

7 Last Words

5. "I thirst." (John 19:28)

John 19:25 through John 19:29 (NKJV)

²⁵Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" ²⁷Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

²⁸After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" ²⁹Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth.

Introduction:

More than 2000 years ago, Jesus of Nazareth knew his hour was coming. Many times in his discussions with his disciples, he told them his death was coming. He told them how he would die. He told them how long he would be dead. He told them how they were going to react to his death. And he told them he would rise again.

From the 6th hour to the 9th hour, he slowly breathed out his earthly life. But during that time, when words are few and precious, the Bible records seven things Jesus said from the cross:

1. Father forgive them, for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34).
2. Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43).
3. Eli Eli lama sabachthani? ("My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?", Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34).
4. Woman, behold your son: behold your mother (John 19:26-27).
5. I thirst (John 19:28).
6. It is finished (John 19:30).
7. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Luke 23:46).

We believe these sayings are significant. We also believe it is our duty to make the cross of Christ relevant for this generation. So for seven weeks, as we prepare for Resurrection Sunday, we are examining the seven last words or sayings of Christ.

We began with "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Next, we examined "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." Thirdly, Reverend Jackson shared from the saying "Eli Eli lama sabachthani? ("My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"). Last week, we continued with "Woman, behold your son:

behold your mother.” Today, our focus turns to a short and simple statement made by Jesus: “I thirst.”

Introduction:

From the beginning of this series we have desired to make the cross of Christ real and relevant for this generation. We want you to understand the significance of the sacrifice of Jesus. Sometimes in church life, we use terms that new believers may not understand. We talk about concepts that are unique to Christianity that you may not have heard of before.

I’m sure that many people have heard that Jesus died for their sins, but don’t know what that means or why that is important. The end result is when we preach “the cross” it doesn’t strike a chord with this new generation like it did the previous generation.

The truth is, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is at the core of all that we believe as Christians. This scripture today opens a discussion for us that can’t be ignored. Verse 28 says that Jesus knew “that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

Fulfilling All Things

1 Corinthians 15:12 through 1 Corinthians 15:18 (NKJV)

¹²Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁴And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty. ¹⁵Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. ¹⁶For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁷And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! ¹⁸Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

In this passage Paul is addressing the fact that some people were teaching that there was no resurrection from the dead. He basically says that Christianity would not exist without the resurrection. If Christ didn’t die and was not resurrected, then we are not forgiven for our sins.

If these things didn’t happen, we are all enemies of God. Without the crucifixion and the resurrection, we would not have the Holy Spirit or the hope of going to heaven. Without the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we would not be grafted

into God's chosen people. If Jesus of Nazareth was not resurrected, then he wouldn't be able to claim that he is the Christ.

So how do we know that our faith is real? How do we know that Jesus is truly the Christ? It's because the scriptures were fulfilled throughout the life of Jesus.

There are more than 300 prophecies about the Messiah found in the scriptures. These prophecies tell details about the life, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah. This unique ability to tell the future with absolute clarity is one of the things that set our God apart from other religions.

To understand the awesome power of these prophetic words found in scripture, we will use mathematical probability to explain. If I flipped a coin and asked you to predict the outcome, you only have two probable choices; heads or tails. That means you have a one in two chance of guessing correctly.

But what are the chances that a prophet could predict details about the life of a man hundreds of years before he is born?

In 1963, Peter Stoner published a book called "Science Speaks". In his book Stoner says that by applying the modern science of probability to just 8 prophecies "... We find that the chance any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power." He illustrates it by saying the following:

If we take that many silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas, they would cover all of the state, two feet deep. Take one of the silver dollars and mark it. Then stir up the state. Blindfold a man and tell him he can travel as far as he wishes but he must pick only one silver dollar and get the right one the first time.

God has not only told us eight things about the Messiah, but he told us more than 300. All of them came true in the life of Jesus Christ. So when the scriptures tell us that he was born of a virgin in Micah 5:2, we know that Jesus is indeed the Christ.

