

## 7 Sayings From The Cross

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Three good friends were driving along on the highway one day: a doctor, a teacher, and a lawyer. All of a sudden, a brand-new SUV cut them off. In an attempt to miss it, they swerved to the left and hit the median. The car flipped several times and all three friends died instantly.

They all found themselves in Heaven. They began to ask each other what they hope people say about them at their funerals. The doctor said, "I want them to say, that I really made a difference in people's lives and that I was able to help many."

The teacher said, "I want people to remember me as a great educator, where I inspired and encouraged many."

Then they looked to the lawyer and said, "What about you, what do you want people to say about you at your funeral?"

The lawyer said, "I'd like people to say, 'Look! He's moving!'"

Many are afraid of dying. They're not looking forward to it.

Yet, we see with Jesus an unreserved focus and determination to walk the Calvary road (Luke 9:51 – He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem). He did not avoid it! He made His way to the cross, knowing exactly what it would mean, knowing what pain would be involved. He even told His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and there be betrayed, beaten and killed (Luke 18:32-33).

Jesus made His way to the cross with courage, not the courage of a moment, but a planned courage. Many of us have experienced that moment of courage, when out of spontaneity and without a chance to think it through, we rise to a challenge outside of ourselves.

- eg. Moms lifting a car to save a child, a surfer fending off a shark to save a friend, telling somebody to beat it when they bud in front of you at Starbucks. It's springing into action without thought.

But Jesus acted with a planned courage. When the Word tells us He set His face to go to Jerusalem, He knew exactly what that meant. It would lead to suffering, pain, and death. But it would lead to oh so much more!!

- **Hebrews 12:2**, *"looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

And as we look at what Jesus spoke from the cross, we begin to see why He was so ready to go to the cross. For it was on the cross that He revealed His heart and mission. We also see the anguish that sin caused, but the victory He was providing for us!

Keep in mind, the Romans knew how to punish people. They made crucifixion the most painful of deaths. To even draw breath to speak would have been an agonizing thing. Yet Jesus spoke 7 times, each time having to pull His bloodied, bare back up against the splintered, hard wooden beam, putting pressure on the nails pierced through hands and feet. Yet sacrificially He spoke out with compassion, love, and grace.

Today we're going to look at these 7 sayings from the cross. 7 being the number of completion and perfection in the Bible (creation being done in 6 days, the 7<sup>th</sup> day revealed completion, a day to rest in a completed work). And as we'll see, the work done on the cross at Calvary was a perfect and complete work of salvation by our Saviour Jesus!

1. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." -  
Luke 23:34

**Luke 23:33–34, "And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots."**

Ever hold a piece of wood for someone as they try to hammer it in place and had them hit you with the hammer? It hurts. I've had that happen and I'll tell you, my first thoughts were not, 'Father, forgive them'.

Yet, here is Jesus, being unfairly accused, undeservedly condemned. Yet in this whole process He is thinking of those whom He is doing this for. This is incredible love and grace.

We see here the brutality and depravity of mankind in sin, but we see the compassion of Jesus. He went through all this so that we could be forgiven.

- Notice He doesn't direct this at this moment to the people saying: "*I forgive you.*" He says, ***Father, forgive them.***

- This is an interesting word in the Greek for **forgive**. It's the same word Jesus used in **Matthew 19:14**, *"But Jesus said, Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."*
- You see, you parents know what it's like when you see your kids being threatened. If someone is picking on them or hurting them, you want to take matters into your own hands.
- And here is God witnessing this brutality against His only begotten Son. You can imagine the power and opportunity He had to wipe them all out! But Jesus is saying, *'Let it happen Father. Hold off your wrath. Because I am accomplishing something here that is far worth it!!'*

Jesus was going to provide the forgiveness of sins for all mankind through this sacrificial death.

