

**The Last Words of Jesus**  
Various Passages  
Jeremy Cagle, April 10, 2020

Good morning everyone. And we are here today to talk about our 2020 Good Friday service with Grace Fellowship, Chilliwack, Mission Bible Church, and Prairie Chapel. We're so glad you've joined us. And today we're doing something kind of different. This is something we haven't done before. But we are here at Chilliwack Cemeteries We are in a graveyard of all places to talk about something that I'm going to mention here in a moment. But as you can see, there's Mount Cheam behind me. And we're here on a beautiful day. I do want to say ahead of time that the wind is blowing a little bit so it's blowing my pages some and if I'm squinting, I'm looking into the sun. But we are doing this because with this Good Friday service we're preaching in a cemetery because Good Friday is a celebration of death. It is a celebration of the most famous death that ever occurred, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Before we started This sermon I was walking among these gravestones, just looking around. And I don't know how many people are buried up here, but I'm guessing it's hundreds. There are lots and lots of grave sites. But there's one grave site in human history that stands out above all the others that I would like to talk to you about.

It's been said that in this world, nothing can be certain but death and taxes. And I don't know about taxes, or maybe a way to get out of taxes, but there really is no way to get out of death. All of us are going to experience death, death comes for all men. You're going to see it here. In this place, whether you're going to be buried in Chilliwack or somewhere else. The statistics say 150,000 people die every day. The numbers, if you boil that down, that's 7000 per hour, 100 per minute, which means by the time this sermon is over, several thousand people will have died. But this morning, we want to celebrate the most important death of all and to do that, I'd like to invite you to turn in your Bibles to the Gospel of John. If you would open your Bibles with me to the gospel of John. In fact, this death is so important in history, that it's called good. If you think about it, most deaths are not considered to be good things. They're usually considered to be bad things. When someone dies, we say "What a tragedy. What a horrible thing to lose them". But when this death occurred, we set up a holiday and we called it Good Friday. And we're going to talk about this in several passages in Scripture, but one is the Gospel of John.

And while you're turning to the Gospel of John, you know, it's been said that most people die the way they live. Most people leave this world the way they came into it. There are some deathbed conversions, but for the most part, people die in the same manner they live. For a couple of examples of this, one is Voltaire, the famous French philosopher from the 1700s. Voltaire was an infidel, he did not like the Christian faith. Matter of fact, he despised it. He called it an infamous superstition created by stupid men – talk about strong words. He hated Christianity. He even

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thought that it would disappear shortly after his lifetime. But at his deathbed, interestingly enough, Voltaire said these words, he said, “I am abandoned by God and man, and would give all I own for another six months to live.” It's a chilling thought isn't it? To say something like that on your deathbed. He said, “I've rejected the Christian faith, and I regret it I have nothing left.”

To think of the last words of another man. Another chilling example in history that would be the life of Sigmund Freud, the inventor of psychoanalysis. He lived a very similar life to Voltaire. He rejected Christianity as well. He despised it, and he thought it was an illusion. It was just an opiate kind of thing; it was a drug made for people. But at his death, Sigmund Freud had a very similar statement in Germany he said, “Das ist absurd. Das ist absurd,” which means, “This is absurd. This is absurd.” I can't figure this out. This is ridiculous. Because his psychoanalysis had no place for death, he couldn't understand what was happening to him. He rejected the afterlife, and then he had nothing to live for.

And I bring all that up this morning to talk about the death of another man to talk about the last words of another figure in history, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus died the way he lived as well. He died in a perfect manner, in a glorious manner. And just to kind of set the stage for this, if you want to tie this into the book that we just turned to. The Gospel of John says that he wrote this book so that you may believe – that's the reason John says that he wrote his gospel John 20:30-31 says,

“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

John says, that's why I wrote this book, that's why I put it in here, so that you may believe and be saved and be born again. And as you can see, if you read this book, John says, if you're going to believe in anything, if you're going to put anything at the top of the list of what to trust in for your eternal life, he says you need to trust in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what he says in this book, the most important thing to believe in is the cross.

There are 21 chapters in the Gospel of John. It's a very large book, 15,000 words and all, and half of the book, nine chapters of it, are devoted to Jesus' death because that's the most important thing for us to believe in. John could have written about anything in the life of Christ. He could have focused on anything. But this is what saves you, this is what gets you into heaven, is his death. That's why we call it good. That's why we celebrate Good Friday and not Bad Friday or Black Friday or Dark Friday because this is what gets you eternal life. And if you want to look at

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this in John 19, this is where Jesus' death is described in John's Gospel. You see it in John 19:16-18. There the John says this, it says,

“So he then handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. They took Jesus therefore, and He went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There, they crucified Him.”

