

Luke 23:34

when life falls in on us, as someone has said, when life knocks us to our knees, we are in a perfect position to pray. It was such a place as no one else would ever have thought of prayer being offered, at that time. And yet at this place, We find that Jesus prays in the most unlikely place.

The story is told in the Country of The Blind by Mr. H. G. Wells how a traveler came to the strange valley shut off from the rest of the world with walls around it. And all the people were blind. He lived for a while in that strange place. He was considered strange, queer, by the natives. Their experts said his brain is affected by those queer things called eyes. And they distracted him. And he would be normal if his eyes should be removed. Now the traveler fell in love with a maiden who pleaded for him to have his eyes removed. That they might live in happiness. But one morning, he saw the sun rise, he saw the rocks in the meadows and the beautiful white flowers, and no longer was he content in the valley of darkness. But he climbed back to the land where men walked in light. Here we see the attitude of men toward Jesus. The strange attitude of men toward Jesus as he walked in the darkness of sin. They thought that he was queer. They thought that they could bring him down to the common level but they failed to do this by crucifying him. The world of darkness here at Golgotha is a place where the contrast between the Saviour's heart of grace

Introduction

We shall consider this under three heads - the place unlikely, the petition offered, and the pardon sought,

The last place, perhaps in all the world, that anyone would expect to hear a prayer would be on Golgotha. And perhaps the last people on earth to expect to hear anyone praying were the Roman soldiers who had just crucified Jesus Christ. For usually they had been accustomed for the victims shreiking with pain, crusing the spectators, and calling for the condemnation of the soldiers who crucified them.

Ordinary men might do so. But Jesus was no ordinary man.

For during his lifetime he had taught men forgiveness. For those who had wronged them. In Matt. 18:28, he exhorted his own followers, his disciples, to love their enemies and to bless them who cursed them; and to do good to those who hated them; and to pray for those who persecuted them. (Matt. 5:44). Now Jesus was the very (example) of all that he taught. And thus we come to think about a strange place of prayer and a strange prayer.

The (sentences) that he uttered here on the cross were uttered in the midst of death. And these words, there are

seven of them, were just like windows through which you could see a great deal. These words are like pictures, they're like photographs. They are seven in number and they are very precious because we know the sayings of the dying are always impressive. We never forget the death-bed utterances of a loved one, a bosom friend. The last words of famous men are treasured forever. In the Scriptures, Joseph, Moses, and other men are represented as having risen on their death-beds and spoken remarkable words that meant a great deal. And now we are to consider the last words of the Christ.

I. The Place Unlikely -

When we think about the strange prayer, we cannot but help thinking about the strange place where it was offered. They tell us the crucifixion was the most painful method of execution that evil minds ever devised. So terrible was it that the Roman law forbade its use in the case of Roman citizens.

It consisted of an upright piece with a beam across it. It was probably upon this type of a cross that Jesus died. In carrying out the cruel decree the upright piece was placed first in a hole in the ground with the cross piece lying flat on the ground. The victim was made to lie down with his arms outstretched. And they say that after jerking the arms and legs out of joint, to render the victim helpless, his arms

were bound by ropes to the cross beam. Then nails were driven through the hands into the wood. After the victim had been drawn into position, the cross beam was fastened to the upright with body perhaps two feet above the ground. Finally, the victim's feet were crossed and an iron spike driven through them into the upright beam.

In all probability, it was while his hands were being nailed to the cross beam that Jesus began to pray. While the crowd hurled their hated words at him, and while the thief also cursed him, he was praying.

Actually, they tell us that Jesus' prayer was uttered many times. That is that Jesus kept on saying this prayer. Surely never one loved so much and yet met sin with such mercy and grace as Jesus did here at this place.

It was here at this place that the words were directed to the father. And we note that in the moment of his greatest triumph Jesus turned and directed a prayer to the father. We remember that when Lazarus was called from the dead, Jesus calmly said, Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me. John 11:41. Now admit the stife and the bedlam of what men had created in all dignity he addressed God as Father. This signified perfect unity between God and the Son. And what a challenge this is to us. It is easy enough we see to trust God when life moves along in a wonderful way. But in times

prayed father forgive. There were those who elevated him to the cross and yet he prayed. There was the crowd cursing and reviling him and still he prayed. And then you look and you see at the bottom of the cross the soldiers are parting his garments; the seamless robe. And they began to gamble for his clothing.

