

Jesus had endured agonizing torture at the hands of the Jewish leaders and even more at the hand of the Roman soldiers. After being beaten with fists, clubs, being spit on, he then endured a lashing that mutilated his appearance.

Isaiah 52:14 ...his appearance was so disfigured that he did not look like a man, and his form did not resemble a human being

Jesus was so weakened that he needed help carrying his own cross. Once at Calvary, also known as the hill of the skull, His crucifixion began. The crucifixion was a brutal method not only of execution, but of torture. Because of the brutality of this torment, He spoke with great difficulty during his final hours on the cross. The Gospels record for us 7 Sayings from the lips of Jesus. Each one has great significance. And what is the first of the last things Jesus would physically struggle and agonize to get out?

1st Saying: “Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.” Luke 23:34

Christ could have called down fire from heaven. He could have ordered legions of heavenly soldiers to slaughter his enemies. Instead, he endures the slaughtering Himself. Why?

Because this was his mission. A Mission of Mercy. A Gospel of Grace. A Sacrifice of Salvation.

And his words as he is being raised in shame and agony are ones of forgiveness.

“...forgive them, because they do not know...”

Those responsible for killing him were not completely ignorant. Jesus didn't mean that they were completely unaware of what their actions were. They knew the horrors they were inflicting on an innocent man. What they did not understand however, is that they were killing God's Son.

1 Corinthians 2:8 says that *if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

In an astonishing act of agonizing effort, Jesus intercedes for his tormenters.

Isaiah 53:12 ... was counted among the rebels; yet he bore the sin of many and interceded for the rebels.

Compassion is what filled his heart in this moment of agony! Not retaliation, not revenge, not hatred, not animosity, not bitterness, but loving, forgiving, compassion.

If Christ is able to forgive his own executioners, how much more is he not willing to forgive you???

If those who killed the author of life may find forgiveness if they repent, how much more won't we?

God is eager to forgive any sinner who humbles themselves in repentance.

Tonight, ponder on the great loving forgiveness even to the worst of sinners. Even to us.

Forgiveness has been extended to you. Though we have rebelled against the creator and the giver of life, though we have offended the King of glory, because our sins have been laid upon the innocent lamb, forgiveness has been brought before you.

In your worst moment, at your lowest and vilest and most wicked, Jesus looks down on you the same way he looked down from the cross on his murderers, with compassionate forgiveness.

There is forgiveness in Christ, for those who least deserve it.

2nd Saying: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

By this point it has been hours of agony hanging on the cross.

Here was the Son of God, bloodied, beaten, and mocked. He hung between two criminals, who according to Mark and Matthew, joined the crowds in taunting Jesus.

But, at some point, one of these criminals had a change of heart.

For what reason, we don't know. He may have witnessed Jesus' torment and mockery, but not once heard Jesus raise a negative word against them. Then, to his astonishment, he would hear the mutilated man hanging next to him pray for the forgiveness of those responsible for this. His heart would have been touched. I believe so much so that he was able to see the man in the middle cross for who he truly was.

And so, this criminal, a murderer, asks Jesus (Luke 23:42) *"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom"*. This lowlife criminal, this revolutionary, this murderer, this sinner saw Jesus in a way the religious leaders, the proud and arrogant, failed to see him. As Lord; as King, as Savior.

And to this sinner, guilty and deserving of death on a cross, Jesus responds: *"...today you will be with me in paradise"*.

This thief on the cross had done nothing to earn Jesus' favor. He deserved no good thing from the Christ. He was hopeless. His request was a final plea, in his final moments, for a final mercy- **"REMEMBER ME!"** He had lived a life of sin and was dying a death fit for a sinner. He was where he deserved to be. But none of that mattered once that request landed on the ears of Jesus- **"REMEMBER ME!"**.

At once his plea was answered. *"...today you will be with me in paradise"*. That is all Jesus said to this dying thief. That is all he heard. That is all he needed to hear.

MacArthur says, *"He was still suffering unspeakable physical torment, but the misery in his soul was now gone. For the first time in his life, he was free from the burden of his sin. The Savior, at his side, was bearing that sin for him. And the thief was now clothed in Christ's perfect righteousness. Soon they would be in Paradise together. The thief had Christ's own word on it."*

You and I can have that same assurance of salvation. Regardless of our past. The thief never attended a single church service. He never got the chance to be baptized. He never memorized any bible verses or gave any offering or prayed any other prayer that we know of, other than **"REMEMBER ME!"**. But his assurance of eternal life was based upon the word of Jesus, that he would in fact be remembered.

