GROUP GUIDE

Frisco First Baptist Church

Last Words from the Cross

luke 23:33-34; john 19:25-27

4/6/2025

MAIN POINT

We are in a two-week series that will lead into Easter. No LIFEGroups on Easter (April 20th). Also, the next week (April 27th) we will dedicate the Finishing Rooted to Grow projects (Welcoming Lobby, Expanded Worship Seating, and Upgraded and larger Playground). So no LIFEGroup and only a 9:30 service. More details to come.

Jesus’ last words on the cross reveal His compassionate nature and incomparable forgiveness.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What are some of the most memorable things your parents told you during your childhood?

If you could say something important to the world in just one tweet, what would you say in 144 characters or less?

People tell us lots of things over the course of our lives. Some, like the things parents say, are memorable and stick with us for a lifetime. If we had limited time, our final words would be very focused—we’d speak only about what was truly important. Jesus’ final hours on the cross gave Him one last opportunity to teach us how to live. What did He say? On what did He focus His final words? As we will see in this study, some of Jesus’ last words were not vengeful, cruel, or vindictive—His last few words were words of forgiveness and incomparable compassion.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE a volunteer read Luke 23:33-34.

Do you find it harder to forgive someone who wrongs you in ignorance or someone who wrongs you deliberately?

How do you typically respond, both internally and externally, when people make fun of you? What allowed Jesus to keep focused on the task at hand?

What kinds of emotions did you feel the last time you forgave someone of an offense?

Jesus’ executioners acted in ignorance of who He really was. After the executioners nailed Jesus’ hands and feet to the cross and dropped the cross into the ground, Jesus spent the most agonizing time of His life suspended between two worlds. Instead of cursing His tormentors, He asked His Heavenly Father to forgive them for hurting Him the way they did.

What does it say about Jesus that He forgave His accusers while He was still on the cross?

When has there been an opportunity for you to forgive someone while you were in the midst of the pain they caused you? Why does God call us toward this kind of forgiveness?

When have you forgiven someone who wronged you, rather than lashing out at the person (or persons)? What was your motivation?

HAVE a volunteer read John 19:25-27.

How have you seen compassion expressed by God’s people to those who were experiencing difficulties?

What is the most meaningful way someone has ministered to you during a particularly difficult time? What did they do and say that was so memorable?

Jesus’ mother went to Golgotha, the site of the cross, and was there as Jesus was executed by the Romans. It is hard to imagine what she must have seen and felt as she looked at her precious son hanging on a cross. Her friends were with her at the cross—her sister and the two women both named Mary. It’s no doubt their presence was a blessing to Jesus’ mother.

Jesus had already uttered words of forgiveness, but now He spoke words of great compassion. He saw his mother in the crowd, along with one of His inner three disciples, John. Jesus told His mother to look to John to take care of her, and He told John to provide for Mary’s needs (“Woman, here is your son…Here is your mother”). Mary was likely in her early to mid-50s and widowed, and would not have a significant source of income. She would be one of the most vulnerable types of people in Jewish society—but Jesus’ compassionate words assured her future would be one in which she was provided and cared for.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Why is forgiveness an important practice for the follower of Christ?

Who do you need to extend forgiveness to this week in order to mimic the forgiving nature of Jesus, who forgave His enemies from the cross?

In what specific ways could you show compassion to someone in your group by putting their needs ahead of your own?

As God transforms your attitude and character to resemble that of his Son, how would you like him to change you? Would you say you need help becoming more forgiving or more compassionate? Explain.

PRAYER

As you lead your group in prayer, give thanks to God for His unending forgiveness and unnerving compassion. Pray for members to have a forgiving spirit. Ask God to use their compassion to meet people’s needs and to advance the spread of the gospel this week.

COMMENTARY

luke 23:33-34

23:32-33 Being executed between two... criminals fulfilled the prophecy of Isa 53:12, as well as Jesus’ words in Lk 22:37. The place where Jesus was crucified was called The Skull. In Aramaic, the name is Golgotha. The Latin equivalent is Calvary.

23:34 Jesus forgave His executioners because they acted in ignorance of who He really was. Some early manuscripts do not include the first part of this verse. The phrase they divided His clothes and cast lots fulfilled Ps 22:18.

john 19:25-27

19:25 His mother’ s sister may be Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee mentioned in Matthew and Mark. On Mary the wife of Clopas, cp. Lk 24:18. On Mary Magdalene, see 20:1-18 (cp. Lk 8:2-3).

19:26-27 In keeping with biblical injunctions to honor one’s parents (Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16), Jesus made provision for His mother, who was almost certainly widowed and probably in her early fifties, with little or no personal income.