

TEXT SERMONS – SEVEN SAYINGS OF THE SUFFERING SAVIOR

SAYING #7

“I COMMIT MY SPIRIT”

Luke 23:46

“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’”

We have been watching Jesus die upon one of three Roman crosses silhouetted against the Jerusalem sky that epochal day long ago. All three figures upon the crosses spoke. We have been riveted by the words spoken by the figure on the center cross, for they were the most unusual statements from the lips of One in such dire straits. Never a man lived as He lived; never a man died as He died.

There is a book based upon Jesus’ experience upon the cross titled: “How to Live Through a Bad Day.” However, Luke 23:46 tells us that Jesus did not live through His bad day. He died before the day was ended! The main story-line of the entire episode upon the cross is that He died as He planned and died when He desired to do so. His life was not taken from Him, He gave it up saying, “*into Your hands I commit My spirit.*”

This unique Person was Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Seven times the crucified Savior spoke:

- He spoke to His Father on behalf of His persecutors: “Father, forgive them”;
- He spoke to the thief: “Today, you will be with Me in Paradise”;
- He spoke to John, “Behold your mother,” to His mother, “Behold your son”;
- He spoke to God saying: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”;
- He spoke to the soldiers: “I thirst!”;
- He spoke to all saying: “It is finished!”; and
- He speaks for the last time loudly saying: “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.”

Seven is the number signifying completion or perfection throughout scripture. It is also the number for rest after a finished work. In six days God made the worlds and on the seventh day He rested. Now Jesus’ work of redemption is completed and His sixth word was “*It is finished!*” His seventh word signified rest as He committed His spirit into the hands of His Father.

These final words of Jesus from the cross have much to teach us about life and death. Let us examine them as follows: The Person He Addressed; The Palm He Trusted and The Power He Displayed.

THE PERSON JESUS ADDRESSED.

“Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’”

Addressing His Father was a very natural act. Jesus spoke often *to* His Father and *of* His Father while upon the earth. In the Sermon on The Mount, Jesus used the word “*Father*” seventeen times. In the Gospel of John, chapters fourteen through sixteen, the word “*Father*”

is found forty-five times! Throughout the life of Jesus Christ He was always speaking of the Father or *to* the Father.

“Father” – the word reveals a precious relationship. In His youth Jesus had said, *“I must be about my Father’s business.”* In comforting His disciples He said, *“In My Father’s house are many mansions.”*

On several occasions, speaking of His Father, He said, *“And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me.”* (John 5:37) Again, *“And this is the will of him who sent me....”* (John 6:39) and *“I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”* (John 8:28,29)

In these statements, and in many others like them, Jesus identified Himself as being sent by the Father on a mission. Now, that mission had been accomplished and He prayed, *“Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.”* This was a very natural utterance for in it He was expressing confidence, contentment and completion of what the Father had sent Him to do.

What an example for us! Is the word, “Father” often upon our lips as we go about our day-to-day routines? Do we often address the “Father” in our work lives? In our family life? In our trials and difficulties? In our times of decision as well as our times of devotion? How often do we say, as Jesus taught us to say, *“Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name”?* (Matt.6:9)

THE PALM JESUS TRUSTED.

“Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.”

The place that Jesus wanted to be in the moment of death was in His Father’s hands. This is the place of solace, safety and security. The ungodly fear the hands of God and rightly so, but those who know God as their Father do not fear His loving hands. David, in a time of great trouble said, *“I am in a great straight: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for His mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.”* (II Samuel 24:14)

For more than twelve hours, Christ had been in the hands of evil men as they arrested Him, tried Him, beat and crucified Him. He had spoken to His disciples earlier, forewarning them that He would be in the hands of such men. In Matthew 17 it is recorded that He had said, *“The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day He shall be raised again.”* (vs.22,23)

Later He said, *“The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”* (Matt. 26:45) Peter, in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost said, *“You have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified....”* (Acts 2:23) But now it is all over – man has done His worst and the God-man had accomplished His best! When Jesus came to the conclusion of His work on the cross in behalf of sinners, He committed Himself back into the hands of His Father. The psalm writer had prophetically written, *“You have not shut me up into the hand of the enemy.”* (Ps.31:8)

Voluntarily Jesus had delivered Himself into the hands of sinful men with evil designs. Never

again will He be at the mercy of the wicked; Never again will He be in the hands of men to do with as they please; never again will He suffer shame! For now, voluntarily, He delivers Himself into the hands of His Father

Three days later, the Father raised Him from the grave and exalted Him. Now He sits on the throne and one day, maybe soon, He will come back again and the situation will be reversed. Christ rejecters will be in His hands!

In Fort Knox, Kentucky, the United States has a great deposit of Gold. This gold is buried in the depths of the earth surrounded by buildings of steel and concrete and enclosed with steel fences and barbed-wire. Soldiers are on guard day and night. We say that that gold is safe.

I say to you that, it is not half as safe as the soul that is in the hands of God for salvation! Before Satan can get one soul out of God's hands he must storm the battlements of heaven, slay all the angels who serve God day and night, remove God from His throne, pry open the hand of God and then remove that soul from the hand of the Savior Who redeemed it by His death upon the cross!

The greatest place of safety is in the Father's hands. There is the place of eternal security and it was there that our Savior committed Himself. It is into that hand that He commits His people and there we safely abide forever! He said, *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."* (John 10:28,29)

*"More secure is no one ever
Than the loved ones of the Saviour,
Not the star on high abiding
Nor the bird in home nest hiding.*

*Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He shows,
And their sorrows all He knows.*

- Carolina V. Sandell-Berg

THE POWER JESUS DISPLAYED.

"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." The King James Version says, "He gave up the ghost." John records, "And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." (John 19:30)

The Lord Jesus died as no one else ever died. His life was not taken from Him but He willed it to end on His own terms. John 10 records His words as follows: *"My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."* (vs.17,18)

He was the perfect master of Himself not mastered by death. He called out with a loud voice of unexhausted strength for all to hear. He breathed His last voluntarily. He was not gasping for breath in an attempt to prolong His life. I am writing this the day after witnessing a dear lady dying in a hospital. She was gasping for breath and calling out, "Someone, help me!" But it was not death which approached Christ, but Christ approached death. He willingly breathed His last, not as conquered, but as the Conqueror. It was not a tragedy but a triumph! What love compelled Him, what resolve impelled Him, what power propelled Him!

My Father witnessed a wicked man dying. The man marshaled all his strength, then, rising up from his death-bed on his elbow and with a curse shouted, "No!" And fell back upon the bed, dead. But watch Jesus die! Watch His life and know how to live and watch His death and know how to die. He died with a "Yes!" at the end of His life. There was no panic, no resistance, no clinging to life, no faithlessness, no curse. He died victoriously, calmly dismissing His spirit into His Fathers hands. What a way to die!

CONCLUSION

Jesus' birth was unique, His life was unique and He died uniquely. He died as an act of His own volition. He death was not premature, He knew precisely when the moment was to be. You and I cannot, by an act of our wills yield up our spirits as did Jesus. We can say with Paul, "*I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*" (II Tim.4:6) We like Paul can be prepared to die but we do not have the power, as did Christ, to dismiss our spirits at will.

Are you prepared to die? You can die with the assurance that you are going to be with the Lord, for, as Paul wrote, when we die we are "*absent from the body, and present with the Lord.*" (II Cor.5:8) But that is true only for those who have made preparations beforehand by repenting of sin and receiving the Lord Jesus Who died for them upon the cross and arose from the dead. Then you too will be in the hand of the Lord!

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