## 2. "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." - Luke 23:43

**Luke 23:39–43**, *"Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, **'If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.'**" <sup>40</sup> But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, **'Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?'** <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> Then he said to Jesus, **'Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.'** <sup>43</sup> And Jesus said to him, **'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'**"*

These were two criminals being sentenced on equal crimes. These were hardened men. They joined in with others mocking and reviling Jesus even as they hung there beside Him on the cross (Matthew 27:44). Imagine that? But something happened on the cross. This one man saw something in Jesus that opened his eyes to the reality of who He was and in turn his heart was opened to Jesus. And this man simply called out to Jesus.

- There was no work he could do, he couldn't get baptized, he couldn't do any charitable work, couldn't get to church or read his bible. Yet he was saved!
- It reveals to us that salvation is by grace alone. We can't earn it. Jesus was doing the work and completing salvation for us.
- And it reveals that nobody is too far gone to be saved. This guy was on death row. He was beyond death row; he was being executed. Jesus didn't reply, *'Remember you? After you said what you said to Me and reviled Me?'*

*I'll remember you alright and it's not going to be pretty!* No way! Jesus responded with love and great grace, **'Today you will be with Me in paradise!'** Why? Because he called on Jesus! How awesome is that?!

- **John 1:12**, *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:"*
- **Romans 10:13**, *"For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.""*

Ultimately everyone stands on either one of these sides of the cross. Which side are you on today?

3. He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" - John 19:26–27

**John 19:25–27**, *"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" <sup>27</sup> Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."*

Here's Mary and John drawing close to Jesus at His greatest need. Only a few were faithful to this point, but how faithful were the few. Both Mary and John received a great blessing by staying with Jesus.

Do you see how Jesus continues to look to the needs of others. He isn't focused on Himself but on others. If that were me up there it would have been all about me! Shameful, but true! But here is Jesus looking to be sure His own mom and those closest to Him are cared for. Think about His mother having to witness these things. How crushing this would have been (In Luke 2:34–35, Simeon prophesied to Mary: *"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."*). Yet here would be one that would come alongside in the flesh and bring consolation. Jesus not only provides for our greatest need, but for those simple practical needs we have as well. What love and concern.

At this point, darkness came over the whole land for three hours, from the sixth hour (noon) until the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). There was a physical reality to the spiritual situation of mankind. They were in darkness apart from Jesus.

4. “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” - Matthew 27:46

**Matthew 27:45–46, “Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> 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?””**

After taking care of His earthly mother, He looks to His Heavenly Father. It's evidently at this time that He felt what He's never had to feel or experience before. And that is separation from the Father. He's always been in full fellowship with the Father, perfectly pure, holy and in harmony with the Father. But now on the cross Jesus takes upon Himself the sin of the world. And the problem with sin is not just that it leads to death but it's that it brings separation between You and God – the one who made you and made you for fellowship with Him. That's His desire! But sin brings a wedge and division in that (both now and eternally). Here now Jesus is experiencing that separation. It's not that God is turning His back on Him and betraying Him at this time, it's that sin is being judged, and Jesus is bearing our sin and the wrath of God that we deserved. Here's the mercy of God that He would subject His own Son to this so that we could be spared from the consequences of sin.

As difficult and as painful as the cross would have been, this is what was true agony. This is the sting of death, the penalty and consequence of sin. Jesus took that upon Himself for you and me.

5. “I thirst!” - John 19:28

**John 19:28–29, “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” <sup>29</sup> Now 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.”** (Psalm 22:15; 69:21)



Jesus came to fulfill all that was written of Him (Luke 24:44). There are over 300 prophecies of Jesus in the Bible. The majority of them were fulfilled at the time of His ascension.

