



Dear Life Group Leaders,

What a joy and privilege it is to do life with you. I cannot wait to hear about what God is going to do over the next several weeks as you faithfully apply His word and lead others in healthy friendship.

This week we begin our brand new series titled, Seven. Over the next seven weeks we will focus our attention on the seven statements Jesus made while hanging on the cross. They are heavy words, full of rich blessing for your life. I pray that great unity begins to overflow as we apply our hearts to these amazing words of Jesus.

**Sincerely,
Pastor Ryan**

SEVEN [part 1] Offensive Strategy

Last words carry great significance. Maybe you can recall a loved ones last words to you before passing. In those moments we press in and listen closely. Prior to Jesus dying on the cross he shared seven statements. All profound and important. In fact, if you have the faith to believe it, these words are full of transforming power for you today.

Jesus shares with us three different prayers, a promise, a personal request, a need, and a victory declaration. Today, we begin with his first prayer, "Father forgive them..."

Read together: ***Luke 23: 33- 34, John 20: 24- 27, Matthew 5:44, Hebrews 7: 23-25***

DISCUSS

1. What was most memorable from this weeks message? What did the Holy Spirit

say to you?

2. **Luke 23: 33- 34** records the first statement that Jesus made while hanging on the cross. How does it make you feel to here that Jesus uttered this prayer over and over again as he hung there?

3. Jesus' request for the Father to forgive was made possible by his willingness to embrace the penalty of sin, himself. When did you first realize this included your forgiveness and what were the events surrounding it?

4. Pastor Ryan said that there is a strange combination of ignorance and understanding in sin. Pilate and the Pharisees most definitely sinned in their execution of Jesus. Can you find the ignorance and understanding in their sin against Him? [Consider for example: Pilate was ignorant that Jesus was the messiah, yet he knew that he was innocent and undeserving of death]

5. **John 20: 27 - 28** says Jesus offered Thomas a close up and personal view of his scars. Is there any sins, doubts, fears or struggles that need a fresh reminder that Jesus has overcome? Can you confess like Thomas in the midst of your hang ups, "He is Lord"?

6. **Hebrews 7: 23- 25**. Jesus was interceding for you on the cross and he is still this moment. What do you need from Him today?

7. **Matthew 5: 44**. How have others forgiven you in the past and what did it mean to you? Whom do you need to forgive right now?

NEXT STEPS

Jesus turned one of the darkness moments of his life into a prayer. As you consider the great sacrifice of the cross we encourage you to take your deepest moments of pain and turn them into prayer. Taking this step won't always change our circumstances but it is the path to transformation into the image of Jesus Christ. Don't wait, take your next step and trust God to grow your faith.

PRAY

Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.

Luke 23: 34

Spend some time in prayer together focusing on this verse above. Thank God for the sacrifice of His Son. Ask the Lord to pioneer a new faith in your hearts, right now!

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