



LET'S VISIT

**A Publication of the Center Church of Christ
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"FATHER FORGIVE THEM"

Can you by an eye of faith imagine what it might have been like in Jerusalem on that fateful Friday? What would it have been like to have been brought under the spell and the excitement of the hour? There were three prisoners about to pay the death penalty. One was a young prophet and two were revolutionists. The crowd on hand that day, with a love of the gruesome, wanted a show

On the way to the cross that day, Jesus had endured untold agony. He had gone through the mockery of a trial and had been scourged. A scourging was a beating so severe that many men did not survive it, and yet Jesus survived it to go to the cross. He had endured the crown of thorns and then the pain of the crucifixion itself. Can you feel the tearing of the flesh as they drove the nails through his hands and the spike through His feet.

Had we endured what Jesus endured that day, would the first words we uttered from the cross have been a prayer? Luke records for us that Jesus said, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) At such a desperate time, Jesus prayed. Yet, this should not come as a surprise to us as this was his habit from youth. Naturally, Jesus would pray in this black and desperate hour.

There are those who refuse to pray when the sea of life is smooth who generally no longer refuse when there is a tempest brewing. In our need and despair we cry "Lord help me."

Yet, this was not the nature of Jesus prayer from the cross. He did not pray for his deliverance. He did not pray that his friends and loved ones be cared for and comforted. At that desperate time, in his pain and agony, Jesus prayed for his enemies. He put into practice what he had preached on a certain hill when he delivered the "Sermon On The Mount" Jesus

prayed for the forgiveness of those who had wronged him. My friends, one of the great roadblocks to the power of the church is the lack of forgiveness among the people of God. We hold grudges, we nurse old hurts and have malice in our hearts. Jesus taught and lived the opposite of that way of life.

In asking for forgiveness for them, Jesus was asking the best for his murderers. You see, forgiveness means far more than release from a penalty. An executive may pardon and refuse to exercise punishment. When God pardons, he does far more than refuse to punish us. He forgives us.

Forgiveness is not a way of escape from consequences. The Bible clearly teaches if we sow tares, we will reap tares. In hot blood David was guilty of adultery. In cold blood he was guilty of murder. His faithful minister took his life in his hands rebuking David. When Nathan called his sin to his attention, David might have come to hate the physician. Instead, he clutched at God's skirt and prayed "have mercy on me". We must be mindful that though forgiveness of David was full and complete, it did not save David from the terrible consequences of his sin.

Forgiveness is a restoral of fellowship. When God forgives and pardons us, He befriends us as if we had never sinned. He forgets our ugly past. He walks with failures as if they had never failed.

(Continued on page 2)

In Search of the Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry
KSHV 45 -Shreveport - 7:30 a.m. Sunday
DISH channel 239 - 6:00 a.m. Sunday
DIRECT TV channel 307 - 6:00 a.m. Sunday

Gathered Here and There



The Friend of Sinners

For The Pantry. . .

February 9 – Dried Beans

Offering – February 2, 2025 . . \$ 2,248.00

The Lord's plan of giving ... "as ye have prospered"

"Father Forgive Them– continued from page 1

Jesus said, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." On the surface he seems to be pleading for extenuating circumstances. However, Jesus was not seeking to excuse their sin. Like folks today, they knew they were doing wrong. Pilate was so aware it was wrong, he tried to wash his soiled hands. Judas realized the enormity of his sin and hurried to empty his dirty hands of blood money. Annas, Caiphas and the others, none of them could plead "not guilty".

Well, in what sense were they ignorant? In what sense were they unaware of what they were doing? They could not realize just how great their guilt. Forgive them, for they need forgiveness so desperately. Forgive them, they have committed a sin that is black beyond all their realization. Actually, this is true of every sin we commit. We can never know what harvest we and others may have to reap because of one wrong decision or of one deed of disloyalty.

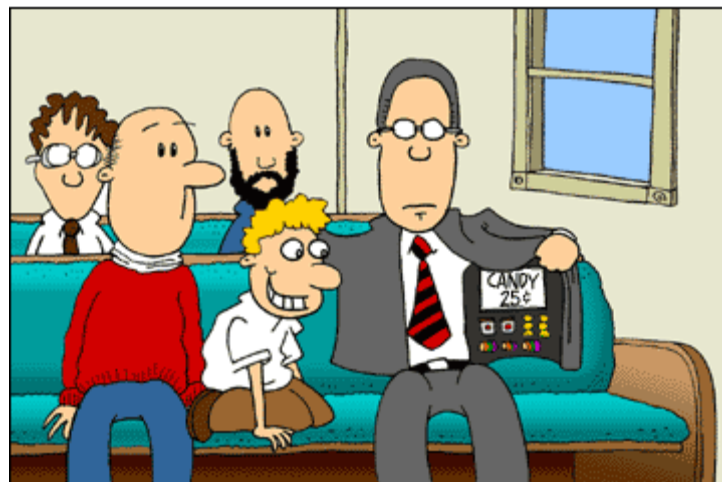
Why is it that we (you and I) find forgiveness so hard? No one has treated us the way Jesus was treated. We haven't been beaten, spit on or crowned with thorns. We have not been wronged in the way that He was wronged. We need to follow the Christ-like example of forgiveness. We need to remember Jesus' words in Matthew 7:12, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to

them. If we would be forgiven, we must follow the example of Jesus and forgive others.

