

How To Face Trials Through Forgiveness

(Part 4)

³² *Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed.* ³³ *When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.* ³⁴ *Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.* ³⁵ *The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”* ³⁶ *The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar* ³⁷ *and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”* ³⁸ *There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.* ³⁹ *One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”* ⁴⁰ *But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence?”* ⁴¹ *We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”* ⁴² *Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”* ⁴³ *Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”* ⁴⁴ *It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour,* ⁴⁵ *for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.* ⁴⁶ *Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.* ⁴⁷ *The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.”* ⁴⁸ *When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away.* ⁴⁹ *But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.”* (Luke 23:32-49)

Christianity is based on the forgiveness of God toward human kind whom God created but went away living in disobedience to God. If God would not forgive man his sin then who can stand in front of God Almighty. In the same way as God forgave us our sins He wants us to forgive one another in Christ Jesus our Lord, **“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”** (Colossians 3:13) So the challenge of God here is to forgive one another in the same way that God forgave us in Christ Jesus our Lord. As we forgive others we assure the continuous receiving of God’s forgiveness.

Jesus also said the following: **“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.** ¹⁵ **But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”** (Matthew 6:14-15) The point here is this; if we will not forgive others who hurt us and harm us then we will in anger and hatred toward them and we will live our lives to plan evil against them and trying to harm them and revenge of them. Now if you live your life in such a way nursing grudges against people in your heart and planning to repay them evil for what they had done to you then God sure will not be happy with your life and attitude. God admonish us to control our lives and our temper and attitude: **“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,** ²⁰ **for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.** ²¹ **Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.”** (James 1:19-21) Life full of hatred and plan to revenge from others are very hard and not pleasant to live in such a way. Forgive and your wounds and sores will be healed by the Lord.

Forgiveness is the good attitude that will bring you good health, peace and joy in your life. What you need to do is to apply it gladly not as loss but as a source of gain in your life. Jesus example on the cross is a good lesson for us to do and to follow as we can further read.

³³ *At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.* ³⁴ *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”* (Mark 15:33-34) Here Jesus was suffering the full pain as human and that is why He was praying to God the Father and telling Him, **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** God forsake Him in term of bearing the full pain as human. But God was with Jesus as Jesus had God’s word and knew God’s will then He was not alone. The same for us, certain times we pass through hard trials and hardships and we pray and we cry to God and for certain times God is silent and He will allow us to pass these trials and hardships but that did not mean that He forsake us and left us alone. He is still with us as we have His word, and The Holy Spirit who leads us to do the will of God, then we are not alone, God still with us. If God would allow us to pass through certain pain and suffering then God had a purpose for us in passing such trials and hardships.

Some people when they pass through hardships they will start to be angry with God and start to blame God and develop the unforgiveness attitude toward Him. That attitude will only make your life more difficult. Better for you to follow what Apostle James wrote, **“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,** ³ **because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.** ⁴ **Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”** (James 1:2-4)

⁴⁴ *It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour,* ⁴⁵ *for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.* ⁴⁶ *Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.”* (Luke 22:44-46) Jesus after He finished all what He had to do in the cross He left the rest of the work to God to achieve. Some people they do their best but still there are many things need to be achieved and they put the responsibility to achieve that on themselves by unforgiving themselves. Jesus gave us the good example for that. We need to do our part, and the rest God will do for us. We cannot play the rule of God but we need to trust Him and obey all His commands and degree and He will achieve to us what we could not able to do. And that what had happened, after the death of Jesus, **“The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.”** (Luke 22:47) God touched the heart of the centurion who is responsible for the team of the execution. Jesus did His part on the cross and after His death God touched the centurion’s heart and made him sees the truth clearly, that Jesus is a righteous man.

My Dear and Beloved: The word of God tells us the following: **“The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.”** The question is this “what the centurion saw that helped him to change His life? He saw the humble, responsible and forgiving attitude of Jesus toward those who harmed Him, and that changed His life. The same is for you and me, as we humble ourselves and be willing to forgive those who hurt us and remain responsible even in the mid of hardships and trials then our lives will be a good testimony and a good ground for others to be changed and transformed as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I commit my life into your hands to be humble, responsible, forgiving and good testimony for others to know you and walk in your ways, this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*