Romans 10:9-11 *If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame"*

Think about it, the first person that God brought into heaven was the least likely to enter.

There is abundant salvation in Jesus for those who need it most.

3rd Saying: “Woman, here is your son...Here is your mother.” John 19:26-27

John 19:25-27 reads Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” ²⁷Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

It’s not only those who hated Jesus that were present to witness his final moments. A few of his closest loved ones were also there. Namely, Mary, Jesus’ mother and John, the disciple he loved. Of all the eyewitnesses present, and even of Jesus’ friends who were now in hiding, no one suffered more to see him on the cross than Mary, his mother.

33 years earlier, while on a visit to the temple with an infant Jesus, Simeon prophesied to Mary (Luke 2:34-35) ...“Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed— ³⁵and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

The time for that sword to pierce her soul was now here, as she stood there, beholding the son she had once held in her arms, now bloodied and his life fading away with every gasp for air. She could hear the gurgling of blood filling his lungs; She could hear the insults of those who hated her child. But she was unable to do anything to help him, to stop them. And so, she stood there, weeping, grieving, broken.

Jesus the Christ, even in the moment of his greatest affliction, was not concerned on his own needs, but on those of others. Even now as he was undertaking the greatest redemptive act in history for all of mankind, he takes time to see to the needs of one person. Jesus charges John with the responsibility of caring for Mary. And He comforts Mary by providing for her a son in the place of the one she was losing.

“Woman, here is your son...and to the disciple, Here is your mother.”

He’s not being rude by calling her “woman” instead of mother. In fact, we never see recorded in scripture Jesus calling Mary “mother”. She knew who he really was. And she knew that even she needed his atoning work of salvation. Jesus on record rebuked those who tried to make more of Mary than they should.

In Luke 11:27-28 we read As he was saying these things, a woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you and the one who nursed you!” ²⁸He said, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”

Mary was blessed because she heard the word of God and kept it. She knew that this must take place. She knew that the son she delivered was the deliverer of the world.

Still, Jesus in his humanity, loved Mary as his mother. He kept the 5th commandment and honored her. It is likely that by this time Joseph, the husband of Mary had died. And Jesus half-brothers did not yet believe He was the Messiah (although they later would believe).

And so, Jesus charges John to care for her after his death.

What a lovely picture of the heart of Christ- fully divine and fully human. While making provision for the sins of the world, he has time to make provision for the suffering of one woman.

There is comfort in Christ for our suffering.

4th Saying: ***“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Matt.27:46; Mark 15:34***

These are haunting words for anyone to utter. It is a dreadful thing for anyone to reach a point in which we feel as if God himself has abandoned us; forsaken us. But this isn't just anyone who spoke them. This is the sinless Son of God. This is the innocent intercessor. This is the spotless lamb.

We would do well to remember the horrors of the cross. The horrors that should have been ours. Jesus was not just fulfilling scripture and quoting Psalm 22 and going through the motions. He uttered these words because he felt them, deeply.

In this moment, all his bodily weight hung on 3 nails; one through each of his wrists, one through his feet. His back had been slashed open after the lashing from the Romans, exposing muscle and bone. Each time he took a breath, he would put the weight of his body on the nails and push his openly wounded back up on the rugged cross, causing excruciating pain. A crown of thorns pierced his forehead, gushing massive amounts of blood down his face and pooling at the foot of the cross. As he gazed out at the landscape before him, he would see Jerusalem, the city he treasured, now distant. He would look down to see those who were meant to represent Him, the Jewish leaders, mocking him and chanting for his death; they would not recognize their own Messiah. He looked around for his followers, but they had fled. The few that remained wept bitterly and looked on in shock.

In this moment, the one who had never sinned, was now experiencing the full measure of God's wrath against sin and sinners. It was hurting him. It was crushing him. It was killing him.

