

- Many of us struggle to find hope, peace, and joy for the days ahead!
- We must lay aside anything that hinders our progress with God. Especially sin!
- We must take our eyes off everything & everyone else in life and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.
  - *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Hebrews 12:1,2 (NKJV)***
- We can learn from several statements Jesus made when He went to the cross.

### **1. Choose To Forgive**

- Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." **Luke 23:34 (NKJV)***
- By having a spirit of forgiveness, Jesus retains control of the situation when it appears He's being victimized by it. He is mastering the moment; the moment is not controlling Him.
- Forgiving those who seek to harm us is to be unfettered by the anger or retaliation that would seek to attach itself to us.

### **2. Help Others Around You Who Are Struggling As Well**

- And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." **Luke 23:43 (NKJV)***
- The criminals on either side of Jesus are experiencing the same kind of agony and suffering as He is.
- Rather than focusing on His own pain, He extends His concern to those who are struggling with infinitely less resources than He has.
- In a bad day, it's important to recognize that others are having it just as tough rather than becoming preoccupied with our own problems.

### **3. Take Your Hard Questions To God**

- And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" **Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)***
- When you feel you've lost touch with God, direct your hard questions to Him, not man.
- While other men & women may sympathize with us, none of them have the answer.
- Job's story is a classic example about how the philosophies of man can fail.
- Cry out to God. While He may seem absent, He is never far away!

### **4. Be Honest & Acknowledge Your Need**

- After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" **John 19:28 (NKJV)***
- Earlier in the story, Jesus turns down a drink but here, Jesus asks for a drink because He wants to clear His throat for the confession of faith, He's about to make next.
- There is no one so spiritual that you can make it through a tough day, season of life without people around you **to help you clarify the stance you are taking of trusting in God.**

## 5. **Be Assured, Better Days Are Ahead**

- a. *So, when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"** And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. **John 19:30 (NKJV)***
- b. It is a statement of triumph, that doesn't see the victory yet, but lays hold of it by faith.
- c. There is nothing that we have gone through or will ever go through, that God's hand can't work in, if we'll only have faith in Him.
- d. Just like He did with Jesus, God can turn a bad day, a bad year, or a bad season of life into something new.

## 6. **Surrender It All To God & Let It Go**

- a. *And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into **Your hands I commit My spirit.**' " Having said this, He breathed His last. **Luke 23:46 (NKJV)***
- b. At times, we can find ourselves reliving the struggle of it all: When will this finally end?
- c. The way to go through a bad season is to place it in the hands of God and leave it there.
- d. Jesus' statement was not one of wearied resignation, but one of trust. It was an act of trust in the Father and in His faithfulness to His own Word.

### **Scriptures:**

#### **Hebrews 12:1,2 (NKJV)**

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>**looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

#### **Luke 23:34 (NKJV)**

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

#### **Luke 23:43 (NKJV)**

And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

#### **Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)**

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, **"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

#### **John 19:28 (NKJV)**

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, **"I thirst!"**

#### **John 19:30 (NKJV)**

So, when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"** And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

#### **Luke 23:46 (NKJV)**

And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, **"Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'** " Having said this, He breathed His last.