If you notice in your Bibles, the word crucified is repeated twice there for effect, because John says they crucified Him. Can you believe that? They crucified the Son of God and nailed him to a tree. They made him bear his own cross to the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. And they crucified him there. What a horrible thing to do. What a terrible, terrible tragedy. And John goes on to tell you how certain people responded to that. He talks about the soldiers and the friends who were there at the cross, talks about the undertakers, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. And then in the midst of all this, John gives us Jesus' final words. That's what he tells us as he was dying. And if you look down in verses 28 through 30, of John 19. He gives us the Lord's final words. And he says,

“After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, He said, ‘I am thirsty.’ And a jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to his mouth. And therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished.’”

There you see two short statements of Jesus on the cross. There you see a few of his final words. But there were more than this. There were many more final words that our Lord said. In fact, there are four gospels, for accounts of a life of Jesus. You have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And each of them say something different about his death and his final words. Each of them said something unique about what our Lord said on the cross. Nobody remembered everything. If you can put yourself in their shoes. This is the most traumatic experience they had been through, watching their Lord die on a cross. This was the most emotional thing they've experienced. And they didn't get down everything that he said. But each one if them got down pieces and parts of it. One remembered one thing, one remembered another. And when you put it all together, there were seven things Jesus said from the cross, which is what I want us to talk about today.

So if you're taking notes, this is what we're going to talk about seven final words that Jesus said on the cross. Physically speaking, crucifixion was a terrible way to go. It was probably the most horrific manner of death ever invented. All the deaths that are here in this cemetery, nobody experienced anything like this. Nobody experienced a crucifixion. But the spiritual side of the cross was even worse. And the spiritual side of the suffering was even more traumatic than the physical element and we can't see what took place spiritually when Jesus died. We can't look into

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his soul. We can see the outside but we can't see the inside. But what we can do is look at his words. What we can do is look into the things that he said on the cross and pull out our Bibles and get a glimpse of that. And that's what I want us to do this morning was seven final words, Jesus said from the cross. We're going to look at them in order. So we're going to bounce back and forth in our Bibles. We're not going to stay in one place.

But the first final word from Jesus on the cross was this and that is a prayer for forgiveness. That's how this all starts out. That's how it all begins. The first final word Jesus said, on the cross is a prayer for forgiveness. And if you want to keep your fingers in John chapter 19, and turn with me over to Luke 23. As you look, as you think about this, it's amazing that the first thing Jesus talked about was forgiveness. The first thing he talked about at his death was others. If this happened to me, if somebody put me on the cross, that would be the last thing I would think about not the first. I mean, if somebody killed me in this horrific manner, I would be thinking about revenge. But Jesus thought about forgiveness. At this point in the story, the Lord has been betrayed and arrested and put on trial. He has been beaten horrifically over and over again. I mean, the Jews beat him to a pulp. Then they gave him to Pilot and Pilot did it again. They gave them to the Roman governor and the Roman governor beat him even further. Even though He knew Jesus was innocent, he scourged Him and handed him over to be crucified. And what does Jesus say in response? What's the first thing out of his mouth? If you look in Luke 23:23-24. There the Lord says this. It's, sorry, Verses 33 through 34. There the Lord says,

“When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, ‘Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’ And they cast lots, dividing up his garments among themselves.”

Just a couple of things to point out here for one, this would have occurred right away, because verse 34 says as soon as he said this, the soldiers cast lots, dividing up his garments among themselves. People were typically crucified naked back then to embarrass them. Their clothes were taken off and given to the soldiers right away as payment. Clothes were expensive back then not as it is today. And so the clothes would be given to the soldiers as a way to pay them for what they did. And the way it worked is they would take your clothes off, crucify you, and then divide them up as you watched. They would divide up your clothes as you looked on from the cross. And the first thing out of Jesus mouth as this happened, the first thing he says is, “Father forgive them.” Now then the think of this. He said that as they were dividing up his clothes. He said that as they were taking his possessions and stealing them, essentially. This is absolutely amazing. Jesus looks to the Father and He says, “don't show me mercy show them mercy. Don't show me kindness, show them kindness.” And then He says while he prayed this way He says “for they do not know what they're doing.” The King James version of this says, “for they know not what they do.” And the idea there is continuous. their ignorance is continuous they have they