At his baptism a voice from heaven proclaimed, ***“this is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” (Matt. 3:17)***, but now ***“it pleased the Father to crush him” (Isaiah 53:10)***. The one who had been closest to the Father and relied upon Him continually, was now cast off from His presence. The cup of God's wrath was poured out upon Jesus, not one drop held back. The sky went dark, even the sun refused to offer its warmth. The principalities of darkness encircled him, celebrating triumphantly at his anguish.

In this moment Christ suffered what we should have.

One commentator wrote, “It was a punishment so severe that a mortal man could spend all eternity in the torments of hell, and still he would not have begun to exhaust the divine wrath that was heaped on Christ at the cross.” ***My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?***

Jesus knows what it's like to feel as if God the Father has deserted you. Jesus has experienced our deepest pain and anguish, and loneliness, and even deeper than we ever could.

Isaiah 53:5-6 says ***“...he was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on him, and we are healed by his wounds. ⁶We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all.”***

The sacrifice of the Son satisfied the penalty for our sins.

5th Saying: *“I’m thirsty.”* John 19:28

John 19:28-29 After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now finished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he said, “I’m thirsty.” ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was sitting there; so they fixed a sponge full of sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it up to his mouth.

After hours upon hours hanging on the cross profusely bleeding, Jesus, the Son of God in the flesh, was dehydrated. His body had endured much physical trauma without an ounce of relief. Earlier they had offered him a pain-numbing mixture of wine and myrrh, but he had refused, choosing instead to endure the full weight of the agony reserved for him to endure. But now his work was coming to a culmination. He expressed his thirst, in order to fulfill the words of [Psalm 69:20-21](#) *Insults have broken my heart, and I am in despair. I waited for sympathy, but there was none; for comforters, but found no one.* ²¹ Instead, they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

This sour wine, this vinegar, was not meant for the victims of crucifixion. It was what the Roman soldiers had for themselves, to alleviate their own thirst. One of these soldiers must have been touched at the sight of Jesus and found pity to relieve the thirst of the man in the center cross.

Don’t miss the devastating irony, that the one who is himself the spring of living water, now himself thirsted. It’s a testament to his humanity. When God took the form of man, he took on the limitations that came with being a man. He laughed; he cried; he loved; he cared; he bled; he thirsted.

During his ministry Jesus had told the crowds, [\(John 4:14\)](#)...*whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life.*

Yet now he was thirsty. He was human. He was where you and I deserved to be.

He was thirsty so that we might never thirst; he was wounded so that we might be healed; he was suffering so that we might be comforted; he was cast out so that we might be drawn in; he was dying so that we might live; he was cursed so that we might be blessed.

[John 19](#) tells us that upon Jesus’ request, they offered him the sour wine on sponge that was fixed to a hyssop branch. This type of branch would have been abundant at this time, for it was the time of the Passover festival. And it was at the first Passover, in [Exodus 12](#), where the Jews were commanded to spread the blood of lambs on their doorpost, using a hyssop branch. At Golgotha, the branch was raised to the true lamb of Passover. While the town feasted and celebrated, the true lamb faded and cried.

“I’m thirsty” whispered the one who created the hydrogen and the oxygen atoms and combined them to create the life giving H₂O molecule, water. He had now completely exhausted himself. Heaven was held back from interfering, for it was necessary that this all take place, in order to fulfill what was written in scripture.

The emptying of the slain Lamb was necessary for the fulfillment of every redemptive promise.

6th Saying: ***“It is finished.”*** John 19:30

To those standing near, this statement may have seemed like an acceptance of defeat. After all, by this point Jesus had endured over 12 hours of physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual torture. He was at death's door. No one had come to rescue him. No one had intervened. No one had stood up on his behalf. And he had not saved himself. ***“It is finished”*** he proclaimed.

But this was no acknowledgement of defeat. To the contrary. This was a proclamation of victory and triumph. MacArthur writes, *“As He hung there, looking every bit like a pathetic, wasted victim, He nonetheless celebrated the greatest triumph in the history of the universe.”*

John records Jesus' statement with one Greek word, ***Tetelestai!*** It is finished. Not his life, but his mission. His work. The work that the Father had planned from long ago. Work that began to unfold from the very first pages of the bible; from the very first moments after humanity's fall into sin and the ensuing death and separation that awaited. What the first man, Adam, did was devastating for every person that came after. But then Jesus stepped in. And he not only reversed what the first Adam did, for you see, we receive far more in Jesus than we lost in Adam.

