

## *The Beauty of Repent: Turn to Jesus*<sup>1</sup> **He Longs to Forgive You**

Dear fellow forgiven criminals at the cross of Christ:

Introduction: Change normal – technology (no cars, just driving computers), life (infancy...aging), church (“Page 5 & 15”...pianos in church)

Jesus also experienced change – home (Bethlehem...Nazareth...Capernaum), work (carpenter...rabbi), pace (festivals...come away and rest)

### **I. Forgiveness – Jesus constant for us**

A. *The more things change, the more they stay the same.*

1. **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”** (Hebrews 13:8)
2. **“I the LORD do not change...not destroyed.”** (Malachi 3:6)
3. **“Mercies are new every morning...”** (Lamentations 3:22f)

B. **“They crucified him there.”**

1. We miss the weight of Jesus’ agony – body and soul
2. Everything in Jesus’ life changed most painfully, but not His constant forgiveness.

C. **“Father, forgive them.”**

1. Not the usual words of a cursing convict on a cross.
2. Jesus is still the same forgiving Lord Christ in His agony.

D. **“Father, FORGIVE them.”**

1. Track record of forgiveness began with forerunner John the Baptist.
2. Paralyzed man on mat: **“Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven.”** (Matthew 9:2)
3. Keys of forgiveness to loose sin. (Matthew 16:19)
4. Jesus’ prayer: **“Forgive...as we forgive...”** (Luke 11:4)
5. Jesus’ commission: **“Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”** (Luke 24:47 NIV84)

E. **“Father, forgive THEM.”**

1. Roman soldiers
2. Jewish religious leaders, Pontius Pilate, the crowd
3. **“God so loved the world...”** (John 3:16)
  - † Mother Theresa and us good church people?
  - † Terrorists, rapists, politicians, lawyers, pastors...?
  - † You and me!
    - “Amazing grace”...vinegar in my mouth?
    - My hands always ready to help – help themselves?
    - My heart – daily chasing idols of other loves?

Transition: **“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”** (John 15:13 NIV84) Brothers at dinner arguing about last piece of pizza / pie. Mother: “Jesus would want you to share.” Older brother to younger: “You be Jesus.”

<sup>1</sup> 2017 Lenten Series: *Repent – Turn to Jesus!*. Available at 1-800-662-6022. [M.C. 3/08/2017]

## II. Forgiveness – Jesus abundant through us

- A. Is Jesus' forgiveness abundant enough to cover my sins if I'm turning to myself as a ....
  - 1. Pharisee – trusting my good works? (priests – Acts 6:11)
  - 2. Judas – despairing in my evil works? (Peter, disciples, Paul)
  - 3. Jesus' tongue not touched by the soldiers: ***“Father, forgive them...”***
- B. God's people forgiving soldiers
  - 1. The jailer at Philippi – Paul and Silas
  - 2. The Communist jailers in the Romania – Richard Wurmbrand (tithing, blessing guards)
- C. Challenge greatest for us among those we love most.
  - 1. At home today.
  - 2. In memory yesterday.
  - 3. Jesus' tongue to be ours with every memory: ***“Father, forgive them...”***

Conclusion: **Jesus' constant and abundant forgiveness is the power for ours**

† ***“God's kindness leads us to repentance.”*** (Romans 2:4)

- ***“...they know not what they do.”***
- *...cutting slack to worst hurts*

† *Jesus in the middle as our Mediator.*

- Between us and God: ***“But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”*** (1 John 2:1f NIV84)
- Between us and all who hurt / hate us.

† *Jesus' forgiveness is constantly, abundantly: accomplished, real, free, yours*

**Turn to Jesus; He Longs to Forgive You. Turn to Jesus.** Always Jesus! Only Jesus! Amen.