

Jesus Crucified, Dead and Buried

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[0 : 0 0] Father, we confess before you that we flatter ourselves too much to detect or hate our own sin. We confess before you that it could have been our hands that nailed your son's hands to the cross, that it could have been our mouths which join with the soldiers or the priests in mocking you, that, Father, we could very well have been these people, and we could very well, Father, have agreed with everything they did.

So, Father, we confess before you that we flatter ourselves too much to detect or hate our own sin. We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would gently but deeply come upon us, that your Holy Spirit would gently and deeply move amongst us, that you would create within us, Father, a pliable, tender hearts that are receptive and responsive to your word and to the moving of your Holy Spirit, that you would create within us, Father, a desire to see just how great and full of grace Jesus is and what he accomplished for us, and that you would fan into flame within us a deep longing and yearning to follow him, to obey him, to be available to him, to be more like him, and to live to bring you glory.

Father, you know that there's things in our hearts that don't want to do any of those things, so we ask for a mighty work of your Holy Spirit in our midst, as we read and think about your word and think about your Son.

And this we ask in Jesus' name, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. So, some of you know that I go to Starbucks sometimes.

And so a couple of months ago, a fellow that I've gotten to know in a Starbucks who's a Christian, he said he wanted to talk to me about a problem that he was having. And the problem was that about a month earlier, whatever it was, a group of guys were together, and the guys were joking the way guys joke.

[2 : 0 5] And I'll call them Andy and Bob. And Andy, completely made up names, okay? Andy and Bob. It helps me to remember A and B. That's why I chose Andy and Bob.

And so Andy, I guess, during the course of them joking around, said a couple of things that deeply wounded Bob. And so Bob sent an email a couple of days later.

And in the email, he told Andy that some of the things that Andy had said had really, really, really cut him to the quick and really hurt him. And so Andy gets the email.

And I mean, this is what he's telling me, right? And so Andy gets the email, and he immediately fires off an email back to Bob and apologizes for what he did.

Said he didn't mean it, didn't mean to hurt it, but he could see now that it probably did hurt him. And he asked, you know, he said, I'm really, really sorry. You know, can we maybe talk about this?

[3 : 0 3] Because I want to be friends. Bob responded that he'd been hurt too deeply to forgive Andy. And you know the way these things go.

This has probably happened to you. Bob didn't just leave it like that. But Bob added a couple of zingers about Andy, about what Andy's character was like and how Andy acted.

And Andy, he got this zinger back, and he was hurt by it, but he decided that he would just reiterate his apology and not respond to the zingers. And so he fired back an email again, and once again just reiterating that he was really sorry.

He wouldn't do it again. He hoped he'd never do it again. Could they talk? Bob sent back another email after a little while, saying, no, I don't want to talk. You've really hurt me. I'm really angry at you still.

And then, of course, Bob added a couple of extra zingers. And this went on for a little while. Bob not answering the phone call, Andy leaving messages. And so Andy asked me what he should do.

[4 : 09] The gospel text that we just looked at, just read a couple of moments ago, has a lot of very interesting things to teach us about this particular situation. And all of us have probably been in similar types of situations.

If we're honest, sometimes we've been the Andy, and sometimes we've been the Bob. So it would be a great help to me if you would open your Bibles, and let's just look at this story and see what the story of the death of Jesus upon the cross and his burial have to teach us about this story that I've just told you, a true story about Andy and Bob.

And so we're going to begin reading it. It's Luke chapter 23, if you've forgotten what the text was, and we're going to begin reading it, the 26th verse. And what's just happened before, if you remember from two weeks ago, is three weeks ago we looked at how the Jewish leadership did an inquiry into Jesus.

They came to the conclusion. They already knew. They were just looking for evidence to get him guilty of something that would be a capital offense. And then two weeks ago we looked at the inquiry of Pilate and Herod, and Pilate and Herod had concluded that Jesus was innocent.

He was sort of very foolish and impractical, but he was innocent. But because of utilitarian ethics, which, by the way, is what most Canadians practice and how they understand right and wrong, but by utilitarian ethics they decided it was a lot easier just to have Jesus die.

