

## Lesson No. 3

# The Seven Words on the Cross

### References:

### Notes For Servants:

- 1.
- 2.

### Objectives:

**General:**

**Specific:**

- 1.
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- 3.

### Instructions:

1. Church occasion.
- 2.
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### Bible Verse:

### Lesson:

## The Seven Words on the Cross

Seven pronouncements were made by Our Lord during His suffering on the cross. They were a lifeblood for us all.

**At every few instances did our Lord talk during His trial, or while being tortured and reviled. He forfeited His own right, and conceded His self-respect, "Love does not seek its own" (1 Corinthians 13:5).**

On the Cross, however, He spoke out for our sake, our benefit and our salvation. Each word had its own impact.

We recognise, in Christ's words on the Cross, the property of giving, and we are apt to wonder that while He was in a state of affliction and submission on the Cross, He was a giver.

**Our Lord gave:**

forgiveness to His persecutors,  
Paradise to the thief on His right side,  
His Blessed Mother a spiritual Son and provided her with care and attention,  
John the beloved the blessing of accommodating Mary in his house,  
the Father the price of the Divine Justice as ordained,  
humanity atonement and redemption,  
us the security that the act of salvation has been accomplished.

In short, He has given everybody his due while no one gave Him anything. He offered all that to humanity though humanity offered Him nothing in return, except gall and vinegar.

The first and last of Christ's seven pronouncements on the Cross were addressed to the Father, His First being: "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34), and the last, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" (Luke 23:46).

Between the first and the last, two other statements were also addressed the Father: "My God, why have you forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46), and "It is finished" (John 19:30). Although this Last pronouncement could be merely a general statement, it is still a message to the Father "I have finished the work which You have given Me to do" (John 17:4). Therefore, while at least half of Christ's words were addressed to the Father. They were also words of assurance to humanity.

We, also, note that He addressed the Father in two ways: "*Father*" and "*My God*.""

By the use of the word "Father", He contested those who challenged Him, saying: "If You are the Son of God, come down from the Cross" (Matthew 27:40), and offered evidence that He is the Son of God. He did not descend from the Cross, however, but made the Cross ascend to Heaven!

With the word "Father" He established His divinity, while with the word "God" He established His humanity. Through both words, He declared His being the incarnated God, Who "Was manifested in the flesh". (1 Timothy 3:16). With the use of the word "*Father*", He refuted the fourth century heresy of Arius, who denied Christ's divine nature, and with the term "My God", He refuted the fifth century heresy of Eutyches, who denied Christ's human nature. In the former He was speaking as the Son of God, and in the latter, as the Son of Man, or the representative of humanity.

**On the Cross, He did not only address the Father, but He also addressed humanity, that is, He addressed the saints, exemplified by the holy Virgin and John the Apostle, and the penitent sinners represented by the thief on His right.**

**His were words of blessedness and grace.**

It was a moment of salvation, worthy of all bliss. Thus, He spoke the words of forgiveness, redemption and everlasting life. He spoke the words of endowment and grace. On the Cross, He did not condemn anybody, He did not punish a single person, in spite of all His afflictions. He did not come to destroy, but to save the world.

**Christ's words on the Cross follow a certain order, the wisdom of which cannot be mistaken; others first, and Himself, second.** His being is for the benefit of others. He started by asking forgiveness for humanity, for while on the Cross, His holy blood started having its impact as an instrument of redemption, and with the advent of redemption came the second statement proclaiming the opening of Paradise. For as the price of redemption was settled by blood, accessibility to Paradise must take effect.

We also notice that the Lord Jesus Christ mentioned His enemies before He mentioned His friends. His first words referred to His persecutors, then the penitent thief, and finally to the Virgin Mary and Saint John.

When He spoke with God the Father, He first addressed Him as the Father, then as God; firstly, as "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18), and then, as the Son of Man born since the fullness of time.

**His first three words pertained to the act of forgiveness and providence, while His last four words came as a declaration that the act of redemption had been fulfilled.**

His words, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" denote that the Father has forsaken Him in order for Him to pay the price of redemption, as well as to point to His emotional agony in sustaining God's wrath for the transgressions of man.

His words, "*I thirst*" (John 19:28) point to the physical torment that He sustained for humanity's sake. Both pronouncements mean that He was paying the price. The words, "*It is finished*" are an implicit assurance to man that the price has been paid. The clause saying, "*Into Your hands I commend My spirit*" signifies that death is the wages of sin, and through death, redemption was accomplished. Thus, the last four phrases were an assurance to humanity concerning redemption.

**There is also a cry of joy and triumph in the last two phrases.**

As God has declared His agony by which redemption was accomplished, He announced His joy for the accomplishment of such redemption.

The phrase, "It is finished" signifies that everything conducive to final redemption has been fulfilled. God found joy in the accomplishment of the act He planned, and did not allow anything to hinder it. This also applies to His pronouncement, "Into your hands I commend My Spirit". With these two

last statements, He declared the defeat of the devil. The battle was over. Through death, God had put an end to the power of death, and there came the cry of triumph and joy.

The foregoing statements amply teach us that the Lord Jesus Christ, while on the Cross, was working for us. Not only was He achieving our redemption, but He was continuing His role as a benefactor and teacher. He kept on making important revelations concerning salvation.

In His first words, He demonstrated practically how to tolerate, forgive and love our enemies.

In His Third Statement, He taught s about true love and care, and how to execute truly and practically the fifth commandment by honouring His mother.

In His last words, "Into Your hands I commend My spirit", He revealed to us that the soul is immortal, and that the righteous spirit ascends to God after death.

To Him be the power, the glory and the honour forever; amen.

**Conclusion:**

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- 3.