

One other thing the people did not know. Their leaders did not know it either. That the crucifixion was God's will. The death of Jesus was God's plan. How could a puny nation of men overcome the Son of God without God's approval? The foolish notion that God was caught off guard by the rejection of Jesus is preposterous! His death was required for our salvation and the Jews were merely pawns who unwittingly fulfilled God's mission.

Peter said, "*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it*" (Acts 2:22-24).

God knew Jesus would be killed. Jesus knew He would be killed. Only the premillennialists teach He did not know He would be killed. They contend that Jesus came to establish a physical kingdom (The same error that the Jews believed when Jesus first arrived). These false teachers believe the Jews foiled God's plan. They teach God set up the church as a substitute for the kingdom He intended, and after a time Jesus will return and set up a fleshly kingdom for 1000 years. The error largely comes from not seeing that the church is the kingdom of God. It was His intention all along. It was done *according to the eternal purpose* of God (Eph. 2:11) . His intention to save us in the church was established *before the foundation of the world* (Eph. 1:4).

Jesus died that we might be forgiven. Jesus prayed that we might be forgiven. God desires that we might be forgiven (2 Pet. 3:9). Is that something we want too? If so, then we must respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is in baptism that our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). *Ron Roberts*

Mooreville church of Christ

720 N. Indianapolis Road

Mooreville, IN 46158

February 23, 2020

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship

3:00 p.m. Worship

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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Announcements

We need a teacher for the 4 year old through kindergarten class for the next trimester: May - August 2020.

Our next Sunday adult teachers will be Alan (Ezra), Rex (Judas and Pilate), and Don (Joseph).

Our ladies class and song leaders' practice will take place at 2:00 today.

This afternoon at 3:00 we will have our extended song service. Please come and blend your voices in praise to our loving God.

Dewey should be home by the time you read this. Continue to visit and to call to see if they need help.

Lucille's sign up sheet is on the board. Why not go and read to her?

Pick up the two new sheets for your directory from the rear table if you have not taken them yet.

May God bless us richly this day.

**Grace comes
to us through
obedient
faith**

“Father, Forgive Them...”

Death by crucifixion is designed to maximize pain and to present the victim as a pathetic character. This deters other potential criminals who want to avoid the same fate. The death involves pierced hands and feet, twisted muscles which are held in unnatural ways, dehydration, and suffocation. When hanging on a cross the position of the arms restrains the lungs from getting oxygen. The person needs to push his body up with his feet in order to take in air. This explains why Jesus seven statements on the cross were very brief. It also emphasizes how important these statements were.

John records three: Jn. 19:26-27 shows His concern for His mother's care, verse 28 says, *“I thirst,”* and 30 says, *“It is finished.”* Mathew and Mark only record one statement quoting Psalm 22:1 about being forsaken. Luke 23:43 is His promise of paradise to the thief beside Him, and 46 is His commending of His Spirit to God. Which leaves Luke 23:34.

*“Then said Jesus, **Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.** And they parted His raiment, and cast lots.”*

Father: Jesus was being killed for blasphemy. He claimed to be the Son of God. Here on the cross He did not change His testimony. He was God's son as a centurion later acknowledged (Matt. 27:54).

Even in the immense pain of the cross Jesus did not reject God. He did not blame Him. He understood the will of God and prayed that it might be done even though it would hurt Him. He knew what needed to be done, and He knew He was the only one who could do it. How many Christians today deny their relationship to God when they face discomforts in their lives? The relationship to the Father is only acknowledged when they want something from Him. Like the spoiled brat who yells, *“I hate you”*, when being disciplined, so church members cast away their heavenly Father when things are not going the way they want.

Forgive Them: Jesus did not forget His mission. He came to save the lost (Luke 19:10). His goal was to enact forgiveness to a sinful society. On the cross He did not focus on His own pain in the body, but upon the spiritual pain of those in need of pardon. Forgiveness came at a very high price. This was God's end of the equation. He offered His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. This did not remove our sins by itself.

There are those who contend that Jesus did all that needed to be done for the remission of our sins. “There was nothing for man to do. If man had to obey anything then he was weakening the grace of God.”

Forgiveness was not granted at Jesus' death. Nor was it provided upon His request. Jesus' statement shows His compassion and desire. It was not answered with a “yes” at the cross. God's plan requires man to obey the Gospel. If this were not the case then why was the Holy Spirit sent to inspire the proper teaching of God's plan? Why did men die for their testimony of the resurrection? Why did God record and preserve the Gospel to this point? Obedience is man's end of the equation.

Some feel the “**them**” who Jesus is talking about refers to the soldiers who were gambling for his clothes. Others think He was talking about the Jewish people. They followed their leaders in calling for His crucifixion, but they really did not know what they were doing. I believe this is the correct aim of His concerns. This is why the Jews were later given the Gospel message. Once they learned they killed the Messiah they needed to know what they could do to avoid the wrath of God (Acts 2:36-38). The same concern we might have to obtain forgiveness is answered in Peter's words. *“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...”*

They know not what they do: The Jews were well aware that they were killing a man. They knew they had pushed the Romans into conducting the execution. What they did not know was that Jesus was not a blasphemer as He had been labeled. What they did not know was that the religious leaders were hypocrites who were envious of Jesus and wanted Him removed because He threatened their position. The masses did not know that Jesus was the Son of God. He was the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed of God. It is puzzling to us how they could not have known this. Through His teaching and His miracles He made it clear. His credentials were beyond question. But, like many today, these Jews expected their religious leaders to know the truth about Jesus and to accurately share it with them.