[5 : 33] Pilate decided it was a lot easier for Jesus to die than to have all the other problems. And so that's where the story continues in verse 26. And as they led Jesus away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus.

Just sort of pause there for a very little second. Simon's from Africa. Just so you know, Simon's from Africa. So it's an African who carries the cross beam for Jesus the rest of the way to this place of the skull.

Verse 27. And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for Jesus. But turning to them, Jesus said, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

For behold, the days are coming when they will say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed. Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us and to the hills, cover us.

For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry? And just sort of pause, keep your finger here for a second. Some of you might, if you know the Bible very well, you can hear echoes of the book of Revelation there, and you can hear echoes of different Old Testament texts in there.

[6 : 55] But the thing I just wanted to do as we pause is that this prediction of Jesus comes true 33 to 36 years after he speaks it.

And it's 33 to 36 because it's not clear whether Jesus is crucified in the year 30 or the year 33. There's evidence that can go both ways. But what we do know is that in the year 66, the war of the Jews against the Romans began.

And it was to be interrupted, but it was to go over four years. And the Jewish people were to lose that war very badly. The city of Jerusalem would eventually be completely and utterly destroyed.

Over a million Jewish people would die in the war and over 100,000 would be taken into slavery and spread across the empire. And so the words of Jesus are fulfilled 33 to 36 years after he speaks them.

Now, just before we sort of keep reading, one of the things you've already maybe noticed is that there's, Luke seems to leave some stuff out of his gospel.

[8 : 09] And maybe it's a little, and I know sometimes when I talk to people in places like Starbucks and all about the Bible, they'll mention how the different accounts in the gospel seem to contradict each other.

I just want to say to you that Luke does leave things out that others talk about, but there's actually no contradictions. It would be another talk, like maybe a Saturday morning or an evening exercise to take the four different historical records of the death of Jesus, his crucifixion, and show you how there's different types of narratives that all would equally put all of the verses together.

But Luke, just because of the way he's telling his story, he chooses to bring certain things in and leave others out. So, for instance, he leaves out that Jesus began by carrying the cross. He leaves out that Jesus had been scourged and stuff like that.

But that's just quite normal. Yesterday, there was about nine or ten of us who were involved, or eleven of us, who were involved in the big give in Ottawa. And if afterwards you were to talk to a couple of us about what happened, we all wouldn't tell you the exact same thing.

We're all there. None of us are lying. None of us are hiding anything. None of us are trying to create contradictions. But we didn't get together and we'd just tell you different things. Maybe the things from our perception that were the most telling or the most interesting thing about the day.

[9 : 27] And that's what happens here with the four historical writers. Luke has the particular points that he wants to bring out. And so that's why we see some differences in the different accounts.

But it's been known for 1,800, 1,900 years, Christians have effortlessly put these different bits and pieces together to make different types of, to make a narrative that makes sense.

So, you know, you don't have to be worried about it because we're about to come to something that only Luke records. All four of the historical records of the death of Jesus all mention that he was crucified between two criminals.

But only Luke is to record what we next see in verse 39, or sorry, verse 32. Two others who were criminals were led away to be put to death with Jesus.

And when they came to the place that is called the skull, there they crucified him and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

[10 : 31] And just sort of pause there for a second. We're going to actually spend a good part of this sermon looking just at that verse, that little part of a verse. But, you know, what I'm going to do, I want us to see the whole story because, you know, one of the things which people who have maybe been involved in more conservative types of Christian churches, and then they leave, maybe to just become spiritual, I shouldn't say just, to become spiritual but not religious, or to become part of a church which practices more a residual form of Christianity rather than full, vibrant Christianity.

They'll often complain that Christians take things out of context. And so what I want to do is, even though we're going to spend a good chunk of time meditating upon these words of Jesus upon the cross, I want us to see the full context, the full story of what happened, so that when we come back and we spend some time meditating upon these few words, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do, we can, in a sense, grasp the full power of it and see that I'm not going to say anything that is out of context with the text.

So we'll see that again. Verse 34, And Jesus said, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do, and they cast lots to divide his garments. And just pause. The implication of this text is that Jesus was crucified naked.