Professor Peter W. Stoner who authored “Science Speaks” stated that the probability of just eight particular prophecies being fulfilled in one person is 1 in  $10^{17}$ , i.e. 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000). The eight prophecies used in the calculation were:

1. Messiah is to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; fulfilled in Matt. 2:1-7; John 7:42; Luke 2:47).
  2. Messiah is to be preceded by a Messenger (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; fulfilled in Matthew 3:1-3; 11:10; John 1:23; Luke 1:17).
  3. Messiah is to enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9; fulfilled in Luke 35-37; Matthew 21:6-11).
  4. Messiah is to be betrayed by a friend (Psalms 41:9; 55:12-14; fulfilled in Matthew 10:4; 26:49-50; John 13:21).
  5. Messiah is to be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; fulfilled in Matthew 26:15; 27:3).
  6. The money for which Messiah is sold is to be thrown “to the potter” in God’s house (Zechariah 11:13; fulfilled in Matthew 27:5-7).
  7. Messiah is to be silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7; fulfilled in Matthew 27:12).
  8. Messiah is to be executed by crucifixion as a thief (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; Isaiah 53:5,12; fulfilled in Luke 23:33; John 20:25; Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27,28).
- This statement was validated by the American Scientific Affiliation. This number has been illustrated as follows: If we take  $1 \times 10^{17}$  silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas, they'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar. The odds of him finding that marked silver dollar is 1 in  $10^{17}$  power.
  - Professor Stoner went on to consider 48 prophecies and says, “... We find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in  $10^{157}$ ”.

Understand this was not some misstep, plan B type thing that ended up with Jesus on the cross. This was a calculated planned move that Jesus did to reveal His love, His heart, His mission and prove that He alone qualified to be the only One able to pay the price for our sins.

In this darkest hour, as He received the judgment of God for our sin, He revealed the need everyone of us has – a thirst that can only be quenched in Jesus.

**John 4:13–14**, *"Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*

## 6. "It is finished!" - John 19:30

**John 19:30**, *"So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"**"*

Jesus didn't say, *'I am finished'*, but ***It is finished!***

In the Greek this is one word: ***Tetelestai***. It was a word used for tax receipts to indicate 'paid in full'. We all had a debt that we were unable to pay. But it has been paid in Jesus! Hallelujah, the work is done!

I can't work for or earn my salvation. Jesus has done it. We're saved by putting our trust in His finished work.

We'll see in a second that the veil in the temple was torn in two. The veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies, where God met with the High Priest only once a year. And it was torn from top to bottom (it was not a work of man). You see, the way to the Father is now available for us. Access to God is now granted! This is what Jesus came to do for us.

## 7. "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" - Luke 23:46

**Luke 23:45–46**, *"Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, **"Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'** " Having said this, He ***breathed His last.***"*

What an example Jesus set for us. Many people would fight for every last breath on the cross. The guards were needing to hasten their deaths this day, so they came around to break their legs so they could not push up any longer to draw breath. But when they came to Jesus, they realized He was already dead. Jesus surrendered His life completely.

- If we're going to truly follow Jesus, He has told us in like manner to take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow Him.
- We're not promised an easy life, but we're promised an eternal life! It doesn't get any better than that. And the way to truly experience the blessed life is to give yourself away. To lay yourself down in surrender. This life is not meant to be lived for self, but for Jesus and others!
- And He came to make that possible. To give you the full life both now and forever!

For those who have never turned to Jesus and admitted your need for Him, understand, that He alone has done the work of salvation. It's yours to collect on now.

- Let's say I were to write you a cheque to remove all your debt. I wrote you a cheque for \$100,000 (now if you ever see a cheque from me for that much - don't cash it!) But let's pretend for a moment. Now if you were to take that cheque, stick it in your purse or wallet, and just sit on that for the next 3, 4, 20 years, while you bust your back trying to get out of the financial hole you're in - it wouldn't make sense would it? But you see, I've done my part, I've written the cheque, but you need to go cash it.
- Three of the greatest words ever uttered are ***'it is finished!'*** The way is opened, the work complete, forgiveness of sins and eternal life is available! But are you going to receive that into your life? All it takes is for a person to simply acknowledge their sin, and their need for a Savior. And Jesus died on a cross to accomplish this for you. Don't put it off any longer, come to Him today and put your trust in Him for salvation.

Now remember, the story is not finished there. A greater work was done to validate everything on the cross. Invite your friends out to church this Sunday to hear the continuation. But let's end with this pertinent good news for us because of this work done at Calvary:

**Ephesians 2:4–9**, *“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*