

It is finished. John 19:30

Rev. Dr. Jim Heidinger

This cry from the cross was not a cry of defeat, but of victory!

Jesus was driven by the fact that He had a great work to do. The first recorded words He spoke on this earth: were “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Even at twelve years of age, He already knew that there was a great work—His Father’s business—that he was to be doing.

Later, Jesus would say “*My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work.*” His work was to glorify the Father in every aspect of His life.

James Stalker, a Scottish pastor of years ago, said this of Christ’s great work: “His [work] was bringing men back to God, and He had to remove the obstacles which stood in the way. He had to roll away the stone from the sepulcher in which humanity was entombed and call the dead to come forth. He had to press His weight against the huge iron gates of human guilt and doom and force them open. He had done so; and, as He said, ‘It is finished,’ he was at the same time saying to all mankind, ‘Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it.’”

The great work of redemption for the salvation of the world was finished! Praise God!

Pray

For faith to finish as Christ did.

Father, into your hands I
commit my spirit .Luke 23:46

Rev. Howard Reynolds

FATHER: Three times in Luke following the Last Supper Jesus directly addresses “Father”. The first is in the garden, “Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but Yours be done.” The second was on the Cross, “Father, forgive them, they don’t know what they’re doing.” The third is our text. Here at His death, after all the pain, agony and suffering His final focus is on His Father. *Do we have the same focus?*

INTO YOUR HANDS: After all the rough, cruel and abusive hands that arrested, beat, and crucified Him, Jesus returns His life to The Father’s loving embrace. *Do we anticipate the same welcome?*

I COMMEND (commit or give up)

MY SPIRIT: HE gives it up; no one takes it from Him! They killed His body but He still directed His Spirit back to its Source, His Heavenly Father. *Can we direct our life, our breath, our spirit with the same trust?*

WHEN HE HAD SAID THIS, HE BREATHED HIS LAST: His Spirit departed and Jesus died and was buried. He had humbled himself all the way down to this (Philippians 2:5-11). Now He will be exalted from the grave and death to His friends and to His Father. *Do we anticipate the same destiny?*

Father, forgive them, for they
do not know what they are
doing. Luke 23:34

Rev. Todd Nelson

Jesus’ first words from the cross were directed at his father in heaven. Father, forgive (af-ee-ay-mee in Greek which means to let go or send forth) them. Do not hold this against them father. Let it go. For they do not know (eido in Greek which means to see or perceive) what they are doing. Father, they are blind to what they are doing.

And by speaking these words, Jesus firmly establishes that forgiveness is not about apologies and contrite spirits. Forgiveness is not even about an understanding or acknowledgment of wrong doing by the offender. Forgiveness, from this point forward is best understood as love not waiting. Not waiting for understanding to forgive. Not waiting for an apology to make things better.

Jesus spoke these words over his executioners. As we begin lent perhaps this is the time God is calling you to cry out “Father forgive them” to the person who has hurt you and shows no remorse or even awareness of the situation. Our example is clear. Love does not wait. The key to healing for everyone involved is the words spoken from Jesus on the cross. *Father, forgive them.*

SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



PRAYER GUIDE
2014

I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.

Luke 23:43

Rev. Kenneth Kinghorn

Here, we encounter one of the most astounding and marvelous verses in Scripture—Christ’s promise of heaven. The two malefactors on crosses beside Jesus viewed him differently. One criminal taunted Jesus. The other wrongdoer countered, “We are punished justly . . . but this man has done nothing wrong.” Then, he turned to Jesus: “Remember me when you come into your kingdom.” That simple appeal was all the thief could make or needed to make.

A right relationship with Christ comes from turning to him and accepting his gracious offer of life. The Lord responded to the pleading penitent, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.” We read in the Psalms: “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints” (Psa. 116:15). When believers pass from the temporal world into eternity, Jesus promises them, “You will be with me in paradise—*today*.”

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I thank you for your promise of heaven. Your love, grace, and mercy exceed all that I can imagine or deserve. I trust you alone for my present and my future. In Jesus’ name. Amen

Dear woman, here is your son. Here is your mother. John

19:26-27

Dr. Mike Powers

Referring to John, the youngest disciple and the only one present at the cross, Jesus spoke these last words to his mother, Mary, “Dear women, here is your son.” And to John, Jesus said, “Here is your mother.” *You are now responsible for one another. You are to be family to each other.*

Jesus entrusted his grieving mother and his grieving friend to the care of one another. “From that hour,” John later wrote, “the disciple took her to his own home.” Likewise, we are entrusted to watch over and care for one another. The apostle Paul later wrote, we “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” The Body of Christ, the Church, is intended to be involved actively in giving care and support to its members.

Family ties are essential to the well-being of every society and community. Our relationships and responsibilities with our brothers and sisters in Christ are no different. Last names do not matter in the family of God. “Behold your church!” This congregation is your family where you give and receive love, support, fellowship and strength.

Pray

For your brothers and sisters in Christ.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Matthew

27:46

Jason Jackson

In our hymnal, most of the song titles are simply the first phrase in the song - *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing, All Creatures of Our God and King, Come Thou Fount*. The first phrase refers to the whole. If someone mentions the opening line, our minds recall the entire song. We hear the tune and we remember the words.

Similarly, in the Hebrew Bible, the names of the first five books are taken from the book’s first line. Genesis is entitled ‘in the beginning,’ Exodus is ‘names,’ and so on. Furthermore, the most significant verse in Judaism is known by its first word - *Shema*’ or ‘Hear’ (Deut. 6:4). A word or a phrase recollects the whole.

In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus’ final words from the cross are “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” His words could suggest that the Father abandoned the Son. But Jesus’ last words are the first words of Psalm 22. What if Jesus meant for us to hear the whole not just the part? [Read Psalm 22 and see.](#)

Prayer

Father you listened to Jesus’ cry for help and you raised him up in glory. Hear our prayer, deliver us from our affliction, and raise us up with him. Amen

I am thirsty. John 19:28

Rev. James Stratton

Jesus Christ is a brother to everyone who suffers! He feels the feelings of our infirmities, the scripture says. Our longings and our losses are known and felt by Him. His feelings of aloneness are akin to ours. A woman whose accident left her a quadriplegic said her spiritual recovery began when she realized that Jesus was paralyzed, nailed down, on the cross. He is one with all those who go down into the darker valleys of experience. He shares with them their cross of pain, and his spirit strengthens theirs to help them bear it.

He saved others, they scoffed, but he cannot save himself! They were right. He could not save Himself and know humanity’s suffering. Yet never did complaint cross His lips, He never became absorbed in his own crisis, nor preoccupied with his own pain. Even on the cross He reached out to others.

His call from the cross is: “Join me in my thirst to do God’s will and to bring living water to those living a dry and barren existence.” Even a cup of cold water He urges us to give in His name.

Prayer

Dear Jesus make us thirsty for what You thirst for. Amen

