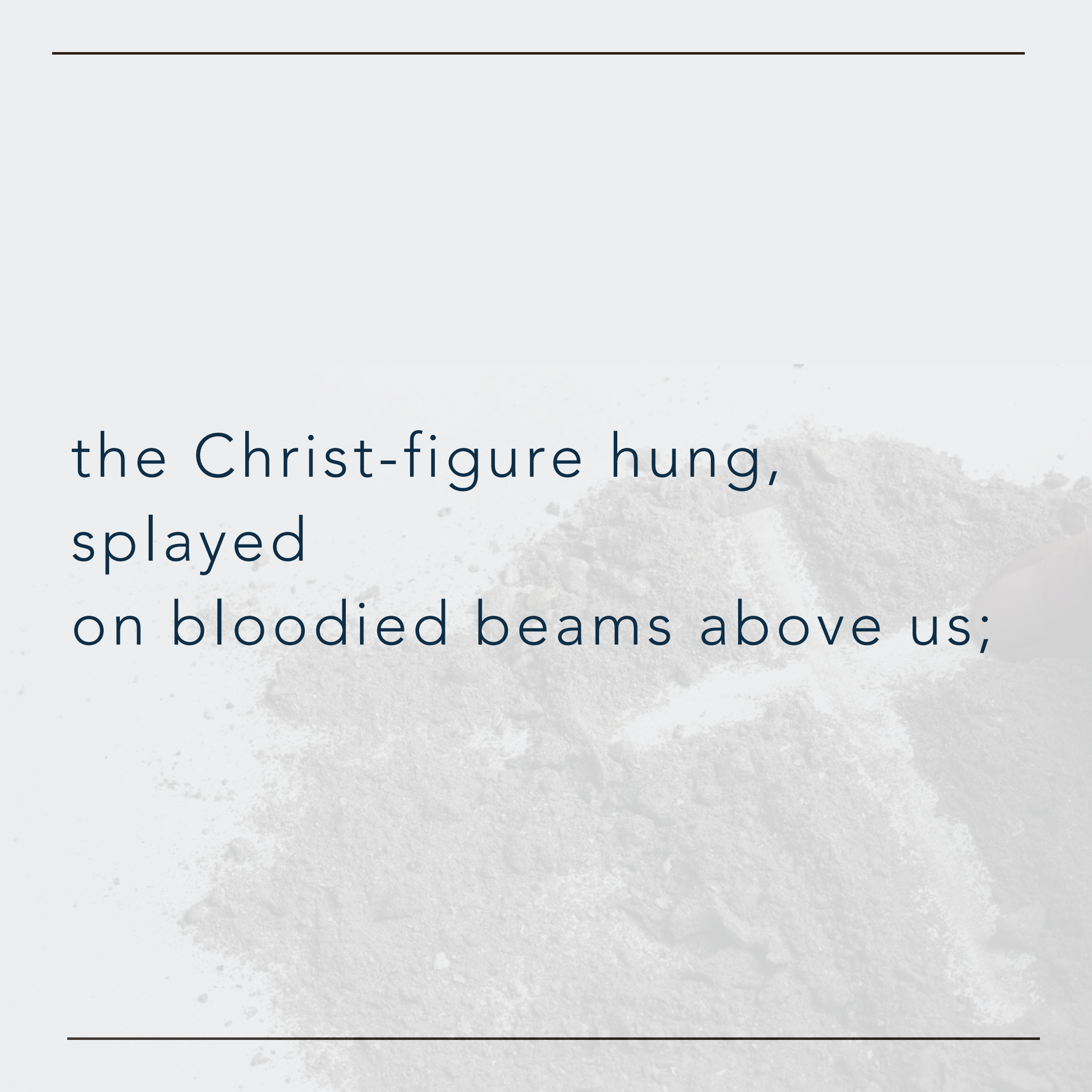

SUNDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 9, 2025

Unholy we sang this morning,
and prayed
as if we were not broken;
crooked



the Christ-figure hung,
splayed
on bloodied beams above us;

devious God, dweller in
shadows,
mercy on us

immortal, cross-shattered
Christ-
your gentling grace down
upon us.

from "Mercy"
by John F. Deans

This week we will consider
the first words from the
cross: "Father forgive them,
for they do not know what
they are doing."

As we meditate on these words, begin this week asking God to give you the humility to face your own need for forgiveness.

MONDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 10, 2025

“Father forgive them...”

Why are these the first words spoken from the cross? Why as Jesus hung there, in indescribable pain, did his mind turn first to “Father, forgive?”

As William Willimon
observes, forgiveness is what
it cost God to come near to
us.

On Good Friday, Jesus
endured the absolute worst
humanity had to offer... and
responded with "Father,
forgive."

Jesus could have called angels to rescue Him. To take Him off the cross and pay back every person that caused Him pain. He could have called down fire from heaven to destroy them.

Instead He said, "Father, forgive."

Our redemption was only possible because Jesus chose forgiveness over retaliation. Love over hate. Mercy over revenge. "Father, forgive" instead of "Father, destroy."

As we venture through the first full week of Lent, spend a moment thanking Jesus that His posture toward us - toward YOU- is "Father, forgive."

TUESDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 11, 2025

When we consider these words, "Father, forgive," we often think about who needed forgiveness, and what they needed to be forgiven for. And rightly so.

But I wonder what it says
about Jesus that his words on
the cross were "Father
forgive." What does it say
about God's Kingdom that
these were Jesus' words on
his deathbed?

What does it say about the norms of life in God's Kingdom? That Jesus, the perfect example of life with God had a posture toward forgiveness, even at the worst?

In these last words of Jesus, we get a glimpse of the values of God's Kingdom. We see that His kingdom is one governed by forgiveness and redemption.

Today, consider this:

As people look at our lives,
would they see this same
value lived out in us? Are our
lives characterized by
forgiveness? By a bent
toward redemption and
reconciliation?

WEDNESDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 12, 2025

"They don't know what they're doing."

Jesus seems to be saying that there is something happening that the people around him don't understand.

William Willimon says that Jesus seems to be saying that humans are stumbling around in the dark. We can't see clearly what's really going on.

He says we're like the soldier
in WW2 that accidentally shot
his best friend when he
mistook him for an enemy
soldier in the dark.

As we consider Jesus' words,
"they don't know what
they're doing", let's spend
some time acknowledging
our limited sight and
confessing our need for
God's help.

THURSDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 13, 2025

*“Roman soldiers, Jewish
Sanhedrin, raving mob - how
did each of you decide to
murder God’s son?”*

"Well, we thought we were standing up for law and order. We believed we were supporting good biblical values. We were just soldiers obeying orders. We had this gut feeling."

"We weren't actually in charge of the proceedings; it was done by the government. Everything was done in accordance with the best legal advice."

In truth, it is as Jesus names it: "They don't know what they're doing."

*-William H. Willimon
"Thank God It's Friday"*

In Lent, we come face to face
with our human finiteness.
Our limited understanding
that leads to faulty action.

But the story doesn't end
with our limits... and thank
God for that.

Spend some time confessing
your limits and thanking God
for His infinite mercy and
wisdom.

FRIDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 14, 2025

*There is the suggestion here
that human beings are in the
grip of something they do
not fully comprehend. The
evil that lodges in the human
heart is greater than we
know.*

This means at least two things. It means that there is nothing that you or I could ever do, or say, or be, that would put us beyond the reach of Jesus' prayers.

And it also means that no one else, no one at all, is beyond that reach. His prayer for the worst of the worst comes from a place beyond human understanding.

From that sphere of divine power we hear these words today, as though they were spoken for the first time, as though they were being spoken at this very moment by the living Spirit, spoken of each one of us:

*"Father, forgive them, for
they know not what they do."*

Fleming Rutledge
"The Seven Last Words from the Cross"

SATURDAY

*Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do.*

March 15, 2025

*Alas, and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred
head
For such a worm as I?*

*Was it for sins that I had
done*

He groaned upon the tree?

Amazing pity, grace unknown

And love beyond degree

*My God, why would You shed
Your blood
So pure and undefiled
To make a sinful one like me
Your chosen, precious child?*

*Well might the sun
in darkness hide
And shut His glories in
When Christ,
the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's, sin*

*Thus might I hide
my blushing face
While His dear cross appears
Dissolve my heart
in thankfulness
And melt my eyes to tears*

*My God, why would You shed
Your blood
So pure and undefiled
To make a sinful one like me
Your chosen, precious child?*

*Alas and Did my Savior Bleed
Arr. Bob Kauflin*