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have no clue that they're putting the Son of God on the cross. "They don't know who I Am Jesus says, they don't know why I'm here. And they don't know what I'm dying for; this is all lost on them. 'So Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'" That doesn't mean they're all going to be forgiven, because some of them are not going to be forgiven; they're going to reject Jesus. And that doesn't mean that they're all going to be saved; some of them are not. But for those who believe, for even the soldiers who believe, who are crucifying him, and dividing up his clothes, even that horrific act will be forgiven, if they trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Friends, I don't know where you're at today, and I don't know what you've done. But I want to tell you, as long as there's a breath in your life, there's hope. As long as you're alive, you can be saved. If these soldiers can be saved, you can be saved, if they can be forgiven, you can be forgiven right now of all your sins. So that's the first thing that the Lord said on the cross.

Second one is this, second word from the cross, it goes right along with that one is a promise of salvation. First you see a prayer for forgiveness. The next thing you see is a promise of salvation because that's where forgiveness leads. That's where it goes straight to is salvation and eternal life. And if you look down in verses 39 through 43. There it says that,

"One of the criminals who were hanging there was hurling abuse at Him, and saying, 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!' But the other answered, and rebuking him said, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.' And he was saying, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into Your kingdom.' And He said to him," Jesus said to this man, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in paradise."

That's the Next final word here you see it right there at the end, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

If you get the context for this, this is interesting because it is said to the worst people imaginable. It said to someone who was worse than the soldiers were, if you can think of someone as hardened and as evil as those soldiers were, who were dividing Jesus clothes among them. This was said to someone worse than that – the thief on the cross. For convenience sake, the Romans would crucify people several at a time; they would do it in assembly line fashion. And so verse 33, says "They crucified Jesus and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left." Luke calls them criminals. Mark calls them robbers or thieves but whatever their crime was, it was really bad because the Romans would not just crucify a thief. It was too much trouble; they wouldn't just kill someone for that. So these guys must have done something pretty bad. They were some pretty rotten fellows here. And they were so rotten that it says that they hurled insults at Jesus. Luke says one of them did that Mark says both of them did. In other words, the insults were so bad, they were so wicked that they were hurling them or throwing them like rocks at

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Jesus. I mean, they're dying on the cross. And they're insulting him. They're going to hell. And they're laughing about it. These are some pretty bad people. These are some pretty evil characters. I'm looking around at these gravestones. I don't know too many of these people that are here who would have laughed at their death. I mean, most of the people here would have understood it's serious. These guys didn't even get that; they were that far gone.

And Jesus says, Luke tells us something changed, though. Something happened to one of them because one of them stopped and he rebuked the other one. One of them stopped acting this way. And he said, "Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom." And what does Jesus say to that? This is an amazing thing. What is the Lord say to the thief that said that? You know, does he say something like "No way you scumbag? You're a piece of filth. I'm not gonna do anything for you." Does he say, "Well, maybe I could forgive you if you could come down off the cross and get baptized. Maybe I could forgive you if you come down and stop stealing, and go to church and pay tithes and all that." He didn't say that. Jesus says, "Truly I say to you, today, you shall be with me in paradise." To my knowledge, that's the strongest affirmation of anyone's salvation in the Bible. That is a strongest affirmation of forgiveness. He says today, because this man was saved today, right now, this instant. And he says "you" which means "you, you terrible sinner. You wicked man." Today, you'll be with in Paradise.

Friends, do you know that today you can be with the Lord in paradise? Do you know that you, even you, a wicked sinner can be saved. Listen, you may be bad, but you're not as bad as this guy. You may have done some horrible things, but this is the worst person imaginable. And the Lord saved him to show us that he can save you. It's been said that this thief's arms were nailed down so he couldn't do anything. And his feet were nailed down so he couldn't go anywhere. He was totally stuck, completely stuck. And yet he believed in Christ and He was forgiven. The same thing can happen for you. The famous agnostic or atheist Margarita Lansky once said, "The one thing I envy about you Christians is you have somebody to forgive you." She said, "I have nobody to forgive me." Friends, we do have somebody to forgive us. We do have someone to give us eternal life. And that is the Lord Jesus Christ, what an amazing final thing to say to someone.

