



This week started our Easter series looking at the 7 saying of Jesus, spoken by him while on the cross. This week was Luke 23:34 – “Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” Forgiveness in any relationship is very powerful, because often what we want is revenge. To forgive required humility and love and the willingness to let go. However, to receive forgiveness can be difficult. Perhaps we doubt the one offering it, or we deny the need for it. This week’s focus was to mediate on how amazing God’s forgiveness in Jesus is for all of us who believe.

Forgiveness is amazing because we don’t deserve it

Jesus prays to his heavenly father asking him to forgive his persecutors right in the midst of terrible suffering. As you read Luke 22 & 23 we observe different groups of people all persecuting Jesus; whether through physical or verbal assault with beatings and insults, or through wearing Pilate down by shouting Crucify him! Whether by falsely accusing him in court or nailing him to the cross. We weren’t at the cross that day but we are guilty of rejecting and abusing God by our natural rebellion and disobedience to him as our loving creator God. None of us deserve the forgiveness God offers.

Forgiveness is amazing because Jesus paid the highest price to achieve it

For God to forgive sin, sin must still be punished/dealt with. Jesus, through his death absorbs the cost of forgiveness by bearing God’s wrath and removing the sin that separates us from God. The Bible tells us that there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. Jesus is our once and for all blood sacrifice making forgiveness possible. He offers forgiveness by taking on the judgement.

Forgiveness is amazing because it is for everyone who believes

Did God forgive Jesus’ persecutors? Does God forgive the worst of crimes? Jesus has paid the price to forgive anyone if they believe in his death. God forgave the Roman Centurion when he believed (Mark 15:39). God forgave all those who at the cross that day who then repented of their sins when hearing the gospel preached by the apostles in the book of Acts. God forgives anyone who believes. The good news of forgiveness is needed in our society today so let’s go boldly to declare it.

Here are some questions to get some discussion and application going...

How would you define forgiveness? What does it look like to forgive?
Why might we find it difficult to receive forgiveness?

Read Luke 22:54-23:38

Who were the different groups of people involved in Jesus’ arrest, trial and crucifixion and why didn’t they deserve forgiveness?

How is it that Jesus says, “they do not know what they are doing?” (Check out Acts 2: 22-23; 3:17-18; 13:27) What were the reasons as far as the Jewish leaders were concerned for crucifying Jesus?

How does the Bible communicate the fact that everyone is in need of forgiveness? (talk about God being our creator to whom we’re accountable and the seriousness and consequences of sin) Have you ever thought if you would have been in that crowd on that day shouting, ‘crucify him’?

Why can’t God just forgive? How at the cross do we see forgiveness possible? What does the OT sacrificial system illustrate to us about how forgiveness works? (Read Hebrews 9:1-22) and how does Jesus offer a better way for forgiveness? How high a price did Jesus pay to bring forgiveness to his people?

Did God answer Jesus’ prayer? How do these passages of scripture show us the answer particularly for those who were there at the scene? (Mark 15:33-39; Acts 2:38-41; 3:17-26; 13:38-39)

Is there anything stopping you from receiving God’s forgiveness? How do you struggle with this? Do you agree that forgiveness is amazing? Why does our society need to hear this message?