

S. N. Apr. 4, 71 A.M.

THE SEVENTH WORD FROM THE CROSS

Luke 23:46 - 46

Last words are important - The final word on St. Calley will be given by The President of the W.S.

INTRODUCTION

Three of our Lord's words from the cross were doubtless prayers.

The first ~~was~~ one was when he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That was the first prayer.

The second prayer was, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, the third prayer was, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

This is the seventh and the final word of Jesus as He commits his all to His Father.

Great importance often is given by people to the last words which they remember

~~xxxx~~ spoken to them before some loved one has passed away. Such is our experience

this morning as we give our attention to Jesus hanging on the cross. While all the

words of a dying person are full of interest and have special importance to us,

but the last ones seem to be the vital ones.

An Englishman as the story goes who was dying called in his daughter and said, "Come near and see how a Christian can die." No one can be learned or

~~xxx~~ taught so well as by studying the death of Christ. The last words especially

teach us more than how to die because there is more involved.

We cherish these last words that were written by his followers who regarded them as the last words that he spoke from the cross.

Jesus knew that these were his final words before death. Furthermore, he was conscious of the fact that they would be read and studied through the ages. We can be certain that He never spoke an idle word, but He chose his words with deliberate care, which reminds us that we as his followers ought to be very careful about the words we choose, because they may be the last words we speak.

We have a record in history of many many people who have used these words of Jesus in the last moments of life. Knowing their contents, a man truly may use these. A man once called as he stood by his wife as she stood between the shadows of death, and said, "She has taught us how to live. Now she is going to teach us how to die." This is to a degree what Jesus was doing. He had been teaching us how to live. Now he is going to teach us how to die.

Jesus gave up the (ghost), gave up the spirit as simply stated. It means that he breathes out the spirit. Actually, these words mean that he expired, or was out of breath. He breathed his last breath.

When John was talking about this account, he emphasized the fact that Jesus delivered his spirit to God as though it were a deliberate act, as you deliver something to keep the use of it, to take care of it, to manage it, and He delivered His spirit up to the Father.

It is like the parable of the ~~xxx~~ talents. The man traveling in a

far country, he delivered to his servants his goods. Now, he meant for them to care for this. And so Jesus delivers His spirit to the Father.

Now, ~~Matthew~~ in talking about this time said that Jesus sent ~~xxx~~ away or bid His spirit to go and depart. He sent His spirit away, and that was the final bid of agony. He had entered into this world, had the sins upon him, and now he says, Let it be. He dismisses his spirit. Matthew states it.

Now, here is a fulfilment of a predetermined purpose. Jesus was not a martyr, he was not a criminal, his death on the cross was not an accident. It was the end of the road for Jesus. And Jesus dismissed his spirit. Father into thy hands I commend my spirit. At the beginning, so at the end of the crucifixion, he addresses God as Father.

The struggle is over, the victory has been won, he has committed himself to the Father, like the prodigal son coming home to his father, his father's care. Now, the key word here from the cross in the seventh word is commit. It means to place beside or near. We could illustrate it with somebody setting before you a table of food. It means that to place this down before one's self. It means to deposit, to entrust, to care.

This is very similar to the charge given to Timothy by Paul. I charge thee, I commit thee, according to prophecy that thou by them mightest war a good warfare. 1 Tim. 1:8.

Another way to think about this would be the obligation to use properly. If the food has been set before us, then it is out obligation to eat part of it, and to properly use it, or else it has been prepared in vain.

Timothy was under compulsion of using the gospel ministry. Thus, the human redemption is placed into the hands of the Father. And this was assigned to the Son and He had finally accomplished this, and his spirit is dismissed from the dead body. He has paid the price for the ransom of many. From now on it is in the hands of the Father. God has given His word to save all. The Son has finished ~~his work~~ the work that the Father gave Him to do. And therefore, He goes to continue this ministry.

Now, they were very important words, these last words. What did these words mean? Could we analyze them for a moment?

First, they were ~~were~~ words of prayer Jesus on the cross was praying. We know some of His words from the cross as he addressed a thief, as he addressed his mother, as he addressed the soldiers. But the first and the last words from the cross were in the form of a prayer. I might state that prayer is appropriate at all times and all seasons, even when a man is going to die. At the close of the day, it's a good thing to pray. In the time of death, the time of peril, ~~and~~ of fellowship and quietness, it is Jesus' nature to pray. The ~~dark~~ deathbed without God is an awful sight. I don't know whether you have watched

many people die, especially those who don't know God. It is not, I can say to you, a very pleasant experience. The thought of facing God brings terror, and it is natural for a man to want to pray at this time.

