

Today's Message: "Love's Last Words"

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me". (Luke 9:23, ESV)

*Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 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.**" And they cast lots to divide his garments. 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!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 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." (Luke 23:32-38, ESV)*

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

You and I, as cross-bearers who have chosen to model our lives after Christ, **have this same intimate access to a Heavenly Father, Abba, Papa.**

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

Forgive = Aphemi = to release from legal or moral obligation or consequence; to cancel; to pardon.

You and I, as cross-bearers who have chosen to model our lives after Christ, **must also choose the path of forgiveness. Forgiving "them".**

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1, NAS)

You and I, as cross-bearers who have chosen to model our lives after Christ, **can live the life of the forgiven, as ones set free from sin to remain free.**

Love's Last Words

Pastor Randy Blincow

March 12 & 13, 2016

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*“Father, forgive them, **for they know not what they do.**”*

We need to hear the voice of our Savior from the cross. . . “(Insert your name here), forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

You and I, as cross-bearers who have chosen to model our lives after Christ, **can stop placing unreasonable expectations on those who do not yet believe.**

“Continue to reflect on Jesus' final words each day leading up to Easter by subscribing to devotional and small group content delivered via email to your inbox each weekday. Text NORTHWAY to 42828 to subscribe.”

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Small Group or Personal Reflection Questions:

1. Read Luke 9:23 – knowing that the original readers of this text knew exactly what it meant to take up a cross, what exactly do you think they were to understand from Christ's words here?
2. How often do you find yourself addressing God in your prayers as a distant being rather than addressing him as Abba Father? Do you think this is significant? Why or why not?
3. Pastor Randy talked about three potential reasons we often fail to extend forgiveness. Which of these is an issue for you? Are there other reasons you feel you have difficulty forgiving others?
 - We lose sight of who Christ is
 - We lose sight of who “them” of “they” are
 - We lose sight of who we are
4. Have you seen a tendency in believers – or yourself – to place unreasonable expectations on those who do not even claim to hold a belief in Christ? Do you believe that a posture of grace would be a stronger position from which to attract people to Him?

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