

Sermon Topic: The Prayer of Jesus On The Cross, Luke 23: 1 – 56

Introduction

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

- Luke records 9 prayers of Jesus to highlight His entire attitude towards His Father and His work: baptism (3:2), choosing his disciples (6:12), Peter’s confession (9:18), Garden of Gethsemane (23:39-46) and on the cross (22:34-46).
- His last hour of prayer is unselfish and other-centered.
- At least 4 things to learn from Jesus’ first words on the Cross:

1. The Love That Extends From The Cross

- This is m_____ love taught on the Mount and practiced in the valley of pain:
 - that is p_____ without complaint, p_____ amid affliction, k_____ amid hatred, gives the benefit of d_____ amid wickedness.

2. The Love That Pleads From The Cross

- F_____ is Jesus’ plea:
 - A legal idea from the Greek word “aphiemi”. A debt owed to God which must be paid.
 - Jesus would take the retribution we deserve, pay in full, once for all (Heb 10: 1-18).
 - An act of grace, undeserved and unearned (Isa 1:18-20).
- I_____ is Jesus’ reason, a limited view of
 - the h_____ meaning of sin in the sight of God
 - the h_____ influence of sin on themselves
 - the h_____ effect of sin on others
 - the h_____ consequences of sin in the future judgement of God
 - Ignorance can mitigate crime but not absolve crime. Ignorance is not innocence.

3. The Love That Warns And Woos From The Cross

- Forgiveness: offered to all but not automatically guaranteed:
 - Barriers to receiving forgiveness include:
 - Stubborn u_____ (Mark 4:12)
 - U_____ (Acts 2:37-38,40)
 - U_____ to forgive other people (Matt 6:14-15)
 - U_____ to admit personal wrongdoing (1 John 1:8,10)

- Jesus' sorrowful lament to mourning women (Luke 23: 28-31)
 - Weep NOT for me, weep for you and your children. Why?

4. The Love That Instructs From The Cross

Jesus' prayer is a model of application for those who follow Him. It teaches us to:

- R_____ the benefit of doubt to those who hurt us by their deeds.
- R_____ any hatred against those who wrong us.
- R_____ the gravity of an offense against us (Mark 11:25).
- R_____ to pray for the forgiveness of our offenders till our last breath (Acts 7:59-60).

The conduct of Jesus on the Cross should be the conduct of the Church and believers who follow Him.

Conclusion

Which character(s) in the drama do we identify with:

- a Pilate who is a c_____?
- b Herod who needs to be e_____?
- c Chief priest and scribes who r_____?
- d Barabbas who forgets to say t_____?
- e Unrepentant thief who prefers to d_____?
- f Roman soldiers who b_____ those made in the image of God?
- g Crowd who all too quickly d_____ Jesus despite the good He has done?
- h Simon of Cyrene who carry the Cross r_____?
- i Centurion, whose eyes are opened to who Jesus is in our life.
- a Penitent thief, who trust in Jesus because we see the dark recesses of our soul.
- b Joseph of Arimathea, who stand by our conviction despite the voice of the majority.

Join with Jesus in the prayer on the Cross: "Father, forgive me for I do not always know what I am doing."

And herald the Good News that Jesus' love **extends, pleads, warns, woos and instructs**, so humankind can find their way back to God and be reconciled.