

# And Jesus Said “Father Forgive Them...”

By John Calvin

Luke 23:34. And Jesus said Father forgive them. By this expression Christ gave evidence that he was that mild and gentle lambs which was to be led out to be sacrificed as Isaiah the prophet had foretold. For not only does he abstain from revenge, but pleads with God the Father for the salvation of those by whom he is most cruelly tormented. It would have been a great matter not to think of rendering evil for evils (1 Pet. 3: 9) as Peter, when he exhorts us to patience by the example of Christ, says that he did not render curses for curses, and did not revenge the injuries done to him, but was fully satisfied with having God for his avengers (1 Pet. 2:23) But this is a far higher and more excellent virtues to pray that God would forgive his enemies.

If anyone think that this does not agree well with Peter's sentiment, which I have just now quoted, the answer is easy. For when Christ was moved by a feeling of compassion to ask forgiveness from God for his persecutors, this did not hinder him from acquiescing in the righteous judgment of God, which he knew to be ordained for reprobate and obstinate men. Thus, when Christ saw that both the Jewish people and the soldiers raged against him with blind fury, though their ignorance was not excusable, he had pity on them, and presented himself as their intercessor. Yet knowing that God would be an avenger, he left to him the exercise of judgment against the desperate. In this manner ought believers also to restrain their feelings in enduring distresses, so as to desire the salvation of their persecutors, and yet to rest assured that their life is under the protection of God, and, relying on this consolations that the licentiousness of wicked men will not in the end remain unpunished, not to faint under the burden of the cross. Of this moderation Luke now presents an instance in our Leader and Master; for though he might have denounced perdition against his persecutors, he not only abstained from cursing, but even prayed for their welfare. But it ought to be observed that, when the whole world rises against us, and all unite in striving to crush us, the best remedy for overcoming temptation is, to recall to our remembrance the blindness of those who fight against God in our persons. For the result will be, that the conspiracy of many persons against us, when solitary and deserted, will not distress us beyond measure; as, on the other hand, daily experience shows how powerfully it acts in shaking weak persons, when they see themselves attacked by a great multitude. And, therefore, if we learn to raise our minds to God, it will be easy for us to look down, as it were, from above, and despise the ignorance of unbelievers; for whatever may be their strength and resources, still they know not what they do.

It is probable, however, that Christ did not pray for all indiscriminately but only for the wretched multitudes who were carried away by inconsiderate zeal, and not by premeditated wickedness. For since the scribes and priests were persons in regard to whom no ground was left for hope, it would have been in vain for him to pray for them. Nor can it be doubted that this prayer was heard by the heavenly Father, and that this was the cause why many of the people afterwards drank by faith the blood which they had shed.



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Post Office Box 124

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Tel: (864) 861-2196

Lucas Mann, Interim Pastor

Tel: (864) 909-7564

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– Jeremiah 17:7-8

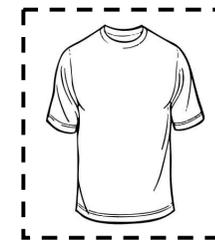
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**National Day of Prayer**  
**Thursday, May 2 @ 12 NOON**  
**Steps of The Old Laurens County Courthouse**



### OLD T-SHIRTS NEEDED

**The LBA will be collecting old t-shirts to be used to make jump ropes that will be given out to children during their Guatemala mission trip in December. Place in box on the table beside the water fountain.**

**Deadline: August 25, 2019**

**Questions? Call Kay @ 984-0123**