

Reading: Luke 23:26-38

*“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Lk 23:34)*

The seven statements Jesus Christ made on the Cross, while He was going through inexplainable suffering on our behalf, have incorporated all the important aspects of the Gospel message. Each saying emphasises any one particular aspect of the Gospel. We will meditate it today and during the next six days.

First of all, the Gospel is the message of God’s forgiveness. That’s what Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach: “Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations” (Lk 24:47).

God’s forgiveness is superlative. He primarily forgives the “sinner,” and his “sins” are automatically taken care of. We are not sinners *because* we sin; we are sinners *so* we sin! God deals with the root and the cause, not with the effect. Before the younger son completed his sin confession the father forgave him and accepted him! We are totally forgiven and accepted in the Beloved! No Christian is ever called in the Bible a forgiven sinner. God calls us saints. We are not saints because we are saintly; We are saints, so we should walk saintly.

When Christ was hanging on the Cross between two thieves, between Heaven and earth, between God and man, He paid the penalty for “all” our sins — sins of the past, present and future. No more sacrifice. Our sins are so remitted as if they were never committed. Total justification!

If we sin today we have Christ advocating for us before the Father. But we are to walk in the light. That is, we must walk in all openness and transparency before God, acknowledging our sinfulness. The blood of the Lamb of God will “keep cleansing” us. Like a perennial river running over the pebbles we are under the cleansing stream of Immanuel’s blood (1 Jn 1:7; 2:1). Our sins of omission are more in number than those of commission. Never a moment can we afford to be outside the Blood!

There are more prisoners outside than inside prisons. Prisoners of guilt! The Gospel rings forgiveness and freedom! All guilt melts away like snow before the Son! Sins confessed are sins forgiven; sins forgiven are sins forgotten — forever!

*Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin,  
And be washed in the blood of the Lamb!  
There’s a fountain flowing for the soul unclean—  
Oh, be washed in the blood of the Lamb!*

*(Pastor E. A. Hoffman, 1839-1929, the author of more than 2000 Gospel songs)*

*"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do!"*

O God, the Father of mercies and all grace,

We thank You for the sacrificial death of Your dear Son on the Cross for our sins and transgressions. Thank You for His blood which cleanses us from all sin. Thank You for His outstretched hands to embrace even the worst of sinners who comes to Him.

We thank, Father, You for throwing our sins behind Your back. We thank You for removing our sins as far as the East is from the West. We thank You for removing our sins as the clouds of the sky. Thank You for sinking our sins into the depths of the sea. Oh the length and the breadth and the height and the depth of Your love!

Thank You, Lord, for Your promise that You would be merciful to our unrighteousness; and our sins and our lawless deeds You would remember no more. We cannot measure the extensiveness of Your love. We cannot fathom its depth. We simply fall at Your feet and kiss them. There's no one like You, O Lord!

Help us, O Lord, not to take advantage of Your forgiving love and continue sinning again and again. You are rich in forgiveness just in order that we may fear You. Help us, O God, to keep short accounts with You. Let us always stay broken though blissful. Let our repentance be genuine with godly fear.

Father God, we thank You that the blood of Your Son has not only cleansed us from all sin but also removed guilt. It has purified our conscience to approach You with confidence, boldness and full assurance. When Satan reminds us of our sins, we pray that Your Holy Spirit would remind us of the power of the blood of Jesus and empower us to testify boldly of our standing with You. We need His help to remind us of the right Word from the Scriptures to quote against Satan's accusations.

Dear Lord, we pray for the millions who have not yet heard of this message of forgiveness, reconciliation and justification. Help us not to keep this message without sharing with those tormented moment by moment by the burden of sin and guilt.

In the Name of Christ Jesus the Saviour, we pray! Amen!

*(2 Cor 1:3; Isa 53:4,5; 1 Jn 1:7; Psa 103:12; Isa 44:22; 38:17; Mic 7:19;  
Heb 8:12; Eph 3:17,18; Psa 2:12; 130:4; Heb 9:14; Rom 8:16; 2 Cor 5:18-21)*