How many times that prayer pierced heaven's sky and the glories beyond, no one knows. But Jesus was reaching the throne of grace with that burning appeal he kept saying, "Father, forgive them."

Where can one find a greater inspiration for faith? Than this one in the illustration here of Jesus who prayed in a strange place at a most unlikely time.

It was not unusual I don't suppose for crucified people to speak on the cross. But their words usually consisted of wild expressions of pain, of curses against God, and implications against those who were causing them to suffer. But when Jesus was there and the occasion of the nails to go through his hands and his feet, his first utterance, the very first one, was a prayer. And the very first word of that prayer was Father.

It was in the name of religion then had acted and in the name of God. But which of them was thus right? Which of them could pretend to be in communion with God? So close. Evidently

and man's heart of rebellion is most striking. The focal point of revelation and history and experience. There God did his best and man did his worst.

Everything at Calvary is significant but in a very special sense the Saviour's seven words spoken from the heart of his suffering interpret him to mankind.

Not a word too many or too few were used at this strange, unlikely place of prayer. Some have attempted to deny the first words and they say that there are some that, some of these words were not uttered at all by Jesus. But we know that regardless of what tradition has tried to add or take away, for tradition also adds another word to the list. When the soldier pierced his side, the story goes that Jesus looked at them and said friend there is a shorter ~~way~~ road to my heart than that. But this is impossible for Jesus was already dead.

Before the darkness descended upon the tragic scene, Jesus spoke three times, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" and "Varily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise" and "Woman, behold thy son; behold thy mother". From the miraculous darkness came the strangest of all words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

After the darkness had passed, there were three more sentences spoken up doubtlessly in a relatively short period

of time. "I thirst" and "It is finished" and "Father to thy hands I commend my spirit".

For our Saviour to pray under such circumstances is a most amazing thing. This was neither the time for prayer nor the place for prayer as we would think of it as individuals.

And so the people of that day thought. They knew all too little about the forgiveness of injuries. The Romans worshipped revenge as a God and "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and blood for blood", that was part of the Hebrew ethics.

It was usual for the victims of that dread doom with pain to shout, curse and spit at the spectators. So says David Smith. But Jesus prayed.

You see in Gethsamane, there was a place of prayer. And it was a good place to pray in Gethsamane. No nails were being driven there, no curses could be heard, no curious crowd to watch. In the quietness of the garden of Gethsamane, Jesus agonized. And when we hear him say, "Thy will be done" we know that Jesus could ask no more.

But this strange place of the crucifixion, a place of death and pain, planted in the earth as the nails ripped through the palms of his hands and by means of a rope or ladder the victim was nailed to his crossbar and was lifted up and fastened there in a n upright position. And a strange thing. There the crucifixion and the cricified was left to hang for

hours. No one ever thought of this as a perfect place for prayer. It was a strange place of prayer.

But here he conversed with the Holy Father, "forgive them for they know not what they do."

James Staker says that his concioussness of his sonship remained. The word father proved that the faith of Jesus was unshaken by all through which he passed and by that which he was not enduring. When righteousness is trampled underfoot and wrong is triumphant. That his faith was still secure in the heavenly father.

He held fast to the sense of his mission. Notice that he did not pray, "Father, forgive me" He was a spotless lamb of God without blemish being offered for the sin of the world. He knew it.

His concern for other people was sincere. There can be no doubt now that he really came to seek and to save that which was lost. And the hurt that he was going through was no to withhold his mercy from them. Does it not stir your heart that Jesus kept on saying and he kept on praying?

Could you reconstruct the picture, the place of the skull. And Jesus looked about and prayed, "Father forgive them". There was the centurion who had crushed him to the ground, tied him to the crossbeam and yet he prayed forgive him. There were the blunt spikes that tore into the palms of his hands and he

But according to his own words he could have summons legions of angels to his rescue. And they would have relieved him of his suffering. But we see that his petition to God was Father, forgive them. Now often in the past, Jesus as God had forgiven sin. Now he calls upon the father to forgive sin. It is divine for God to forgive and Jesus had so identified himself with sinful, suffering humanity and as God Jesus died for our sins. The wages of sin being death. Jesus was the God man and we note that many theological battles have been fought on this ground because to deny this is heresy. In more recent years the deity of Christ has been the center of controversy.