This leads us to another final word from the cross. It doesn't seem to go along with that one, but it actually does. And that is a provision for his mother. The third final word from the cross, Jesus said, is a provision for his mother. If you want to turn back to the gospel of John, Chapter 19. This is a third word the Lord says. To set the stage for this one, there's only a few people standing at the cross as Jesus died. There were only a few friends there and one of them was his mother. And Jesus turns to her next and he says, In verses 25 through 27 it says,

"But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopus, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus then saw His mother, and the

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disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son!' And then He said to the disciple, Behold, your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household."

You know, Jewish custom at this time dictated that a woman, particularly a widow, like Mary was, had to have a male provider. She had to have someone, a son or a relative take care of her when her husband died. There was no there's no life insurance back then. And there was no government programs to sign up for, so you had to have a male relative. And as Jesus is dying, he turns to Mary and he says, "Behold your son." In other words, "behold your provider", and he turns to John, and he says, "Behold your Mother, please take care of her." John was actually Mary's nephew. He was Jesus' cousin, so everybody was related here and Jesus turns to Mary's nephew, his own cousins. Blood cousin. And he says "make sure she's okay for me."

And if you're wondering what that has to do with these other things, the answer is simple. Jesus was selfless on the cross. He was completely selfless. He was consumed with thinking about others. He wanted to save them and forgive them and take care of their needs. You know, when we're suffering, I don't know about you guys. But when I'm suffering, and I often think about myself, don't think about others. They're not even on the radar; my thoughts go inward. They focused entirely on me. Jesus focused on other people. Another way to say this is why you are saved, this is why I'm saved, it's because Jesus did this. He thought of others. If he didn't do that, there would be no salvation. If he didn't think of others there would be no cross. This was all about other people for him.

An evangelists once led a drunk to the Lord by saying, "From what you've told me, friend, you can't trust in yourself because you're nothing – you're a drunk. And you can't save yourself because you have nothing. You've spent it all on alcohol. And you know nothing. I mean, you know nothing about the Lord. You know nothing about salvation. You know nothing about eternal life, but you can trust in Jesus for he's done everything for you. You can trust in Jesus, because all you have to do is believe he's done the rest." That's because he was selfless in his dying. Matthew 20:28, says, "just as a Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many." This is what you see here. This is Jesus giving his life a ransom for many and being selfless, even with his own mother. Taking care of her.

And it needs to be balanced with the next thing we see on the cross here. The next thing the Lord says, to change directions a little bit, this is where he starts thinking about himself some. And that is a prayer for understanding. That's the next thing the Lord says from the cross. And you can see this in the Gospel of Matthew, if you want to flip over there, Matthew 27, the Lord gives us a prayer for understanding. As the suffering intensifies, as it gets worse and worse, as the hours drag on, Jesus begins to talk about himself a little bit. And for the first time you start



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seeing the cross from a spiritual perspective. This is where you begin to open up the soul of the Son of God, if we could say that reverently, and see what's going on in his death.

They say death is the great equalizer of men; death is where you see what's truly going on. You can hide from a lot of things, but you can't hide on your deathbed, and this is where Jesus is just baring his soul. We've seen the effect on his body, but this is where you see the effect on his soul. And if you look in Matthew 27:45-46 there it says, this says

“Now from the six hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ That is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’”

From the six hour here to the ninth hour would have been from noon until 3pm. So the middle of the day. John 19:14 says Pilot passed judgment on Jesus at the sixth hour, that's noon. So from noon until three o'clock the sky went dark and went completely black. Which would have been terrifying in a day like this because this was the Jewish Passover and Jerusalem would have been full of visitors. And it would have been full of visitors who were looking for the blessing of God. I think it goes without saying that if you're looking for the blessing of God and the sky goes dark in the middle of the day, you're going to be scared; that is ominous. That is a very strange thing to occur. And Matthew says darkness fell upon all the land. In verse 46 says that as that happened at the ninth hour, three hours into the cross to Jesus said with a loud voice “‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani’ that is “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” That was spoken in Aramaic, and Jesus native tongue. It's a language he would have spoken as a child and in his suffering and in his pain, the Lord goes back to that. He goes back to something familiar. He basically asked God “Why?” What why are you doing this? Lord? Why is this happening to me?” Now Jesus was God in flesh, which means he had an infinite mind. He had a perfect mind. He knew everything. There was nothing he did not know, so this was not a scholastic academic question. This is, this is a personal emotional one. I think we know when we suffer, we're not asking when we ask “why” when we're suffering, we're not asking for a textbook answer. We're not asking for someone to open up a systematic theology and turn to page 493 and go over something in there. It's an emotional question.