In other words, this picture here is wrong. Wrong. Jesus also probably didn't have blonde hair, and he was probably pretty hairy. But, you know, apart from that, he was probably crucified naked because part of the whole purpose of crucifixion was not only to create a very, very horrible form of death, but the reason it was reserved to slaves in the lowest orders in the Roman Empires is because it was to humiliate the person as much as possible.

Verse 35, And the people stood by watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, He saved others. Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one.

[12 : 36] The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine. In other words, they present him wine as if he's a king, you know, and saying, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

There was also an inscription over him. This is the king of the Jews. And you see that the Jewish leaders mock him because he claims to be the Messiah, and the soldiers mock him because he claims to be a king, as if there could be any king that can defy the emperor, the great Caesar, who is also a god.

And we see that Jesus dies upon the cross as the king of the Jews. Just to reiterate something I said very briefly two weeks ago, no Christian should ever be anti-Semitic because a Christian has given his or her life to the king of the Jews.

No Christian should ever have any anti-Semitism in their life because we give ourselves to the king of the Jews. That's how he dies. So, we're about now to see something as we start to read the next few verses as we go into verse 39.

There's some gruesome images sort of just very, very briefly, you know, put into the text.

[14 : 06] It's a very, very simple word that actually is a very gruesome image. It's verse 39. One of the criminals who are hanged nailed at him. This is just reminding us that Jesus is literally hanging from the wood.

And he's not hanging from the wood because he's gripping it with his hands and hanging, but the nails have been put just underneath, sort of there.

And he's literally hanging from the cross because the nails are holding him there. So, in the next little bit as we, it's part of the thing which is so striking about the text is that one man who's also hanging, hanging by nails and his blood is dripping down on the ground and all of that and he's going to be mocking Jesus just as the chief priests and just as the soldiers did.

And another man on the other side of Jesus who's also literally being held up on the cross by nails and his blood is dripping down and he's going to have a conversion.

You know, I said to you that there's these different accounts in the Gospels and they're all, they're four historical records of the death and resurrection of Jesus and they don't all tell you the same things and only Luke tells you this particular detail.

[15 : 33] The other three or two of the other three will tell you that both thieves mocked Jesus. And one of the Gospels will tell you that Jesus was in a sense nailed to the cross at around 9 a.m.

in the morning. John's Gospel, the time's given different because it uses a different time system. It's like the difference between those of us who use a, you know, 12 hours versus a 24-hour clock.

You know, that some people will say it's, you know, 1,300 hours as opposed to 1 o'clock in the afternoon. John has a different way of keeping the time than the other three Gospel writers and it's clear that in Mark that Jesus is crucified at 9 a.m.

and it's clear in Mark and Matthew that from 9 a.m. till approximately noon that both thieves are going to mock Jesus. but the Bible doesn't tell us why but it just tells us that for some reason both are hanging from the cross, both are dying, both are completely and utterly humiliated in front of the crowd and one man's response to this is to pick on Jesus and another man's response was to pick on Jesus but for some reason which we do not know, somewhere between 9 in the morning and noon the second man's heart was changed and it's actually a credit to show the historical nature of this account is that Luke doesn't tell us why he changed his mind because how could he tell us how he changed his mind?

He could only tell us how he changed his mind. Luke could only tell us how he changed his mind if the man survived and then could sit down with Luke over a glass of wine and say, oh yeah, I was on the cross and this really struck me and this really struck me and this really struck me and it felt like the Holy Spirit coming upon me but no, we don't know that because as we know sometime after this the man after never leaving the cross is going to die and so nobody can ask the man why is it that you changed?

[17 : 36] All we can see is that Luke records that for some reason that one man seeing the same thing that everybody else sees and experiencing the same thing that the other thief sees that he has a profound and deep change in his life.

Listen to it here. Verse 39. One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Jesus saying, are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us. But the other rebuked him saying, do you not fear God since you are under the same sentence of condemnation and we indeed justly?

For we are receiving the due reward of our deeds but this man has done nothing wrong. Here's this profound act of faith. It's one of the most touching moments I think in all of the Gospels these next couple of verses.

And the thief says, Jesus, remember the man is hanging on the cross. The blood from his back and the blood from his arms and the blood from his feet are dripping on the ground.