This petition was offered we see forgive them. Now does that refer only to the four soldiers who carried out the order of Pilate? No, they were mere servants in a game. Even so Jesus said, he that delivered me unto thee has the greater sin. (John 19:11) Help in answering this question comes from another prayer of Jesus just the night before. He had prayed for his friends (John 17). But also them which shall believe on me through their word. Now he prays for his enemies.

He prayed for those immediately responsible for his death. The religious hierarchy was guilty of spiritual blindness. The false witnesses who had committed perjury. Pilate was a coward. The mob sinned in its indifference; the soldiers were cruel in the performance of their duties; the thieves profaned

it was because prayer was the natural part of Jesus' life. That at that moment this prayer came forth.

The word Father also proved that the faith of Jesus was unshaken through all of this experience. And when he was being trampled upon, he knew. Thus we really see here that when prosperity is turned into adversity or when some of our plans or hopes of life tumble in to confusion, that even the child of God often times is apt to be rebellious to God. But great saints have been driven by the pressure of pain and disappointment to more devotion in God's service. We see that the salvation of the world is to come out of this prayer, this cross and this situation. Here are lessons for God's children to learn. All may be dark, everything may seem to go on the rocks and ruin, evil may seem to be on the throne in the place of God and yet God liveth. He is there and he is present and he will bring the dawn shortly to pass.

II. The Petition Offered

Now the petition offered is "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Now I am not sure that this prayer is completely understood by all of us. Even as we fathom it and try to understand it because here is a great second in the midst of the death of Christ.

This petition is not a prayer request for blanket pardon.

It is not for the cancellation of the penalty of all the sins of all those who were standing around the cross.

You remember that Jesus said to the women on the way to the cross, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but weep for yourselves, for your children; for behold the days are coming in which they shall say blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bear and the paps that never give suck. Then they shall begin to say to the mountains fall on us and to the hills cover us." Luke 23:28-30. This was a prophecy of the coming wrath upon Jerusalem and sinners. Such prophesing does not go with the praying that overlooks every guilt in a sentimental goodwill.

Such a request would have been inconsistent both with divine justice and man's freedom as an agent. When men do not desire God's forgiveness, it is not thrust upon them. God is not a tyrant. Our lord went to the cross that the justice of God and the mercy of God might be free. This his first words certainly could not ignore the very thing that his death made possible. And necessary.

Jesus never granted pardon except to (individuals) on petition of faith. He will grant pardon to you or to any man, even a penitent thief if he asked it. He will never force pardon upon a crowd.

Another thing in this petition we notice here that is offered. It was not a petition considered as a justification of ignorance. In most sin there is a strange mixture of ignorance and understanding.

Pilate may have been ignorant of Jesus' eternal sonship to God but he knew that Jesus was innocent and that was not a wrong-doer.

The Jews may have been ignorant of the fact that Jesus was a Messiah but they knew that it was far for envy and not justice that they brought him to Pilate. No where does he justify; to neglect, to ignore, and to be careless is to sin. And Jesus never winks at sin.

This petition on the other hand is not a petition for special reward. Jesus did not ask that because he participated in Calvary this would have been blasphemy. It cannot be argued that since we are saved by his death, since those at the cross were the instruments that put him to death. It follows that they are the direct agents of the blessing. No that is not true. He is not asking a petition of special rewards for those who have crucified him at the cross and those who stand around there. Because the ones that crucified him were the agents of Satan. Now we see in this petition when we consider what he did pray for and what his petition he offered, it would have been customary for him to have cried, "Father, destroy them."

deliberately committed in the face of facts. When one becomes so depraved in his nature that he declares evil is good then he has reached beyond forgiveness.

But those who crucified Jesus did so in ignorance. To the Jews he was a blasphemous, to the Romans Jesus was a pretender to a throne, To the soldiers he was merely simply a criminal, to the mob he was just a dreamer.

But the petition he offered was one that had a heart to it. And a heart to it was wrapped up in one word forgive. It is a tremendous word! When we see it in its multiplied meanings. Its most primitive meaning seems to be found in the simple statement, (let the pot drop) from this we probably get the idea (to leave or let go). Since the time of Homer it has carried the sense of (sending from one's self). Thus the New Testament referred to Jesus (dismissing the crowd) (Matt. 13:36). Paul employs it in the expression - the act of a husband putting away a wife. (1 Cor. 7:11). It denotes relieving one of his duty or the remission of such practices. One of its most picturesque ideas is that of freeing a slave under the will of the owner. All of these enrich the life of a believer. He was talking about not forgetting the crime that was being committed, but to forgive this crime. These murderers that Jesus was praying for in this petition that he was offering. He had been quiet before his crucified but he broke the silence

the holy one of God. Even Peter denied him and his other disciples fled. When all of the people answered and said his blood be on our heads and on our children (Matt. 27:25) there was guilt enough for all.