You remember even that sinful prophet prayed, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Second, they were quotations from the scripture. Not only were these words prayer, but they were a quotation of the 31st Psalm and the 15th verse. Because the psalmist had expressed this in a way of prayer. You remember many of these sayings on ~~the~~ the cross Jesus quoted the Bible, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" were the words taken out of the Old Testament. That is the natural thing for Jesus to use the scriptures. So the Bible and its language was used here and it was fitting.

A tombstone for example. Some of them have a quotation from scripture, and some of them are very fitting. Some of them may seem out of place.

For example, a student went to visit his professor who was dying, and they went out for a little while and the professor had been visiting with some of the other students earlier, and the professor confessed that they had been reading to him the words of some philosopher. And the professor said, "I am tired of it." And then he began to repeat, "This is the faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance,

that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the chief."

He went on to say that there was nothing else of any use except the scriptures.

Now, of course, the student certainly was overjoyed in the depth and the greatness of the man's mind. He knew other books. Some of them were good. But in the moment of death, he turns to that book which is eternal.

The quotations from the 31st Psalm and Psalm 22 help us to know that Jesus knew the Bible.

In the third place, this is a word about his spirit. Dying persons are sometimes much taken up with a lot. For example, their bodies, their pain, their troubles, with their doctors, and some display of a peculiar anxiety about what is going to happen to their body after life. They leave careful instructions as to what will happen. They are occupied with worldly affairs. They have property to dispose of. They are distracted by the anxieties of the family.

But Jesus shows us that it is not wrong to bestow attention upon ~~earth~~ earthly things, because the fifth word he said, "I thirst." And in another word he made provision for his mother's future. And yet his last and final word is of supreme concern about that of his spirit.

What is the spirit? It is the most sacred part of our being. Now in theology we call this the (soul.) That man is composed of body and soul. And this was

a word about the spirit.

In the fourth place, he was filing a report. The idea here is of bringing forward by way of proof. It was like a letter of recommendation, Acts 14:23.

From the cross, Jesus was adding a report that he had completed the task, and it was a report to the head commander in chief. Satan had tried to force him along another route.

Jesus is filing this declaration and his claim on the property of the ~~this~~ souls of men. He has purchased with his blood, and he says, I gave unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Stephen looked up and saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. This tells us that Jesus was loyal in filing his report that even this man Stephen could stand and look and see as he was transported from earth.

Fifth, the word is like making a deposit in the bank. When Jesus committed his spirit, it is like banking terms. You make a deposit of money. You commit this to one charge or trust like a treasure in a bank for safe keeping.

Neither life nor death as Paul says. If Paul knew that he believed and he was persuaded that what he had committed, placed on deposit, would be kept against that day. On the Damascus Road he deposited his soul ~~for~~ for safe keeping in

the bank of God's grace. Now, that was a matter that happened to him. Suppose you deposit your money in a bank. It is after safe keeping until the day when you call for it. However, the banker may utilize your funds. He is obligated however to keep them safe for you in good times and in bad times. It would be foolish for you to place your money in the bank and then walk up and down outside of the strong vaults that are guarded by armed men and wonder whether or not your money is secure. In like manner your soul is on deposit with God, it is in safe keeping, and we need never care about its safety.

In the sixth place, these words are in view of death. Commending His spirit to God implies that he was giving it away in a hope of finding it again. Not only depositing it for safe keeping, but this was after death was over, he would come and recover it.

This ~~next~~ sort of helps us to answer the question that bothers many people: If a man die, shall he live again? Does he die, does he live forever? These words of Jesus prove to us this fact.

John Huss was being led to execution, and there was a paper cap, on his head put there with pictures of the devil on it by the wretched priest that assigned his soul, but again and again he cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my ~~px~~ spirit." These were the last words of Polycarp, the last words of Jerome, the last words of

Luther, and of Melanchthon.

Now, Jesus did not yield to death in weakness, and the writer does not say that he died. But ~~he~~ it says that he gave up the ghost. It was on His part.

Augustine said He gave up His life because He willed it when He willed it and as He willed it.

They tell us that the factors involved in a man's death leads a man to lift his head at the last moment if possible to fill his lungs with the life-giving oxygen. But with Jesus he bowed his head before he died. It was a clear intention that he gave up ~~his~~ his life.

Now, there is one other matter I should like to bring ~~you~~ to your attention in closing, and that is who spoke these words? These last words?

First of all, it was a prophet. Jesus spoke them as a prophet of security. Father, into thy hands I commend my ~~my~~ spirit.