Isaiah 7:14 tells us that he would be born of a virgin. Malachi 4:5-6 tells us he would be preceded by Elijah. Isaiah 61:1-2 tells us he will heal the broken hearted. Zechariah 9:9 said he would ride into the city on a donkey. Zechariah 11:12 said he would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. Isaiah 53:7 said he would be silent before his accusers.

Isaiah 53:12 said he would be crucified with the malefactors. Psalm 22:17-18 tells us they gambled for his clothes. Even when he says “My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?”; it can be found in Psalm 22:1.

It’s almost as if Jesus himself stepped into the pile of silver dollars and miraculously hand picked the marked coin over and over again without fail. He had done the impossible with every detail of his life and death.

From the cross, with the pain and the agony, Jesus realizes where he was in time and space. He realizes all things had been accomplished that the scriptures might be fulfilled. All of the things that God had spoken about his earthly life had been checked off the list. Then he adds one more: “I thirst.”

I Thirst

Psalm 69:21 says;

Psalm 69:21 (NKJV)

²¹ They also gave me gall for my food,
And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

It is believed that this scripture is fulfilled when Jesus says “I thirst.” But there is more to this thirst than meets the eye. Let’s look at something together.

Matthew 27:32 through Matthew 27:34 (NKJV)

³²Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. ³³And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, ³⁴they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.

When Jesus first arrived at Calvary, they tried to give him something to drink, but he wouldn’t take it after he tasted it. I was curious about this episode and wanted to know why the Lord refused the drink that was offered to him. I did some research and found the following. This account in Matthew says he was offered sour wine mingled with gall. But later in Matthew, when he is given sour wine again, it doesn’t say it is mingled with gall.

Sour wine or vinegar was a common drink used by the Roman soldiers. In Bible times, one of the ways it was produced was by pouring water over the skins and stalks of grapes after the juice had been pressed out and allowing the whole to ferment.

The gall that was used in the wine was from bitter herbs. It was almost poisonous. Gall was used for the purposes of deadening the sense of the victim. This gall would also nullify the pain. It was designed to make the victim numb and lessen the suffering.

If Jesus took the wine mixed with gall he may not have had the mental and spiritual focus to speak these seven last words. He may have been so incapacitated that he would not have recognized Mary and John standing near by.

He may not have been able to have the conversation with the thief on the cross. He may not have been able to fulfill all things. Jesus needed to be in control of every detail of his life regardless of what the crowd wanted to do. They thought they were in control, but really Jesus was in charge of the crucifixion. Remember he said, "I lay down my life and I pick it up again."

Let me ask you a question: who is in control of your life? What do you want out of life? Where do you want to be? Who will you become? How will you be fulfilled? You will never become who God ordained for you to be if you are waiting and depending on "they".

Who are they? They are the people who believe they are in control. They try to dictate what is good and what is bad. They make the rules on how to be accepted in the world. They want you to be numb and insensitive to the spirit of God. They would have you too busy to read the word of God. They want you to be too cool to lift up your voice and worship.

They would have your mind so crowded and confused that you can't hear God's voice. They would have you believe the psychics, palm readers, and root workers are alright with God. They will have you compromising your faith for a good time. They will have you caught up in inappropriate relationships.

They will have you believing your marriage is okay but you spend more time at mama's house or on the phone than you do with your spouse. They will have you believing your social club is so important that you are more faithful to attend their meetings than you are to worship God.

They want you to be too drunk to know better. They want you to be too impressed to think better. They want you to be too covetous to spend better. They want you to be too stubborn to do better. They will try to tell you to drink when you are not thirsty.

"Don't let the world dictate your thirst."

1 John 2:15 through 1 John 2:17 (NKJV)

¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Our value is not dictated by the social standards of this world. Our future is not limited by what the world says about us. Our destiny is not in the hands of the establishment. Our lives, our faith, and our hope are all found in Jesus Christ. We are complete in Christ.

From the cross, Jesus was securing our salvation. He was completing the work that the Father sent him to accomplish. He didn't leave any stones unturned. He left no work undone. Jesus didn't leave any question that he was truly the Son of God. From the first prophecy in Genesis, down through forty and two generations, from the kings to the prophets, from the tents to the temple, Jesus solidified our faith.

He purchased our salvation in a complete work.