Who really crucified Jesus? Can we not look and see that the cross of Christ is not just in Palestine but it is right among us? Can we see that we are not present standing there among that group with the tempest and the earthquake? Where Christ died once for all. There was human despair and the cross of Christ was standing right among us. And can you not see that you were among the crucifiers? We are the crucifiers. We crucified Christ. If we would deny such then we would raise the cross of Christ again. And cause him to suffer. For we see when Christ was reviled, he reviled not again. He knew everyone who had ridiculed him and beaten him and nailed him on the cross. But on the cross he did not address a single one of them. He answered his crucifiers with silence. He did not call down to them but he called to the very God up in heaven who has majesty and power to forgive.

Did not God commend his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us? You see this takes in each of us. Into his arms of infinite concern and love. He prayed for the lost man who by either deliberate choice or indifferent denial had gone into godliness and continues so. The sin of

commission and the sin of omission. Thus we see that we crucify Christ afresh time and time again.

When the soldiers had raised Christ into position on the cross, they nailed above his head this superscription which Pilate had caused to be written. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews". G. Campbell Morgan points out that in Jesus' day the three great streams of life were represented by Jews, Romans, and Greeks. Thus the charge was written in a national language - Hebrew - the official language, Latin - the common language, Greek - the language of religion. The language of government, the language of culture - all these elements demanded his crucifixion. The Romans supplied the power, the Greeks culture of the age ignored him, sinful religion rejected him, sinful power murdered him, sinful culture neglected him. And thus we see in this day in which we live that sin is up to date in the same way. And for this Jesus' petition was offered for they know not what they do.

The word know is of special interest. There are several words for knowing. Each with a particular emphasis upon the kind of knowledge implied. For instance, one word denotes from proximity to the thing known. Second, expresses native insight. Third, expresses the idea of a determination with regard to external impressions or a knowledge grounded in eternal

experiences. Which literally means to see with the mind's eye. It denotes clear and pure mental perception apart from any other knowledge that is received from others. This is to see and certainly it means to see or perceive while the other expresses the knowledge which comes from perception that has done its work. In other words, after one has perceived or seen through a matter, it becomes active in his soul. Thus it means not to have seen but to know.

It was this word which Jesus used in his prayer; in the New Testament it is used of the Gentiles who know not God (1 Thes. 4:5). They have a knowledge of him, they have heard of him, they see external evidences of his nature; but they do not know him in their souls. (Romans 1:19-32). They have not perceived him at the point of soul knowledge or understanding.

Thus these crucifiers of Jesus is saying that in their souls they do not understand what they are doing. They have an acquaintance regarding him, they possess heresay facts about him; but they have not seen through them to the soul's comprehension of what they are doing. Their's was a deliberate sin. But was not a deliberate sin but was one of soul ignorance.

Now Paul speaks of the wisdom of God. This is the sum and substance of what we have been saying before. Thus Jesus did not pray such a prayer for Judas his was a sin of full knowledge. The unpardonable sin is the sin against knowledge,

heavenward, he sees the legion of angels (straining forward,
ready to come, waiting for his word to sweep down and destroy
the crucifiers and to rescue him back to heaven. But Jesus
 cries to the father to hold them back, do not hinder these men,
permit the crucifixion to continue. They are not taking my life,
I am laying it down. It is necessary for man to be saved.

I see in this also a temptation of Satan. For he was saying
 as they were driving the nails in his hands that he could
avoid the cross but Jesus would not turn back and he prays this
 passionate prayer. For this to continue.