George McDaniel used to tell the story of a mother who argued that her sailor boys were perfectly safe. And the man said, "But suppose one of your boys should drown at sea?" "Well," she replied, "I trust they are nonetheless safe for that. It would be a strange thing for an old woman like me to suppose that safety lay in not being drowned. What is the bottom of the ocean, sir? The bottom of the

ocean is the hollow of his hand."

These were also the words of a priest. He, as the high priest on the last passover day, offered himself to God. He was the ~~xx~~ bleeding sacrifice atoning for man's sin. The cross is the altar, and there he was officiating as the high priest. At that very season, ~~and likewise~~ many priests were going through endless ceremonies. They were to visit the temples and amid the singing of the psalms and the blasting of the silver trumpets, the priests received the blood of thousands of lambs. The ~~xxxx~~ altar was soaked with blood. Here was the all-sufficient lamb that has ever been found. He is without spot, without blemish, without wrinkle, and He pours out His precious blood on the cross, and the veil in the temple was rent.

We need to read sometimes Hebrews 7:22 - 27. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament, and they truly were many priests because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death, but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore, he is able also to ~~xxx~~ save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily as those high priests who offer up sacrifice first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people, for this he did once when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 9:24-28 says that Christ is now entered into the Holy place which is a true figure that he is the priest of all mankind.

Martin Luther in one of his periods of depression saw the horrible crimes and transgressions written on the wall in his room. The accusing hand wrote down his sinful faults, the evil deeds, the sins of omission, the sins of commission, the secret sins, the open sins. There seemed to be no end to them. Luther finally bowed his head in prayer, and then when he looked up, the writer was still there facing him, and Luther said, "Thou hast forgotten one thing. ~~Take~~ Take your pen once more and write across the wall, The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.) And at the mention of the blood of Christ, the evil spirit vanished, and the walls were clean.

There was an known poet once who pictured two men crossing a battlefield where they had fought that day. And now they stand beside a manly form outstretched alone. His helmet from his head had fallen. His hands still ~~is~~ grasped his clean but broken sword. His ~~face~~ was white and cold, and thinking he was gone, they were just passing on, for time was precious. Then a faint sign caught their attention, and life was still there. And so bending down, they whispered in his ear more earnestly, yet with a hush, to this departing soul, "Brother, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanses from every sin." The pale lips moved and

gently, "Hush." Then they closed, but life again seemed to be gone. But yet once more they whispered those wonderful words of hope trying to point the parting soul to Christ and heaven. "Brother, the precious blood of Christ can cleanse from every sin." And the pale lips moved again, for death was about to do his fatal work, and the dying soldier whispered, "Hush, for the angels call the muster roll, I wait to hear my name." They spoke once again, because they knew that he was listening, and so they hushed and they kneeled, they watched and suddenly with his last~~k~~ breath, he whispered, "Here." Now that is what Christ on the cross as a priest was doing on that day. He was telling God that he was present.

These words were spoken by a king. He had won the victory. Don't forget this. He confessed to Pilate that he was a king. They condemned him for being a king. The board that was nailed on the cross declared that he was king. He wore a crown indeed, but his last word, his seventh word from the cross was a proclamation that he was a king. And this king rushes from the torments of hell and fearlessly into God's presence as a strong power. This king commands death to come to his service and convey his ~~fix~~ spirit to God. The first Adam was death's servant, and he could do nothing more than obey death. But the last Adam is now master of death

and here is a symbol of ~~xxx~~ power, for he is the king.

Now, for the past seven months we have considered one saying of Jesus from the cross each month. And it is so fitting to climax this on the week of his crucifixion, for we come to week of all weeks in the year in which we in a special way commemorate this event. And so we introduce this week by confronting you with the claims of Christ upon your life and soul. The redeeming death of Jesus upon the cross is a fact of history. But it is to be availed for you, it must become a fact in your personal experience. It should be the most momentous event in your life, and it will be if as Jesus committed his spirit to the father, you through faith in him commit your soul and life to God. Thus, that which the Saviour accomplished almost 2,000 years ago will become a present and abiding reality in your life today. May God grant that this may be so.

Bud Newsome stepped off the flight from New York
at Norfolk Airport Thursday evening -
one of 13 plucked from tossing life raft -
661 ft Tanker The ~~TERACO~~ TERACO - Oklahoma - from Port Arthur
to Boston - Broke in half Sat a week ago - off Cape Hatteras
31 went down -
He described the last words of some of the men
"Help, save me, help, save me, God save me"
We couldn't get to them!
Bud saved his wife's Bible - you can get to Christ now -
Make this word commitment of life