And the Lord is asking that because at this moment in history God abandoned him at the cross. The Lord forsook him. And this is something in our human minds we can't understand this. We can't get our minds around this. But for all of eternity, God the Father was with God the Son in a perfect relationship. They loved each other without any breach in the relationship, without any hostility between them. It was always perfect love, always perfect unity, always perfect oneness. And for this moment in time on the cross all of that was ripped apart, was totally severed. The fellowship was broken. And when we say God abandoned him, that's an interesting statement because it doesn't mean He abandoned him physically, because instead He was pouring out His



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wrath on him. What that means is for that moment, the Lord abandon the oneness that they had, abandoned the relationship. For three hours on the cross God hated his son with a hatred unlike this world has ever seen. And Jesus asked God “why”.

The Bible says God hates sin. He can't stand it. He despises it and he hates With a perfect hatred for the wages of sin is death. That means any sin one sin, an individual sin, but on the cross Jesus died for the sins of everyone who would ever believe. From Adam all the way to the last believer in the book of Revelation, and with that much hatred, Jesus asked, experiencing that much hatred, Jesus asked God “why”. It was a statement of infinite pain. It was a statement of perfect absolute suffering. God will punish sin in one of two places – He will punish it in hell on the sinner, or he will punish it on Christ on the cross. And in Christ on the cross Isaiah says the Lord broke him over this. He suffered all there was to pay for sin.

It was said that as Voltaire lay dying, they sent a priest to him and they asked him, “Do you renounce Satan? Do you defy him?” And Voltaire said something very chilling. He said, “Now, now am I good man, this is not the time for making enemies.” And that was actually a twisted answer. Voltaire got it exactly wrong. Because if you're going to hell, your enemy is not going to be Satan, your enemy is going to be God. You're going to face the wrath of God for all eternity. And what the Bible tells us is that at the cross though, for those who trust in Christ, Jesus suffered in on our behalf. The angry, hateful Father who hates sin, hated His son for us. Out of perfect amazing love.

It leads to the next word that Jesus says on the cross and the next statement that he makes and that is a plea for relief. Next things he says is a plea or a cry for relief. And this one's found back in the Gospel of John. So if you want to turn there with me, turn to the Gospel of John. And as Jesus' thoughts turn inward, he starts to feel his physical suffering again. This is actually the first reference to his physical suffering that's going on here. But in John 19:28-29 Jesus says, this, says

“After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, ‘I am thirsty.’ And a jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth.”

We don't have time to go into all this now but in past years at our church, and maybe at your church a lot of pastors talk about how painful the cross was, because it was a very painful experience. And one of the worst things about it was the thirst. Because you lost so much blood and sweat as you were dying, the thirst was unbearable. One author said it never went away. You were always thirsty on the cross. So Jesus says very simply here, and this is almost like an understatement. He says, “I am, I'm thirsty.” That's one word in the Greek, *dip-sah-o*, because

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Jesus didn't have much time left to talk, or much strength left to talk. His words are getting fewer and fewer. So he just says one word on his mind. *Dip-sah-o* I'm thirsty. John says that he did this to fulfill scripture, to fulfill Psalm 69 which talks about the Messiah thirsting. And to help him it says they gave Jesus sour wine, that's a reference to the cheap wine the soldiers would have drunk. They didn't have much money; soldiers were very poor, like I just said they were paid in clothes. They were often paid in salt and things like this. They were at the very bottom of Roman society. And they would have drunk cheap wine that tastes like vinegar, something very gross to drink. And it says also that because he was hanging several feet off the ground, they put a sponge on a hyssop plant to get to get the wine to him. This is the plant, interestingly enough, that would have been used by the Jews at Passover to spread the blood of a lamb on their door post. And so the city Jerusalem would have been full of hyssop plants at this time because it's Passover. You would have seen hyssop plants everywhere, and the Jews would have seen the significance of this plant. And they raised the wine up to Jesus on the hyssop plant, to give it to him to drink. The perfect Lamb of God was on the cross dying for our sins as the hyssop was being given to him to quench his thirst. It was a very symbolic moment in time.