And that's what Jesus is happening to Jesus as well. And the thief says, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And one of the things which is so remarkable about this is that in the original language he just has this trust in Jesus within the Jewish religious terms that aren't really quite what God's going to do and Jesus doesn't then say to him, oh dear man, you've just failed the theology test and your ethics are terrible and I wish I had more time to actually set you straight on the need of federal incorporation and headship and sacramental theology and atonement and I wish you could be baptized and have communion first and no Jesus, what is Jesus?

[19 : 39] Just to say that stuff. This man says, Jesus, when you come into your kingdom, in other words, when the resurrection happens in the last days, but it's your kingdom, Jesus, that's the great thing.

It's Jesus, it's your kingdom, your kingdom and when it comes, remember me, remember me, remember me. Jesus says to him in verse 43 and it says here in English, truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.

No Christian, no matter how much they're suffering and they are close to death, I should say, every Christian, we should remember that when we are close to death, we are just moments away from paradise.

Jesus, by saying truly I say to you in the original language, is a very, very solemn pronouncement and it's very, very, it's very, very moving.

Now, this is the first of two or three or four times I'm going to mention how the gospel is very un-Canadian and very un-American and I'm just going to point it out and in some ways it's so un-Canadian, all I can do is tell you that it's very un-Canadian and I can't necessarily argue or prove to you that Canadians are wrong and the Bible is right, but I just want to point it out that it's very un-Canadian.

[21 : 07] If you, if we were to go afterwards the service and just walk up and down, go to the University of Ottawa and go up and down King Edward and go along Rideau Street and we were just to have a bit of a, you know, a pad with a question and ask you what happens when you die.

I don't know what, maybe 80, 90% of the people that we would talk to would say I will go to a better place and maybe some will just say when you die, that's it, but probably everybody would say I go to a better place and this, these next few verses just are very, very, very, very un-Canadian because Canadians believe that we're just going to go to a better place it's not necessarily a place where God is but if there is a God he's a wimpy type of God, a distant God who basically will now in the better place just cater to our needs and we might mock Muslims for thinking that they're going to go and spend time with virgins but the fact of the matter is that the Canadians while we might not have a crudely sexual type of an image of it that in fact we have a crudely self-centered materialistic image of it that we just go to a better place where God will cater to wherever he needs and the average Canadian they have no type of basis as to why that might be true or why

I mean really it's just it's both on one hand an intuition of life is more there's something more than life but it's also a great sign of the great overwhelming and I don't mean to offend if you're a guest but it's a great type of presumption actually that just because I'm me when I die I go to a better place and these next few verses are going to really show us that the Bible's view of God and what happens is very very very very very un-Canadian and very different verse 44 it was now about the sixth hour and that means around noon and we're going to see here that there's two miracles that happen they're just miracles they're just God does something God is revealed not as being distant and absent but God shows up and does something it was about the sixth hour and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour three o'clock in the afternoon the brightest time of the day and while the sun's light failed and the curtain of the temple was torn in two the religious leaders and the Romans had been mocking Jesus

God now shows up and performs two miracles and his miracles in a sense are both a mocking of the pretensions of the soldiers in the Roman Empire and it is a mocking of the pretensions of the chief priests and the Jewish religious leaders it is both a mocking and it's a warning in other words the true and living God is not a tame God is not a wimpy God is not a distant God he's not a God that we can just take lightly and pretend that he is exactly a God who will only fulfill our needs and wishes because ultimately we are the center of the universe I am the center of the universe the God who truly does exist the God who's revealed here in the scriptures he now mocks and warns the Romans first the Romans and then the Jewish people how does he do that?

the Romans believed in omens and so every emperor the death of an emperor the ascension of an emperor was marked with omens and you know those were made up they were made up or they'd find something and say oh that's the omen you know but they're looking for it because it has to be there but most of the time it's just it's just made up it's just invented and these Roman soldiers are standing there and they maybe they believe the made up stuff but what they and maybe they don't maybe they know it's just made up but they're there and an omen happens it's eleven o'clock eleven fifteen eleven thirty eleven forty five and then somewhere around noon the sun's light fails and it fails for three hours and as the sun's light returns

