



### ***Day 5 - Father, Forgive Them***

Of all the scenes around the cross, this one angers me the most. What kind of people would mock a dying man? Who would be so base as to pour the salt of scorn upon open wounds?

The words thrown that day were meant to wound. And there is nothing more painful than words meant to hurt.

If you have suffered or are suffering because of someone else's words, you'll be glad to know that there is a balm for this laceration. Meditate on these words: "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23 NIV).

Jesus did not retaliate or bite back. He did not say, "I'll get you!" "Come on up here and say that to my face!" "Just wait until after the resurrection, buddy!" No, these statements were not found on Christ's lips

He simply left the judging to God. He did not take on the task of seeking revenge. He demanded no apology. He hired no bounty hunters and sent out no posse. He, to the astounding contrary, spoke on their defense. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34 NIV).

And when you think about it, they hadn't the faintest idea what they were doing. They were a stir-crazy mob, mad at something they couldn't see, so they took it out on, of all people, God. But they didn't know what they were doing.

Yes, the dialogue that Friday morning was bitter. The verbal stones were meant to sting. How Jesus, with a body racked with pain, eyes blinded by his own blood, and lungs yearning for air, could speak on behalf of some heartless thugs is beyond my comprehension. Never, never have I seen such love. If ever a person deserved a shot at revenge, Jesus did. But he didn't take it. Instead he died for them. How could he do it? I don't know. But I do know that all of a sudden my wounds seem very painless. My grudges and hard feelings are suddenly childish.

Sometimes I wonder if we don't see Christ's love as much in the people he tolerated as in the pain he endured.

Amazing grace.

### **Mark 15:22-32 NLT**

22 And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). 23 They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it.

24 Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They divided his clothes and threw dice (15:24 Greek *cast lots*. See Ps 22:18.) to decide who would get each piece. 25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. 26 A sign announced the charge against him. It read, "The King of the Jews." 27 Two revolutionaries (15:27a Or Two criminals.) were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. (15:27b Some manuscripts add verse 28, And the Scripture was fulfilled that said, "He was counted among those who were rebels." See Isa 53:12; also compare Luke 22:37.)

29 The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "Ha! Look at you now!" they yelled at him. "You said you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. 30 Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!"

31 The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but he can't save himself! 32 Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe him!" Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed him.

### **Luke 23:32-34 NLT**

32 Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. 33 When they came to a place called The Skull, (23:33 Sometimes rendered *Calvary*, which comes from the Latin word for "skull.") they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left.

34 Jesus said, "**Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.**" (23:34a This sentence is not included in many ancient manuscripts.)

And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

### **Hebrews 12:1-3 NLT**

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. 2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. (12:2a Or Jesus, the originator and perfecter of our faith.) Because of the joy (12:2b Or Instead of the joy.) awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. 3 Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; (12:3 Some manuscripts read Think of how people hurt themselves by opposing him.) then you won't become weary and give up.

This reading plan can be found at [www.bible.com/reading-plans/1428](http://www.bible.com/reading-plans/1428)