

Jesus' Last Words

John 19:28-30

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

I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.
(Luke 23:43, NIV)

*When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."
(John 19:26-27, NIV)*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
(Matthew 27:46, NIV)

I am thirsty.
(John 19:28, NIV)

It is finished.
(John 19:30, NIV)

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

Imagine that you are Jesus on the day of your death. Look around. Who do you see?

- the religious leaders, proud, self-righteous, angry, blind to their own murderous jealousy
- Judas, a close friend whose heart had wandered and who turned you in for a few pieces of silver
- the disciples, who lived with you for three years then fearfully deserted you in your time of trouble
- Pilate, who knew the truth but was too weak to act on it
- Herod, who held your life in his hands but was only concerned with his own entertainment
- sadistic soldiers, to whom you were cruel sport
- a thief dying next to you, taunting You in an effort to save himself
- the crowd of people looking up at you, a mixture of gloaters, mindless mob, and curiosity seekers.

In short, you're surrounded by humanity. To them, you're a criminal, a blasphemer, a financial opportunity, a pawn, a scapegoat, a fool, a buffoon. Your pain is their afternoon's amusement. You've given yourself for these people, and they're crushing

you with their indifference, injustice, torture, humiliation, and the most agonizing death they can devise.

Every fiber of your being is screaming in pain and begging for relief. You are in your final moments. What is on your mind?

Most people being crucified would have filled their last hours with angry curses and bitterness. Read Jesus' final words. Listen as He speaks them. What is on His heart during these moments?

Forgiveness for those killing Him and for the repentant thief. Pain never overwhelmed the love in His heart.

Care for those He loved. Mary must have longed for a word from her son, and Jesus didn't disappoint her. Even as He died, He provided for her and bestowed a great honor on John.

Abandonment. Jesus' deepest sorrow was feeling cut off from His Father. But how did He express it? He prayed, using words from Psalm 22. Read the psalm. It's a moving expression of desperate complaint and ultimate trust. Even when separated from His Father, Jesus turned to Him and trusted Him.

His thirst. Having cared for others, He cried out in His own need, again fulfilling Psalm 22 (v. 15). The drink apparently gave Him strength for His final words.

Triumph. To the very end, Jesus' thoughts were of His Father and His mission. His final words were a cry of victory. "It is completed! Father, I lay My life in Your hands!"

Father, when I die, when I am losing everything I am and everything I hold, will I be looking to You, reaching for the completion of Your work, loving those around me, trusting my life into Your hands? Lord, may it be so.

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