

A STORY ABOUT JESUS AND ME AT THE CROSS

I picture myself beneath the cross of Jesus while He is being crucified. A deep darkness covers the land; a stiff, cold wind slaps my face. I hear the mourning of women in the distance. I am one of his disciples, and Jesus is speaking to me in a voice filled with pain, love and understanding. His eyes focus on mine; they look right into my heart. I ask Him why it had to be this way - why did He have to die? Jesus said, "I offer up my life in your place as atonement for your sin. I gladly do it for you." My stomach is in knots - how could He do this for me? "Isn't there another way, Jesus?" "No, my beloved. There is no one righteous, not one. I'm the only One who can pay the price for your sins. God is holy, and the price must be paid," replied Jesus in a voice filled with both love and torment.

I hear the catcalls in the distance as those around me are mocking Jesus. I hear, but I don't really hear because I am consumed, overwhelmed by the love of Jesus and by the sorrow of losing him.

Jesus entreats me, "Give me your sins." In my hands is a list of sins, too numerous to count, page after page - larger than a dictionary. I give them to the executioner, and he nails them to the cross. As the spikes go in, Jesus winces in pain. When it is done, He speaks with relief, "It is finished; your debt has been paid."

My heart doubts - how could God ever forgive me? The more I have been around Jesus, the more that my heart realizes how holy He is and how sinful I am. Jesus can read my thoughts and can see the torment in me, "Child, do you trust that my sacrifice on the cross cleanses mankind of sin?" "Yes" I reply, hope filling me. "Do you believe that I am Lord and I have the power to forgive your sins?" "Yes" I respond as my heart races. "Then nothing, nothing can separate you from my love! Your sins are forgiven. Now go and give me all of your life! You do find me trustworthy, don't you?" Jesus asks as his eyes meet mine. "Of course I do; you have never failed me!" I replied, recalling that I certainly had failed him. "Do not fear. I know that you will fall at times. I will be there to forgive you, pick you up, and lead you on. My Spirit will live inside of you, guiding you all the way through life. Only give me your all, as I have done for you. I have been crucified for your sins. You must put aside your old way of life. In essence, you must die to your old life and live a new life dedicated to me. This is what you were created for! This is the only way you will find your fulfillment! Go and share the good news with others, that they, too, may know my forgiveness and love and receive me into their hearts!"

Jesus breathed His last.

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