

## *Christ's First Saying From The Cross*

*"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).*

Because Elke Wisbey of England was born with brain damage, the six year old girl has never been able to walk or talk. Recently, however, she was able to communicate with her family by using a high-tech gadget which tracks her eye movements. The machine, a MyTobii Smartbox from Sweden, detects which icons the little girl is looking at by using tiny lasers. When her eyes settle on an icon on the screen, a pre-programmed voice speaks the word or phrase for her.

Just a few days after setting up the equipment, her parents described how their daughter started using her eyes to repeat the words "I love you" over and over again. At first they thought that the machine was stuck, but then they realized she was definitely looking at the "I love you" icon. When asked if she was telling her Daddy that she loved him, she looked at the icon "yes." You can imagine that this was a very emotional moment.

The Lord Jesus was born without any physical defects. He had no problems walking and talking. And He never needed a high-tech gadget to track His eye movements. But basically, when He was hanging on the cross, the first words that came from His mouth were, "I love you!" His prayer to the Father for the forgiveness of His enemies was an expression of love for sinners. Several lessons are afforded us in the Savior's first saying from the cross.

*These words teach us of the privilege of communion!* According to Matthew's account, Jesus had already suffered varied forms of abuse. He had been "scourged" (Matt. 27:26); He had "a crown of thorns" placed upon His head and was "mocked" (Matt. 27:29); the wicked ones had "spit upon Him . . . and smote Him on the head" (27:30), and nailed Him to the cross. Yet, reminding us of the privilege of communion with God in the darkest hours of life, Jesus called upon Him as a trustworthy "Father."

*These words teach us of the power of compassion!* The venom of hatred was never as poisonous as in this hour. Yet the strength of love was never as powerful as when Christ prayed for His enemies. While the wicked succeeded in manifesting their wicked hearts, the Lover of sinners succeeded in revealing His loving heart. And by asking the Father to forgive them, He demonstrated to us that where there is a heart of compassion, there is a heart of forgiveness.

*These words teach us of the prominence of corruption!* The Sent One from heaven, the Savior of men was the center of attention. But due to spiritual corruption and depravity, the people were blinded to His Person. Instead of showing Him their affection and devotion, they revealed their accusations and detestation. Because God alone can forgive sin and open blinded eyes, we must also pray for those who continue in spiritual ignorance.