[25 : 47] Jesus died Jesus actually dies on the cross and then moments after he dies the light returns and good grief if you are a Roman soldier this is not a made up omen the skies changed the light of the sun failed all of our beliefs about emperors being gods and these purported signs and omens in the skies and they're just really just made up the sky changes the Jewish religious leaders who believe that they guard the rituals and God is in their pocket and God is tame and they know how to do the ceremonies and they know how to control the people and they know how to control the interpretation of the word and they can control all of these things and as the son of man God himself is dying upon the cross the veil that separates the holy of holies that only a priest can enter once in a year after many sacrifices that is ripped from top to bottom

God shows up and the holy of holies is open for all to view and God mocks and warns God is not like most Canadians believe him to be according to the Bible I can't prove that that's true but I can point out that that's the case I think ultimately the resurrection of Jesus is strong belief and there's other things that we can say but it just needs to be strongly grasped verse 46 then Jesus calling out with a loud voice said father into your hands I commit my spirit and having said this he breathed his last and it's not very obvious here in the English but it's obvious in the original language that what happens here to Jesus is quite remarkable and I don't mean to depress you but really one way we can image what's happening with this is that what happens with us with us human beings is that as I walk through my life what you can really imagine is that the grim reaper death himself follows behind me and as my day goes on

I always stay a couple of steps above in front of the grim reaper but when my time is up death itself overtakes me and I succumb to death and I have no choice over succumbing to death because when death comes I will succumb I am powerless against death as are every single one of you but the image here is not of death finally catching up to Jesus and overwhelming Jesus because Jesus is weaker than death what is portrayed here is that death always had to keep its distance from Jesus John tells us that Jesus is life itself he doesn't have life he is life and it's as if death itself is always at more than arm's length from him and that on the cross as Jesus the final word that he says from the cross is that father into my hands I commit your spirit and death is the separation of the spirit from the body and Jesus gives himself to the father and with that he enters death he enters death he's in control and he enters death and it's beyond this we're going to look at it next Sunday we see that as he enters death and he will eventually defeat death and death itself is changed death where is your victory where is your sting that Jesus life himself life itself entering death will change death and those who put their faith and trust in life itself will share in life itself and death is but a passing into paradise with the untamed good and living God for the lowliest disciple verse 47 now when the centurion saw what had taken place he praised God saying certainly this man was innocent and Luke just records one thing that the centurion said he said other things that others record but Luke wants to really deeply emphasize in his account the innocence of Jesus and I won't read it now but the rest of it you can read it later on 48 to the end time after time after time it just wants to emphasize that Jesus is dead

Jesus is dead Jesus is dead Jesus is dead Jesus is dead nobody expected him to come again to life he is dead he is dead he will stay dead and that's what the other verses want to communicate to us now some of you might say okay George that's a you've given the context of the text what about Bob and Andy what about Bob I wanted to say that because I really like that Bill Murray movie what about Bob so actually what about Andy and Bob Andrew if you could put the verse up or there we go could you say this with me and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do let's say it again and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do here's the here's the thing remember Andy and Bob and Andy did something wrong Bob tells him

Andy apologizes and then as these things go it just goes south and Andy's asking me what he should do because he really wants to be reconciled to Bob and here's the first point if you could put it up which is part of what I told him one person alone can forgive but two are needed for reconciliation one person alone can forgive but two are needed for reconciliation Andy was battered by this whole event the several weeks of conversation before he talked to me he was he'd been really good friends with Bob he was really bothered that Bob didn't want to see him he was really bothered that Bob had been saying bad things about him to his mutual friends and had really had really just had was actually become very vindictive and vengeful and Andy on one hand he's caught because he wants to be reconciled he felt he's forgiven and to be honest when I'm talking to Andy you could see at times his fists would clench and you could actually almost see that he's a strong guy you could see like his muscles tensing and I knew that he actually wanted to pound Bob and if not pound him physically pound him verbally and launch a full scale offensive and what

