

## **Father forgive them ...**

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

That prayer of Christ for His enemies embraced the world, taking in every sinner who should live, until the end of time. {SR 222.1 }

The Saviour made no murmur of complaint. His face remained calm and serene, but great drops of sweat stood upon His brow. There was no pitying hand to wipe the death dew from His face, nor words of sympathy and unchanging fidelity to stay His human heart. While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, Jesus prayed for His enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." His mind passed from His own suffering to the sin of His persecutors, and the terrible retribution that would be theirs. No curses were called down upon the soldiers who were handling Him so roughly. No vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers, who were gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose. Christ pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. He breathed only a plea for their forgiveness,--"for they know not what they do." {DA 744.2 }

Had they known that they were putting to torture One who had come to save the sinful race from eternal ruin, they would have been seized with remorse and horror. But their ignorance did not remove their guilt; for it was their privilege to know and accept Jesus as their Saviour. Some of them would yet see their sin, and repent, and be converted. Some by their impenitence would make it an impossibility for the prayer of Christ to be answered for them. Yet, just the same, God's purpose was reaching its fulfillment. Jesus was earning the right to become the advocate of men in the Father's presence. {DA 744.3 }

That prayer of Christ for His enemies embraced the world. It took in every sinner that had lived or should live, from the beginning of the world to the end of time. Upon all rests the guilt of crucifying the Son of God. To all, forgiveness is freely offered. "Whosoever will" may have peace with God, and inherit eternal life. {DA 745.1 }

Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from His wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon His brow. From His hands and feet the blood fell, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering,--"Father, forgive

them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. Yet there stood men, formed in the image of God, joining to crush out the life of His only-begotten Son. What a sight for the heavenly universe! {DA 760.2}

Can you, beholding by the eye of faith the sufferings of Christ, tell your trials, your tale of woe? Can you nurse revenge in your heart while you remember the prayer that came from the pale and quivering lips of Christ for His revilers, his murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"? {LHU 233.3}

There is a work before us to subdue the pride and vanity that seek a place in our hearts, and through penitence and faith to bring ourselves into familiar and holy converse with Christ. . . . We must deny self, and fight continually against pride. We must hide self in Jesus, and let Him appear in our character and conversation. While we look constantly to Him whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we shall acquire strength to be like Him. Our lives, our deportment, will testify how highly we prize our Redeemer, and the salvation He has wrought out for us at such a cost to Himself. {LHU Chapter 8}

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34. {SD 153.1}  
Christ is our example. He placed Himself at the head of the human family to accomplish a work the importance of which men do not comprehend because they do not realize the privileges and possibilities before them as members of the human family of God. . . . His mercy was not weakness, but a terrible power to punish sin. . . . yet a power to draw to it the love of humanity. Through Christ Justice is enabled to forgive without sacrificing one jot of its exalted holiness. {SD 153.2}

Christ taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and added, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses." . . . {SD 153.3}

We must not shrink from the depths of humiliation to which the Son of God submitted in order to raise us from the degradation and bondage of sin to a seat at His right hand.... It is high time we devoted the few remaining precious hours of our probation to washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, that we may be of that white-robed company who shall stand about the great white throne. {TMK 65.4}