2. We see in the second place that Jesus prayed that it might
not be laid to their charge. You remember Stephen was caught
 something of this spirit in the hour of death when he prayed
 in the same sense, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,
 (Acts 7:60). We note here that this idea is to waver certain
taxes. That is it is used of a debt. A man has a burden. For
 instance, a certain man demands a payment of a debt. When the
 debtor pleaded for more time, the man was moved with compassion
 and loosed him and forgave him of his debt. (Matt. 18:27).
 Thus the man took the debt upon himself. More to the point is
 the word of Jesus. To the palsy man, Son be of good cheer, thy
sins have been forgiven thee. (Matt. 9:2). Jesus took the
 man's sins upon himself.

when in this strange place, he offered this strange petition
 of forgiveness. Because they did not know whom and whom they
 were crucifying. When the Romans heard someone talking of the
son of God, they thought of him as an emperor. When the Jews
 spoke about the Messiah, they thought of him as a national
liberator. They did not know that Christ would miraculously
arise the (third day), and be exalted of God. They knew not
what they did. Now our situation is different. We can know
 certain things and we can plead ignorance to certain things.
 But can we still say that we know not what we do? When we
 think about the case of these people and we think about the
 crucifixion of Jesus.

Here was a prayer for the petition, a pardon of his
enemies. Herod has disdained him, Pilate played fast and loose
 with his entries, and the mob had howled at him. But here was
 a prayer of Jesus, Father forgive them. He had long ago taught
men to love their enemies, bless them that curse you, do good
to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully
persecute you. The Sermon on the Mount had been a beautiful
 dream but now we see what a difference it is to preach and to
 practice.

There are few of us perhaps who know what it is to forgive.
 We have never been deeply wronged as Jesus was. Very likely
 many of us may not have many enemies in the world. But those

who have are aware of how difficult it is. Perhaps noting
else is more difficult.

Revenge is one of the sweetest satisfactions to the natural heart. The law of the ancient world was at least in practice, thou shall love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. Even in the Old Testament, curse those that have persecuted and wronged you. And we see that Jesus changed this and Christ revealed that here was a father's heart and it was the heart of forgiveness.

For they know not what they do. We are looking further, still further into the depths of his love. He has been injured. Could it be said of them all that they did not know what they were doing? Did not Judas know? Did not the High Priest know? Did not Herod know? Apparently it was primarily the soldiers he was praying for the praying about. Actually they just worked and that was a day's work for them. But they were just instruments of the government. And yet they were guilty.

It is true of every sinner in some measure that he does not know what he is doing. Paul one time said that he in ignorance and in unbelief was blinded about the things that he was doing.

But Jesus knew that they needed forgiveness. But unless they seek repentance as individuals, God cannot forgive them. How can he? And we know that Jesus was going to give Jerusalem at least forty years to think through and to change her ways.

III. The Pardon Sought

Now we see in the last analysis of this text, of this prayer not only the place was unlikely, the petition was offered, but what was the pardon that Jesus sought? As he prayed here on the cross?

First, we see that Jesus prayed that he might be permitted to be crucified. He was praying that the crucifixion might continue and condemn me for only by assuming their debts could he plead for their forgiveness. In this appeal he was isolating himself as the Saviour, the only Saviour of the world. Change their wrong doing to my account and I will pay the last penny of the obligation. By this sacrificial act, he separated himself from all mankind. And became the one. And it cost him his blood. Now he could, Calvary could never hope for mercy, except for the hands strong enough to atone for the crime.

They did not know that he went to the cross in order that his prayer for their forgiveness might become a possibility. No one else could do this. No one else could undertake such a work of grace, as Jesus. And it seems that his prayer and this pardon he was seeking. He was praying for the permission of the crucifixion to be continued. Now Jesus had told Peter the night before. Think thou that I could not pray the father and he would give me 12 legions of angels? (Matt. 26:52). To deliver him. The crucifixion was now in progress. And he looks

him stay on the cross. And he was with him through the tomb.

If someone committs a wrong against you you may immediately forgive him. But until he repents of the wrong and asks for your forgiveness the broken fellowship cannot be mended. Even so forgiveness of God cannot become effective only as we repent of our sins. We often wonder why it is that God delays his judgment against men and nations born in sin.

Pilate washed his hands of the matter but he wound up in exile. Thousands recognize the sin in their lives and yet are not saved.

Still God through mercy has delayed his judgment and if you will repent then you can have this pardon which he is willing to give. During the war between Russia and Finland seven Russians were held prisoners in a little town hall of a Finnish city. They were to be shot at sunrise. They were communists and godless, unbelievers. They had not hope for time or eternity. Some of them even cursed God and beat on the wall with their fists. But one voice began to sing "Safe in the Arms of Jesus", Safe on his gentle breast; There by his love overshadowed, Sweetly my soul shall rest. Hark tis the voice of angels; born in a song to me. Over the field of glory, over the Jaspem sea." When the verse was finished one of his fellows broke out, where did you get that from? You fool, are you trying to make us religio?

