

The Seven “Words” of Jesus on the Cross

During Lent and Holy Week you will hear people refer to the seven “words” of Jesus. They are not really seven “words,” but rather seven sentences said by Jesus while He was on the cross. No one Gospel records all seven sentences, but when you read all the Gospels you find that Jesus spoke seven times. (Since seven is God’s special number, this is another testimony that the Bible was written by One Divine author, not just by religious men.)

The Scripture passages for each sentence that Jesus said are listed below. They are placed in the likely order in which Jesus spoke them. You will find that Jesus spoke three sentences of LOVE, two sentences of SUFFERING, and two sentences of VICTORY.

Use the following as a personal, group, or family Bible study. Feel free to ignore some of the questions, if you would like a shorter study.

THREE SENTENCES OF LOVE

1. LUKE 23:34

What did Jesus say?

What does this tell you about Jesus?

Read Isaiah 53:12. What does this have to do with Luke 23:34?

Assuming that Jesus had the Jews in mind, did the Father grant Jesus’ request?

Who do you have in your life that is hard for you to forgive?

Christ’s disciples have Christ’s Spirit living inside of them, transforming them. How does this fact help you to forgive other people as Christ forgave?

2. LUKE 23:43

What did Jesus say?

Jesus’ words are in response to a request. Compare the exact request of the criminal with Jesus’ exact reply. What do you notice?

The criminal’s request

Jesus’ response

Earlier in the morning this criminal had mocked Jesus along with his companion (Matthew 27:44; Mark 15:32). What does this tell you about people?

What does this tell you about repentance?

What does this tell you about Jesus and how He will respond to repentant sinners?



3. JOHN 19:26-27
What did Jesus say?

Jesus was the eldest son of his family. Since Joseph had died, it was Jesus' responsibility to care for His mother. Why did Jesus not pass on this responsibility to one of his stepbrothers (cf. John 7:5)?

Who did Jesus choose instead and why?



Jesus took time on the cross to care for His mother. Write a statement about His time and His desire to care for your needs.

If you have older parents and are not able to be physically present with them, how are you providing for their material and spiritual needs? What role does Jesus play in your plans for care?

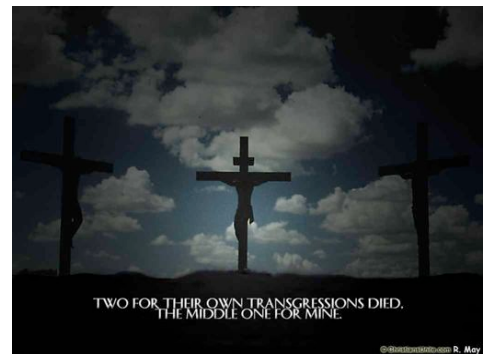
TWO SENTENCES OF SUFFERING

4. MARK 15:34
What did Jesus say?

“Forsaken” is a strong word. Have you ever felt “forsaken”? If so, describe your situation.

In Psalm 37:25, King David said that he had “**never** seen the righteous forsaken by God.” Why would Jesus be “forsaken”? (If you need help, read 2 Corinthians 5:21 & Galatians 3:13.)

If you are Christ's disciple, will your Father ever forsake you? How do you know?



5. JOHN 19:28
What did Jesus say?

During the first few centuries of Christianity a large group of people taught that Jesus was only a spirit and did not really have a body. Likewise they said that Jesus did not really suffer on the cross – He only appeared to suffer. Jesus' crucifixion was really just “special effects.” How does this fifth statement by Jesus go against that belief?

If Jesus was truly human (as well as divine) how does this strength and comfort you? (See Hebrews 2:7; 4:15-16.)

TWO SENTENCES OF VICTORY

6. JOHN 19:30
What did Jesus say?

What do you think Jesus meant was “finished”?

This statement by Jesus is actually one single word in the original Greek: *TETELESTAI*. It was a word that was stamped on debts when payment had been collected. According to Matthew 27:50 and Mark 15:37, it was said in a loud, strong voice. So what was Jesus trying to tell us by shouting, *TETELESTAI*?



What Our Saviour saw from the Cross by J J Tissot

7. LUKE 23:46
What did Jesus say?

What do you think that Jesus died from?

Read John 10:17-18. Does this change your opinion about what caused Jesus' death?

Jesus' final words are a quotation from Psalm 31:5. For many centuries Jewish children used this verse as a bedtime prayer – like we say, “Now I lay me down to sleep...” What insight does this give you about how Jesus viewed His death?

How would you respond to the following statement made by an atheist in a chat room site: “The Gospel writers record Jesus' death. It shows that Jesus felt his death was for nothing. Jesus cried, he felt that he was forsaken, and he believed his dreams were shattered because He said that his hoped for mission was finished, kaput! The other two criminals lived on until their legs were broken. Jesus died quickly, a defeated wimp. That's not much of a 'Savior'!”