And it leads to another word from the cross which is right below this one in the Gospel of John, and that is a proclamation of victory. Next, the Lord gives us a proclamation of victory. If you read in verses 29 through 30. I love this one. But it says after they gave Jesus the wine,

“Therefore, when Jesus has received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And he bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

John skips over a final word here. There's one more thing Jesus says after saying “It is finished.” We'll talk about that in a moment, but this is an amazing way to die. These are some very strange last words. Most people don't die with a victory shout on their lips. Most people don't die with a shout at all. Most of us die in our sleep, or we die very quietly. And we die defeated. We die saying “I can't do this anymore.” Jesus died with a victorious shout, “It is finished.” I guarantee you that probably no one in this graveyard died like that. No one here, even here at Chilliwack Cemetery would have done something like this.

But what does this mean? Well, this means his purpose, and his assignment was finished. This means his job, his task, his work was over. Jesus doesn't say “I'm finished,” he says “It is finished.” He doesn't say “I am through,” but “it is through.” The job that God gave me to do is done now. It's done. Just to unpack that some, the word for finished here is *tetelestai* in Greek. It means complete or terminated. That's what the word means in Greek. It means everything is done. There's nothing left to do. In a business sense, the term means everything has been paid in full. And in fact, Roman merchants at this time would write at the top of their accounting books, top of their accounting pages. *tetelestai, tetelestai, tetelestai* just turn the page and you would see it on every page. And what that meant was this account was paid in full. It was paid entirely;

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there's nothing more to pay anymore, they don't owe anymore. And that's how Jesus uses this word to say that you don't owe anything anymore. If you trust in me, your business or your debt with God is over.

And friends let me just stop here and say a few words about this because I meet so many Christians who don't get this today. I meet so many Christians who don't believe or understand that their debt with God has been paid. They think it is still going on. They think they still owe something because they feel guilty all the time. It's just guilt, guilt, guilt with them. They're a walking talking ball of guilt. You talk to them about their parenting and they feel guilty. You talk to them about their marriage and they feel guilty. You talk with them about their school or their job, or their personal walk with God, and it's just all guilt with them. And Jesus, Jesus said this. Jesus said these words on the cross "It is finished." And what that means is if you're in Christ, if you trust in the sinless Son of God, then your guilt and all of those areas has been paid in full. Completely.

It doesn't mean you're not convicted of sin. That doesn't mean you don't need to grow in these areas. That means the price for your sin has been paid. And when you deny that, it's like you're slapping Him in the face. When you deny that in your life and go on feeling guilty like that you're insulting Him. You need to cut that out because it is finished. Are you a bad parent? Of course you are. We all are. Have you failed in your marriage? You absolutely have and if you haven't today, get up tomorrow and you will. Same thing with jobs, same thing with school, but that's okay because Jesus died for that. You can live in victory. If he can die in victory, if Christ can die in victory on the cross, you can live in victory today. He has taken care of everything, whoever you are, whatever you've done, there's hope for you. You can find forgiveness in him.

Which leads to a final word from Jesus here. One more thing he said on the cross. And that is a prayer of commitment. Just to review these other ones, you know, Jesus starts off with a prayer. He says, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." So he starts with a prayer. Then he gives a promise and a provision for his mother. Then he prays again, a lot of prayer on the cross, prays again and says, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then he gives another plea, gives a proclamation of victory. And now it's time to come to a close. Now it's time for the last word from the cross and that is a prayer of commitment.

Jesus dies with a prayer of commitment on his lips, and that is in Luke 23. If you want to turn back there with me, these are the last words from Jesus on the cross. And we see these in Luke 23:44-46. There the Lord says this. It says

"It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the land." Luke is repeating some of the things we read earlier, "because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the

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temple was torn in two. And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit.'”

We've already said a little bit about the darkness, or the sun being obscured, but verse 45 says that as Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn in two. It was split in half. The Temple in Jerusalem had several courts in it. And one of them was the court of priests where the sacrifice was made, where you would bring your sacrifice to the Lord. And in that court was a huge veil that separated you from the presence of God. It separated you from entering into his glory. One author said it was 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and it took 300 priests to move it back and forth; a massive curtain. Another one, Josephus said a team of horses couldn't tear it apart. It was so big. If you tied horses from end to end on this curtain, they could not open it up, tear it off. And Luke says at this feast as the people were bringing the sacrifices to the Passover in the court of priests in the full side of the assembly, it tore in two. Split in half to show that the separation between God and man was over. The hostility was finished.

