

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Give a 5-minute review of Peppy's sermon

Facilitator:

Please don't feel you have to cover every question. They become increasingly deeper and more thoughtful toward the end. It may help to highlight questions you want to be sure to cover, depending on the dynamics of your group and the time available. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

### **CONNECT Group study questions for April 3 - Luke 23:34**

#### **Title: The Cost of Forgiveness**

Read **Luke 23:34**—*And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”*

**Question:** In our journey from here-to-there, Pastor Peppy has taught us to renew our passion and to praise and glorify our Lord and Savior. But many of us attempt to do so while carrying baggage. “It’s time to lose some weight,” he tells us. What is your “baggage”? What do you insist on carrying with you from where you were to where you are going?

**Question:** An answer to the last question might be favorite sins that we carry, like resentment, bitterness, anger, or unforgiveness. Note that Hebrews 12:1-2 includes the admonition, “...let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely...” We can be carrying weights that have nothing to do with overt sin—legitimate activities that nonetheless weigh us down on our journey from here to there. According to Hebrews 12:1-2, the journey from here to there is a race. What other weights do you need to shed to become a lean and mean long-distance runner for the Lord?

**Question:** In his prayer to forgive those who were crucifying him, Jesus addresses God as Father, a term for God used frequently by Jesus, but found rarely, if ever, in the Old Testament. What particular significance can we draw from Jesus’ use of “Father” while in agony on the cross?

**Facilitator:** If there was ever a time when Jesus could have doubted the love of his Father, it was there on the cross as God turned his head from the sin Jesus bore. Yet Jesus still clung to the belief that the love-bond between them was not broken.

**Question:** If we haven't already, each of us will face loss, hardship, pain, or suffering of some sort that will stretch our belief in a loving, caring heavenly Father who wants only the best for his children. What can we do to ensure we stay firm in our faith even through something as severe as a crucifixion?

**Question:** When we say we forgive a debt or an offense, we often miss that a price still has to be paid. No debt ever goes unpaid. When you forgive, you bear the burden of payment yourself. If we forgive a debt or an offense, but resent the burden of payment, how can we "lay aside" (Hebrews 12:1) that burden and be free?

**Facilitator:** 1 Peter 2:21-24, 1 Peter 5:7, and Matthew 11:28-30 tell us what we can do to relieve ourselves of the debt of forgiveness. Because that burden has been and is continually being borne by Jesus Christ, we can lay it aside for him to carry.