[33 : 10] Bob was saying to him was eating him up in my previous church I was the pastor of some four little country churches and in four these country churches when there's a death and I do a funeral I would do the funeral with the church the ladies of the church would gather and they would make a lunch it didn't matter if you had it in the morning or the afternoon it was always called a lunch for some reason and one time there was this big funeral and a big lunch and afterwards shortly after the funeral was over I was really sick and I discovered that a couple of my kids were sick and I discovered that there were a lot of people in the church who were sick and we realized we figured it out but one particular person's multiple trays of egg salad sandwiches gave us food poisoning and we of course never told people we never told that person that do you realize that your three trays of sandwiches of egg salad sandwiches gave us all food poisoning that would be devastating especially in a rural community person would never live it down but here's the thing here's the thing about how one person alone can forgive and people need to forgive to not forgive for by Andy not forgiving

Bob what he was doing was that every day he would think about Bob and it would be like him taking one of those egg salad sandwiches and eating an egg salad sandwich saying I sure hope this makes Bob sick and all it does is make Andy sick Bob's having a great time luxuriating in his accusations and his slander and Andy's getting eaten up taking another one of those food poison egg salad sandwiches eating it hoping that Bob gets sick and only Andy's getting sick and one of the things I said to Andy is that whether or not he's able to eventually reconcile with Bob that's that's maybe that'll happen but what he needs to do is he needs to forgive Bob he needs to forgive Bob and here's the thing one person alone can forgive but two are needed for reconciliation if you could put the verse up again you want to say this verse with me again say it with me and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do let's say it again and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do here's the second thing if you could put it up

Rebecca I cannot forgive another person without personally paying a price I cannot forgive another person without personally paying a price Andy would talk to me about this I could see his fists at time clenching as I said you could see his arms you could see the muscles in his you know the bit of the biceps you could see in his wrist you could see them tensing and flexing you could see the emotion you could see the hurt about his reputation you know listen we all when you think about it for a second he's eating these poison egg salad sandwiches all it's doing is making him sick and on one hand to forgive that other person means that you have to pay a price for that but the price is worth it how does he have to pay a price he has to pay a price he's not going to get revenge he has to pay a price because it might be that the friends that Bob has slandered about Andy that Andy will never get to set the record straight he might just have to pay that price he might have to pay a price in terms of his pride and he has to pay a price of just being able to sense to swallow that anger and forgiveness is a miracle you know it's a common grace it's a miracle every time somebody forgives and it's not just something that only

Christians do because we all know non-Christians who forgive in fact we know lots of Christians who maybe desperately need to forgive and non-Christians who are very good at forgiving it's just part of God's common grace that there's this type of price that we pay for forgiving the other person but we realize that it's just so worth it because on the other side of it there's a basic there's not forgetting but there's freedom because who wants to eat food poison egg salad sandwiches every day and be sick it's so much better just to be free just to be free but a price has to be paid a price has to be paid could you put the verse up again for us Rebecca let's say it together and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do here's the third point if you could put it up Rebecca on the cross Jesus paid the price of God forgiving me and he's going to forgive Bob he has to pay a price see here's the thing which makes

Christian faith in the gospel so Islam has nothing for forgiveness it's just a mere act of just a mere you go to the good place you go to the bad place you go to the good place bad bad bad good bad bad just pure it doesn't make any psychological emotional sense the Christian faith makes so much sense and provides so much hope and this sentence looks a bit odd and I tried to figure a way to put it in but this was just so much more punchy but really you have to remember that I wanted to try to say something like on the cross Jesus paid the price of God the Father God the Son God the Holy Spirit three persons one God forever and ever and ever forgiving me but that's what happens if you wanted to string it out it's not not as catchy but on the cross Jesus paid the price of God the Father God the Son God the Holy Spirit three persons one God forever and ever world without end forgiving me and on the cross you notice that little line about you know forgive them for they know not what they do this isn't just saying because they're not very smart forgive them that's not it's showing that forgiveness is not the same thing as forgetting it shows that Jesus knows what's going on in their hearts you see that's the part of the great confidence that I can have that when

[39 : 49] I understand that every single wrong I've done and every wrong that's a wrong because I should have done something and I didn't do something the good that I should have done and I didn't do and that's a type of wrong and the actual wrong I did and Jesus knows it all about me all about me and Jesus is dying on the cross is God absorbing into himself the price that has to be paid for God to forgive me Rebecca could you put up the verse again could you all join me in saying it this is the last time we'll all say it together and Jesus said father forgive them for they know not what they do let's say it again father forgive them for they know not what I do here's the fourth point if you could put it up Rebecca every wrong I do is an offense against another person or creation and against

