitute – the Father needed to do the forgiving because Jesus was doing the bearing of the sins which needed forgiven.
- He has held you and your sins up to the Father and said, “Father forgive them”

4. A Great Challenge

A Challenge to Love him more

- How can we hear these words and not love him more?

A Challenge to Trust him amidst difficulties

- “Father” – in the midst he still calls God ‘Father’
- Do we distrust God’s fatherly care?



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A Challenge to Forgive as Christ forgave

- Do we harbour resentment, bitterness, grudges?
- Do we water our grudges with our remembering?
- Staying unforgiving questions our claim to be Christians

A Challenge to Pray

- To pray for those who make life hard for us
- To pray for the hard cases
- To pray when we can do nothing else

A Challenge to Obey

- “for they do not know what they are doing”
- We know a lot from God’s word. We need to do it – James 4:17