

THE JESUS STORY: Redemptive Forgiveness!

Scripture used: [Luke 23:33-34 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon continued “The Jesus Way” by shifting from the personal practices that deepen our faith to the interpersonal practices that shape how we live with others. Jesus did not only teach faith; He practiced faith in relationship with people. He engaged with stories, kindness, and empathy. He ignored labels. He practiced courageous integrity. And, most powerfully, He lived out redemptive forgiveness. On the cross, Jesus was taken to “The Skull,” stripped, shamed, nailed to wood, and left to die in complete innocence. Yet His first words were not words of rage or revenge. They were a prayer: “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” Jesus prayed for those who persecuted Him, sentenced Him, mocked Him, and gambled for His clothes. This was not human willpower. It was the fruit of deep, practiced faith. Jesus was able to draw on a power greater than Himself, showing us that forgiveness is not merely an occasional act, but a permanent attitude rooted in trust in God.

KEY POINTS

- 1. Jesus practiced redemptive forgiveness.** Jesus did not wait for repentance before He prayed for forgiveness. He forgave while He was still suffering. His forgiveness reveals the heart of God and shows us what mature faith looks like under pressure. The cross teaches us that forgiveness is not the denial of pain, but the choice to trust God with the debt others owe us.
- 2. Atonement restores our relationship with God.** Pastor Hurmon explained that atonement means “at-one-ment”—the restoration of our relationship with God. Jesus died on the cross to pay the debt of sin and reconcile us to God. But Jesus paid more than our debts; He also paid the debts that others owe us. We cannot condemn people whose sins Jesus also carried.
- 3. Forgiveness lets go and reframes the memory.** Redemptive forgiveness has two parts: letting go of past wrongs done to us and reframing the memory by hearing the other person’s story and recognizing their brokenness. This does not excuse what happened or erase the pain. It restores humanity to the people who wounded us and prevents resentment from poisoning our own hearts.
- 4. Forgiveness is both a decision and a process.** Forgiveness is not the same as restoring trust, removing boundaries, or pretending the wound did not matter. Sometimes we decide to forgive and then walk through the process. Other times we enter the process before we feel ready to make the decision. Everyone’s journey is different, and God treats each of us individually.
- 5. Trust in God makes forgiveness possible.** Two questions block forgiveness: “Why did that person hurt me?” and “Why did God allow this?” Jesus answered these by praying that His persecutors did not know what they were doing, and taking His suffering directly to God. We can trust God because He first endured the brokenness of the world—pain, shame, violence, abuse, and death.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** -Where are you still carrying resentment or bitterness toward someone else? In the midst of your suffering, how do you know you can trust God?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Read [Matthew 18:21-22 NLT](#). What does this passage reveal about the kind of forgiveness Jesus extends to us? What keeps people from forgiving repeatedly, and how can faith help overcome that?
- 3) **DO** - This week, ask God to help you take one step toward forgiveness, whether that means making the decision, beginning the process, or praying for the desire to forgive. Remember that forgiveness does not require denying pain or removing healthy boundaries; it means refusing to become a prisoner of resentment.