If Jesus, hanging on the cross can pray, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do" we should be able to forgive those who have wronged us.

tp

On The Lighter Side. . .



RONNIE FOUND A LUCRATIVE WAY TO PAY OFF HIS BUILDING FUND PLEDGE

Some Random Observations:

1. The weather is stronger than the religion of some Christians.
2. Some Christians provide for comfort and convenience on vacation trips but make no provisions for keeping the Lord's Day.
3. Some Christians can attend their places of entertainment regularly and care for their personal luxuries but can give little into the Lord's treasury.
4. Some Christians can get to work every week day morning in order to make a living, but they cannot seem to make it to worship one day a week on a regular basis.
5. Some Christians can be pushed, shoved, and insulted in the ticket line, or "bawled out" for holding up the line at the grocery store, but they never cease to frequent these places. But they feel slighted at church and they refuse to attend services.

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**Sunday
March 2nd**

Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 2, 2025.
That's the day for our annual

“Pack-a-Pew Sunday”

Make your plans to be here, bring a guest and let's
have a great day to the glory of God!

Hospitality Group 1 will be in charge of the
luncheon that day. The members of that group
are: Marsha Bounds, LaResa Livingston, Betty
Miller, Lisa Miller and Melonie Molloy.

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**Wednesday
FELLOWSHIP MEAL**

Our next Wednesday night Fellowship Meal will be on
Wednesday, February 26, 2025. Make your plans to be
here and meet in the Fellowship Hall at 6:00 for our
meal together followed by our monthly singing
together.

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Business Meeting Today February 9, 2025

There will be a men's business
meeting in the church offices
immediately following the morning
worship. All men of the
congregation are encouraged to
attend.



OUR “CHURCH FAMILY”

Cissy Amos, LaJuan Baugh, Martha Jean Golden,
Alice Hall, Thelma Hinton, LaResa Livingston, Mike Lout,
Debra Pate, Jerry Pate, Wayne Sims, Betty Willis

“EXTENDED FAMILY” AND FRIENDS

Tony Abernathy (friend of Isaiah & Amanda Molloy
hospitalized) Coleen Dickerson (friend of Cissy Amos with
leukemia) Hugh and Pat Fletcher (Sarah Fletcher's brother
and sister-in-law dealing with multiple health issues)
Joyce Fontenot (Debra Pate's mother) Emily Heflin (Mike
Bostick's niece recovering from surgery) Debbie Lynn
(Abbey Perkins' mother dealing with memory issues) Lamar
McCormick (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues)
Calvin Smith (Debra Pate's uncle); Heather Simmons
Stewart (Friend of Cissy Amos) cancer;
J. C. Tate (Jana O'Brien's father)

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE

Cole Barbee, Adam Bradshaw, Andrew Bradshaw,
Michele Bradshaw, Rosie Tate and Lucas Tate

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER!

**Make a note of the dates of these activities on the
Calendar for 2025.**

March 2, 2025 – “Pack-A-Pew Sunday”
April 25-27, 2025 – Area-Wide Singing and
Gospel meeting with Phil Sanders.
June 1, 2025 – Covered Dish Luncheon
September 7, 2025 – Friends & Family Day
December 7, 2025 – No Excuse Sunday
December 21, 2025 – Annual Christmas Party

PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!

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*We must always remember to hunt hard for the
good points in others. Remember they have to
do the same for us.*

*Knowing your limitations is the first step toward
overcoming them.*

*Worry is a dog chasing his tail. Remorse is when he
catches it. Despair is when he bites it off.*



Across The Preacher's Desk

When Jesus walked the dusty roads of Palestine, he had the ability to see more than just the veneer that people offered for the rest of the world to see. He could look inside a person and see what was in their heart, he could see more than just what they were, he could also see their potential. Jesus looked into the hearts of the Scribes and Pharisees and had nothing good to say about them. In Matthew chapter 23 he said that they did not practice what they preached (verse 3) and then in verse 28 he said they appeared righteous unto men but within they were filled with hypocrisy and iniquity.

Yet, not only could Jesus see what was in the hearts of men, he could also see the potential that individuals had. When he first met Simon, he told him that he would be called Cephas, a stone. Not many people would have seen in Peter a future pillar of the church. Neither would most of us have thought the "Sons of Thunder" James and John would have been so instrumental in the church of the first century. But Jesus did. Would we have wanted a pessimist like Thomas to be part of our group. Probably not. However Jesus chose him also. We probably would not have chosen a tax gatherer like Matthew nor would we have gone to the home of someone with the tarnished reputation that Zacchaeus had. Yet, Jesus saw value in these men.

Jesus had the power and ability to see the hidden strength in every life and to waken the sleeping hero in the soul of every man and woman. What does Jesus see in us?

it's something to think about.....tlp

**The Lord's Plan
For Evangelism –
Each one Bring one!
55 in '25!**