And to show that this was really done, it was really accomplished. Jesus said, “Father into your hands, I commit my spirit.” Now the beautiful thing about that being the last statement on the cross is that it means that God wasn't angry with him anymore. It means that when Jesus says “It is finished”, it really was finished. The anger, hostility, separation, forsaking on the cross was done. And the relationship was restored to remind us that that's what we can experience as well. We can go through the veil into the presence of God. You don't have to go through all these other works and good deeds like we just said, with the thief on the cross. You don't have to come down off the cross or he didn't have to come down off the cross and do a bunch of good things. You don't have to either. You don't have to join a certain church. You don't have to give a bunch of money. And you don't have to take all the ordinances, things like that. First, you trust in Christ and you can come straight into the presence of God today. You don't have to go to a priest. You don't have to go to a pastor like me. You don't have to go to a confession booth. You can go straight to Christ and experience all this.

Which raises the question, how do you respond to all this? What do we do with all this information? We've talked about a lot of stuff here. The most famous death in history. You know, 150,000 people die every day, 7000 per hour, which means thousands of people have died since we started this. This is the most famous death and we're talking about this massive issue this morning. What do you do with these seven statements Jesus made on the cross? Let me give you a couple things to do. A couple things you can take home with you and think about on Good Friday and on Easter Sunday. One is you should be encouraged by this because the veil has been torn. This should be an encouragement to you because the hostility between you and God is over if you trust in Christ. This should be an uplifting subject to talk about. Like I said, this is Good Friday, this is a good death. Because you don't have to stand at a distance from God anymore. You don't have to be far, far away from him. You can come in close, you can come in near

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because of what Christ has done. You don't have to hang your head in shame when you come to church. You don't have to be embarrassed when you walk into the assembly of God. You can walk boldly, not brazenly, but boldly and humbly into the presence of Christ Himself, God himself because of what Jesus has done. Bringing you to one more thing to consider here.

Another thing is you should have peace, because this is finished. You could have peace with God, you should have peace with God, because it is *tetelestai*. It should not be guilt, guilt, guilt with you anymore. should not be shamed, shame, shame. You don't have to pay God back. The payment has already been made.

And that brings to one more thing to talk about. And I think this is very appropriate for where we're the day that we're celebrating. It's very appropriate for where we're standing right now, this morning, and that is that you don't have to fear death anymore. You know, we've been here for a couple hours now just getting things set up and doing this sermon. And we've looked around and quite honestly, there are never a lot of people in a graveyard. Cemeteries are never full because people are afraid of death. They're afraid of dying. Go into places like hospitals. They're usually not full of people visiting because they're scared of what's happening. Go into nursing homes, the same thing. Death is a frightening subject for a lot of people. But it shouldn't frighten you anymore. Cemeteries shouldn't frighten you anymore. Graveyards should not do that. Because Jesus already died in your place. The Son of God paid the price that you should pay. He paid the debt your sins deserved.

You know, an old preacher from the country, from the prairies out in the Midwest was once famous for using simple illustrations and one time he was speaking to a group of farmers. And he said, the prairie fire can't go where it's already gone. He said the fire can come where it's already been. And that is why I'm calling you to the cross because judgment cannot fall where it's already fallen. He who takes a stand at the cross is safe forevermore. He can never come into condemnation. He has passed from death to life because he is in God's perfect safety zone.

Friends. That's what you see here. That's what you can have. If you trust in Christ, you can be safe for all eternity. I want to say to you a very warm and happy Good Friday. Thank you for joining us today. Also, please come back to our YouTube channel. Join us for Easter or join the church where you're at. May the Lord bless you.

Let me close us in a word of prayer, and we'll be dismissed.

Father, we thank you so much for the work of Christ on the cross. And as we do think about the subject of death, Lord, I pray for all my friends who are listening to this, because there will come a day when we will all stand before you. We'll all die and enter into your presence. But the wonderful good news we have this morning on Good Friday is that Christ has died in our place,

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Lord would these words from Jesus on the cross, take root in our hearts, would they penetrate our souls. Would we go home changed as a result of what we have learned today? Thank you for Christ. Thank you that he has done everything for us. We worship Him, we lift Him up high on this wonderful day, day of all days. May he be glorified as we go from here. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.