God himself every wrong I do is an offense against another person or creation and against God himself this is very very un-Canadian see if Jesus is on the cross saying father forgive them for they know not what they do God's not where's God being wrong against Jesus but you see the Christian understanding of right and wrong is not utilitarian it's not consequentialist it's that there's that ultimately right and wrong just reveal the good reflects the character of God and wrong is some bending or rejection or breaking of that which is good and that there is it can be hard to always understand it and we're bent and broken ourselves and all but there's this moral order that actually exists and that every wrong act I do against another person or against the created order I try to put that in because we can wrong our dog we can wrong our donkey we can wrong the rivers and the lakes and the sky and every wrong we do is also a wrong against

God and that's why Jesus in his death upon the cross he is paying the price for God to forgive me now some of you might be saying okay George I'm a little just so make this clear okay so you're telling Andy that he has to forgive Bob okay remember my first point was that one person alone can forgive but two are needed for reconciliation and you know part you can't really have this is one of the things about this truth and reconciliation commission I don't want to be political about it but without forgiveness there can't really be reconciliation and you can't force somebody to forgive but gosh for life why go through life eating food poisoned egg salad sandwiches hoping the other person will die a lot better to forgive and but so Andy has to forgive

Bob but Bob has to still do something if there's going to actually be reconciliation and this is where we see this wonderful thing and we're not going to have it up on the screen but if you have your Bibles open look at what Jesus says to the thief on the cross remember in verse 42 the thief after acknowledging that he's up there wrong and that Jesus is innocent the thief says Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom and in verse 43 Jesus says to truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise here's the thing when I was younger I used to think that most things that were right you know when people got into conflict that it was sort of 50-50 and maybe 60-40 and then as a minister I have come to realize that that's often the case and one of the problems with Andy and Bob and their thing is it started off with Andy doing the wrong thing and Bob not but then it got really messy and you know

Bob did all sorts of wrong things and it got really messy and that's really true of human life but you know there are still some times I know for a fact that there still are some times when it's 99.99999999% one person's fault and not the other and I don't just know it because I've had to deal with people I know it because of myself I know that there have been times I have hurt my relationship with my wife and I'll be honest with you it wasn't 50-50 or 60-40 it was 99.999999% my fault and whatever's left over out of that purse that there's just some times when it's really all one person's fault it really is it's all one person's fault and what do you do when it's all one person's fault well all you can hope for if the marriage isn't going to end or the relationship isn't going to end is that when it's all one person's fault you have to hope that the other person forgives and you have to hope that as the other person forgives that in this case I swallow my pride and humble myself and will say to my wife

[45 : 38] Louise I'm really sorry I've done wrong will you forgive me and I want to stay with you that's what salvation is God's done nothing wrong to you God's done nothing wrong to me my relationship with God and your relationship with God is nothing like the relationship of Andy and Bob and in my case with God and in your case with God the fact of the matter is it's a hundred percent wrongdoing by you and me and zero by God and salvation is described as reconciliation and reconciliation only happens if the one who is wronged forgives and pays the price of forgiving and if you desire to be reconciled to the one that you have wronged can come to him and say I have done wrong I am sorry I don't want to do it again will you have me back and that's what we see on the cross the thief he doesn't have a theology test he can't pass it he can't pass an ethics test he can't pass how he's lived you know two hours before this he was mocking

Jesus with the other guy but there's a change in his heart and and and reconciliation is possible because in the cross Jesus is taking into himself the price that has to be paid for God to forgive me and you and the invitation we see here with the cross is for you and me to say father thank you so much for forgiving me I have done wrong I want to be yours reconciliation takes us to turn to receive what's fully done you see that's why it can be that Jesus has died his death upon the cross is an act of forgiveness for every single person that we will meet today for every single person on the planet and the question isn't whether the cross is big enough and God is big enough to forgive all the question is will you turn to be reconciled will I turn to be reconciled if you could put up the next point I couldn't word this better I came across it in one in part of my research for this sermon one thief was saved that no sinner might despair but only one that no sinner might presume don't presume today

