# They Know Not What They Do

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.". That's in Luke chapter 23, verse 34.

## Provocation

This verse provoked me several weeks ago. It's been weighing on me.

Why did He add "They know not what they do."?   
Why didn't He leave it at "Father, forgive them."?

The verse really struck me: forgive them even though they have no idea the effect on me.

In some translations, it's TWO sentences: "forgive them" and "they know not".   
In others, it's one: "forgive them for they know not". In either case, Jesus is dying   
and yet He forgives. And those crucifying Him are so dispassionate; just another day for them.

## Forgive Them

We know we're supposed to forgive others. (Matthew 18:23-35)   
This is about the added wrinkle when we don't get an apology.

Forgiveness is easy when the sin is minor. It's usually doable when the sinner comes to you seeking it. But what if they have no clue? What if your life has been really screwed up because of something someone did? Can you forgive them then?

We want to scream, "Look what you did!".

Our culture doesn't help. We're increasingly concerned about how we feel. We're not (as a people) even rational anymore, logic lags behind emotion, even trumped by it.

Many have pointed out that it's not about how you feel. It's a choice.

## But I was HURT

When the wound is deep, it's understandable: We want the offender to feel some of our pain, or at least to have some clue how devastating their action was. To be honest, it angers me that some people truly don't care that they have hurt others.

Davey Blackburn's wife Amanda was killed, shot during a home invasion. She died the next day. Their unborn second child perished with her. Why them? Davey was a young pastor. Justice has taken years. The men know what they did. Do they have any idea what all Davey and his family have done through? But he has chosen to forgive them (without neglecting justice).

What are we doing? Seeking vengeance? That belongs to God alone. (Deuteronomy 32:35, Romans 12:19) Remember that God is just and He will deal with your adversaries. Get out of the way and let Him.

## Forgiveness Heals

Let nothing stand in the way of your forgiving others. Whatever prevents you from forgiving is poison to your soul and has no effect on the offender. Let it go.

IT HAPPENED. Don't deny that. The hurt is real. But let the Lord heal your heart. He's the only one who can.

Jesus' words haunt me. I have to forgive people who have gone on with their life as if nothing went wrong.

I'm not saying we should have no sense of justice. But when justice becomes our idol ... that too is sin. (And we have then become an offender in a whole new offense.)

Jude says we must leave it to the Lord.

"But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgement, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'." (Jude 1:9)

And so it is. See Romans 12:20-21 and Proverbs 25:21-22 ...

"To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

## Questions

Is there someone you need to forgive?

Is there someone who has hurt or offended you that won't apologize for it.   
(Do they even know the impact of what they did?)

Can you forgive those who "don't get it"?