Jesus was not asking that their sins be ignored. A righteous God could not do that. He used an expression of thought of letting go or giving up the debt by demanding its payment. Now he was asking their sins to be placed upon him already he is the son of God bearing away the sin of the world. Thus he calls upon the father, not to hinder them by any divine intervention but to lay their sins upon him. Forgive them by condemning me, he prays. In no other way could they be forgiven. In no other way could they find excuse for sin. As Paul said, if he hath wronged thee or owed thee ought, put that on my account, I will repay. (Philemon 18)

Because Jesus became a debtor, we are free. He was rich for us to serve the masters. Jesus was not praying that because they did not know what they were doing that they did not need forgiveness. I do not believe that this was a prayer for Judas. Because Judas knew that Jesus was innocent, Judas was ignorant and I am not sure that this was a prayer for Pilate. Pilate knew that there was no evil in Jesus. Pilate was not ignorant enough concerning that truth. The soldiers were not ignorant altogether. Because the passersby were not ignorant, the thieves at his side were ignorant. None of them knew what he was or what he was doing. They did not even understand the significance of sin and the consequences. They had ignored him thoughtlessly. The penitent thief was ignorant but knowledge

came and he appealed for salvation to Jesus.

3. I think in the third and last place here that Jesus prayed and sought in this pardon that judgment be held back for a moment.

I think this was a request that the condemnation of sin might be held back and the wrath of God might wait for just a time. The word that he uses here is the same word in Matt.

19:14 "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me". Directing the disciples to forgive the children, insisting that they not interfere with them. We see that on the cross

when the soldier wanted to give vinegar to Jesus, the objector says let it be. That is it was not forgiveness they were thinking about. They were attempting to prevent the soldier

from carrying out their purpose until they could see whether or not Elijah was going to come back to earth again. Now Jesus had already prepared his little band of followers to go

forth and witness. After the resurrection, pentecost would come, but these were ignorant of the tragedy of the cross and the tragedy of the gospel message. And Peter preached we see

and now brethren I would that through ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers. Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. (Acts 3:17-19). Many believed

if they had not believed it would not have been necessary for him to suffer.

I think it is clear here that Jesus does not wish that

immediate doom like the flash of the lightning or a thunder-bolt of God's wrath come down upon them. And that they be cast out in his justice. (No man) would have had a chance for

salvation because no man deserved a chance. But thank God Jesus prayed, Hold the winds of wrath back until the elect are sealed. There are some among these at the cross who will

turn when the significance of their crime dawns upon them. Father, postpone the day of judgment, give them a chance and because of that prayer the gospel has been proclaimed and many

an unworthy sinner has been saved. Why does not God's lightning strike when we stoop to sin? Why does he seem to ignore the wickedness of men and of nations.

They do not deceive, God is not mocked. But God may postpone the men may escape. But unless they turn to Jesus, they will never escape their sins. And be saved.

That they might have an opportunity to know in response to Jesus' cry we see that he was asking God to hold back, to intercede until enlightenment could come through the victory of his

death and of his resurrection that he might declare to be the son of God. That they would know that they might not continue

in their sins deliberately. But Paul says and in times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

We find that God answered Jesus' prayer. And that God let

For Resurrection to take
Place & hear of Grace
of God -

This was the song of a man by the name of Koskinen. And he replied in tears, comrades listen to me a moment. When I first heard that song from the salvation army, I laughed too. But the song got me. It is cowardly to hide your beliefs. The god my mother believed in has now become my God. I lay awake last night and suddenly I felt that I had to find a saviour to hide in. Then I prayed like the thief on the cross. And Christ cleansed me and he made me ready to die. During that night, many Bible verses came and many verses from hymns. And they brought the message of the crucified Saviour to my heart. And I have been saved. Within a few hours, I shall meet my Lord. And his face was shining. Silence followed. Very soon one of the condemned men said, you are right. If I only knew that there was mercy for me too, but these hands of mine have shed blood and I've reviled God. I've trampled on holy things. Would you pray for me? He sank to the ground in despair. The two prayed. About four o'clock in the morning, all seven were praying and soon all of them found the Saviour as they joy of his life filled their souls. They sang old hymns, the clock struck 6, the seven men were marched out to face the end. With their hands lifted up to heaven. And at last they went to meet God. They had a night to turn back to him. Jesus still is praying Father hold back the judgment. We cannot expect this for long. We need to accept his mercy even now.

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