In Jesus, we have justice satisfied; In Jesus we have wrath appeased; In Jesus we have atonement made; in Jesus we have our ransom paid; in Jesus we have all that we lost in Adam and more, for we now have the Son himself, and the comforter tabernacling in us and the Father abiding with us.

We have hope and life; we have purpose and value; we have rest from our striving efforts to perhaps someday be enough.

There is nothing anyone could add to the work of Christ. ***“It is finished”*** is a declaration of completion.

It is a marker planted deep in the ground that says *“For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—⁹ not from works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)”*

It is a banner flying high that shouts, *“there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)”*. There is nothing left to add, nothing anyone could ever contribute to make what Jesus has done any better, any more useful, any more helpful, any more precious. It is done. It is finished. It is accomplished.

Jesus spoke these words aloud not for his own sake. He knew what his work had accomplished. He spoke them aloud for you and I. For he knew that along our journey, even knowing everything we know about the bible and the sacrifice he made, he knew we would be prone to want to add to his work. As if we could. He knew we'd be tempted to add rules and to add our efforts and to add our accomplishments. But all we touch is tainted, and at the end of the day it's never enough, and we are right back where we started. And so, for you and I, Jesus loudly exclaimed ***“It is finished”***.

It must have been agonizing to say *anything* at this point in the crucifixion. Yet he saw it necessary to say this one more thing. Be reminded today, directly from the lips of the Messiah who hung bleeding on the cross: THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO THAT CHRIST HAS NOT ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED FOR YOU.

The work of Jesus is more than enough to meet every requirement and demand for my salvation.

7th Saying: “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.” Luke 23:46;

Luke describes the last moments of Jesus’ life in this way (23:44-46) It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three, ⁴⁵ because the sun’s light failed. The curtain of the sanctuary was split down the middle. ⁴⁶ And Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, **into your hands I entrust my spirit.**” Saying this, he breathed his last.

John tells us that bowing his head he then “gave up his spirit” (John 19:30).

And Jesus himself had told his followers during his days in ministry that no one took his life from him, but that he gave it up on his own (John 10:18), for he was the good shepherd.

Jesus was not a victim of the moment. He was completely in control. He was where he intended to be. The Romans may have taken credit for his death, the Jews may have thought they incited it to happen, but it was the plan that the Father and the Son had agreed to, that had now taken place. This was no misfortune; this was no tragedy; this was not spiraling out of control. This was the culmination of long awaited, sovereignly prepared and anticipated prophecy.

The daylight turned to night. The final drops of the cup of God’s wrath were being poured out. The veil in the temple that separated the most holy place from all the people ripped. On a hill he created he hung crucified. His enemies stood nearby. His loved ones stood far away. His body had been broken. His blood had been spilled. His assignment almost concluded.

What may have crossed Jesus’ mind as he prepared to give up his spirit and breathe his last? Have you thought about it? What would he be thinking of in those final moments? Is it possible he thought of you, of me, of each one of us individually. By name; by face; by sin? Did he look back into history; did he think back to that first week of creation, to the 6TH day when God made man and gave him his breath to give him life? It was now the 6th hour (on the cross) and God was giving up his breath, once more, for man, to give him life.

With his final breath the words **“Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit”.**

The ever-singing angels are quiet, at least for now.
The ever-mocking demons are roaring, at least for now.

Good Friday is over. The sacrifice lamb has been slain. But his death is not the end. His death is the beginning. A new covenant has been established in blood. We can entrust our Spirits to Christ because He entrusted himself to the Father.

The death of the Son of God has brought life to the children of sin.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

- VIDEO
- OPENING PRAYER- **Ramon Barrera**
- 1st Saying: *"Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing."*
- SONG:
- 2nd Saying: *"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."*
- SONG:
- 3rd Saying: *"Woman, here is your son."*
- SONG:
- 4th Saying: *"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"*
- SONG:
- 5th Saying: *"I'm thirsty."*
- SONG
- 6th Saying: *"It is finished."*
- SONG:
- 7th Saying: *"Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit."*
- COMMUNION/ OPEN ALTAR/ SONG
- FINAL WORDS/ CLOSING PRAYER- **David Halla**