

December 3. Divine Forgiveness

by J.R. Miller

Transcript

"Father, forgive them" for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

This was the first saying spoken by our Lord on His cross. It was uttered just when the soldiers were in the act of crucifying Him " driving the cruel nails through His hands and feet. It was a moment of excruciating, inconceivable anguish. Yet He uttered no cry of pain, no word of execration upon those who were causing Him such suffering " but calmly prayed for His brutal, pitiless murderers, "Father, forgive them " for they know not what they do."

The moment the sacred blood began to flow " the intercession for sinners began. The pleading was first for the ignorant heathen soldiers who were acting as executioners; but it was not for these alone. It certainly widened out, and took in all who had been concerned in the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus. It was for the Jewish rulers and people who had rejected their Messiah. May we not believe that many of those who on the day of Pentecost and afterward were brought to repentance " were forgiven and saved because on His cross Jesus made intercession for them?

Then the prayer went out beyond the people who had a direct part in the crucifixion. From His cross, Jesus saw the lost world down to the end, and prayed for all His people. We know, too, that that word of prayer was but the beginning of an intercession that is going on yet inside Heaven, where Jesus pleads the merits of His own sacrifice, for the salvation of His people.

This word of Jesus teaches us a great lesson on Christian forgiveness. He prayed for His murderers! Just so, we should pray for those who injure us. There are some fragrant trees which bathe the axe that gashes them in perfume. So should it be with Christ\

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