J.C. Ryle is who Ryle College is named after one thief was saved that no sinner might despair but only one that no sinner might presume Rebecca if you could put up the next point if you're trying to write these down they'll be on the web page tomorrow here's the prayer I urge you if you've never said a prayer like this that there's no time better than right now like right today like to see this and stop listening to me and with your heart my words aren't perfect I'm just trying to capture what's happened in Luke chapter 23 and say this to Jesus to the Father to the Holy Spirit say it yourself there's no better time than right now to say it Lord I have done wrong I am sorry thank you for forgiving me on the cross in your grace please make me yours please be my Lord and never let me go in Jesus name on men

Lord I have done wrong I am sorry thank you for forgiving me on the cross in your grace please make me yours please be my Lord and never let me go in Jesus name Amen. I've gone way over my time. Just two things very, very, very briefly before we go. If you could put up the next point, Rebecca. As the gospel grips me, my desire to forgive will grow.

As the gospel grips me, my desire to forgive will grow. It should grow. And here's the thing, here's the wonderful thing. All sorts of us today are eating rotten egg salad sandwich, hoping that after we've eaten those sandwiches, somebody else will get sick.

[50 : 23] And sometimes when we ask God to help us forgive another person, it happens instantly. But for most of us, it could be a journey of a couple of days or a couple of weeks or a couple of months or a couple of years. And even in some cases, it might require daily prayer that goes on for two decades, but it's always so worth it to stop eating rotten egg salad sandwiches. There's no good case for eating egg salad sandwiches that will give you food poisoning. There's no good case for it.

And you know, if non-Christians, it's part of the common grace that they just realize they need to forgive. For us, realizing what Jesus did for us on the cross, as that grips us, then why wouldn't we want to call out to God and ask, Father, help me to forgive this person that wronged me 60 years ago, 40 years ago, 30 years ago, 20 years ago, last week, this morning. Father, help me to forgive.

And who better than we can turn to to Jesus and say, Jesus, I'm having such a hard time forgiving. I am so filled with bitterness. I am so filled with anger. I am so filled with revenge. Who better than Jesus to pour our hearts out to if we have made him our Savior and Lord?

Do it today. Begin it today. And final point, Rebecca, if you could put it up. As the gospel grips me, the cry of my heart will increasingly be, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. You know, it's really interesting in Luke's gospel, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do, is the first word from the cross. If you look at the four historical records of Jesus on the cross, there's seven things he says from the cross.

Luke records the first and the last. The first and the last. If you go and ever start to learn morning and evening prayer, a great part of Anglican spirituality, you'll see that this prayer in different forms is a key part of the spirituality of morning and evening prayer. As the gospel grips me, the cry of my heart will be increasingly, men face eking sun. Father, into your hands I commit my joy. Father, into your hands I commit my day.

[52 : 30] Father, into your hands I commit my path. Father, into your hands I commit my prophecy. and I commit my past. Father, into your hands I commit my desire for revenge. Father, into your hands I commit my desire to do evil. Father, into your hands I commit my money.

Father, into your hands I commit my family. Into your hands I commit my career. Into your hands I commit my study. Into your hands, Father, as the gospel grips us, this will become the cry of our heart. I invite you to stand.

let's bow our heads in prayer father if there are any who who prayed that prayer today maybe for the first time and acknowledging that Jesus has died and paid in himself the penalty the price that needs to be paid for forgiveness father if there's any who prayed that may your holy spirit just flood upon them and seal them as your own father seal them as your own and father for all of us father thank you so much that your son died upon the cross that paid the price that had to be paid for me to be forgiven for me to be reconciled to you father thank you that it was in your heart it was your heart that we would be desired that we would be reconciled to you that that when we turn to you and receive what Jesus has done for us that that's that's your heart that that would characterize our lives and father we ask that you would gently but deeply pour out your holy spirit upon us so that as we are gripped more and more by the gospel that we will desire to live up on the path of forgiving others and that we will as the gospel grips us father that we will live on the path of committing ourselves and commending ourselves and commending all that we do into your hands father make us disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel who live for your glory and this we ask in

Jesus's name amen