

The Words of a Dying Man

INTRODUCTION

- A. In Shakespeare's *Richard I*, the dying Duke of Lancaster tells the Duke of York: "O, but they say the tongues of dying men enforce attention like a deep harmony: Where words are scarce they are seldom spent in vain, for they breathe their words in pain"
- B. Indeed, you can learn much about a man by what he says in his last hours--where will his heart be?
 - 1. Will he speak words of comfort and love to his family?
 - 2. Will he plead with God for mercy after a life of sin?
- C. This morning, we want to examine Jesus' last words, the words he uttered from the cross.
 - 1. We have seven recorded statements the Lord made on the cross.
 - 2. Some have attempted to put these words in chronological order, yet that task is difficult at best.
 - 3. We will study these words as they occur in Scripture.

JESUS WAS A FORSAKEN DYING MAN

- A. Mt. 27:46.
 - 1. These words come from Psalm 22.
 - a. Psalm 22 accurately portrays the sufferings Jesus would endure on the cross.
 - b. In fact, many scholars believe that because he quoted from this psalm, Jesus may have meditated on this psalm during the crucifixion.
 - 2. This shows that the Father abandoned the Son.
 - a. Granted, it is a mystery how the Father forsook the Son, because the Father and Son are one (Jn. 10:30).
 - b. Ps. 22:3 tells us why the Father abandoned the Son--"You are holy."
 - c. God is absolutely holy, and the Son bore the sins of mankind.
 - 1) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - 2) "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3 : 13).
- B. Our sins are so horrible that the Father turned his back on his Son.
 - 1. What sins have you committed which put Jesus on the cross?
 - 2. What have you done that caused the Father to forsake the Son?

JESUS A MEDIATING DYING MAN

- A. "Jesus said, 'Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do'" (Lk. 23:34).
- B. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would pray for transgressors (Is. 53:12).
- C. Those who crucified Jesus did not know what they were doing.
 - 1. "Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8).
 - 2. Jesus' prayer shows that even though someone may sin ignorantly, he still sins.
 - a. No one in this age can stand before God and claim ignorance.
 - b. Although God once overlooked ignorance, he now commands "all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).
 - 3. Jesus' prayer shows that anyone can be saved.
 - a. God forgave those who crucified his Son.
 - b. Peter accused those at Pentecost of killing the Messiah (Acts 2:36).
 - 1) The crowd cried in desperation, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).
 - 2) Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

- c. If those who crucified Jesus can be forgiven, so can we.
- C. This puts Jesus in the role of a mediator.
 - 1. The NT teaches that Jesus is a mediator;
 - a. “There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5).
 - b. “He always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).
 - 2. Jesus stands before God’s throne and make intercession for sinners.

JESUS WAS A SAVING DYING MAN

- A. To the penitent criminal, Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Lk 23:43).
- B. “Paradise” is a word of Persian origin.
 - 1. The Persians used the word to describe a beautiful garden.
 - a. In the OT, the term describes the Garden of Eden.
 - b. The term then came to be used of the place where the righteous await judgment.
 - c. This is the same place described as Abraham’s bosom (Lk. 16:19-31).
 - 1) Abraham told the rich man that Lazarus was comforted (Lk. 16:25).
 - 2) The description of the place of torment shows just what a paradise this is.
 - 2. The tree of life is in the midst of the Paradise of God (Rev. 2:7).
- C. This tells us that Jesus was thinking of others in his dying moments. Although Jesus was dying, he still had time to save this criminal.
- D. Jesus can save us because of what he did on the cross.
 - 1. We were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
 - 2. The blood of Christ will cleanse our consciences to serve the living God (Heb. 9:14).
 - 3. Jesus has washed us from our sins in His blood (Rev. 1:5).

JESUS WAS A CRYING DYING MAN

- A. Lk. 23:46.
- B. This quotation is a prophecy from Psalm 31:5.
- C. This cry shows Jesus’ trust and confidence in the Father.
 - 1. The spirit returns to God “who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7).
 - 2. Jesus knew that he did not need to worry about his soul--God would take care of him.
 - 3. As we prepare to die, we can die in the same confidence Jesus had.

JESUS WAS AN HONORING DYING MAN

- A. Jn. 19:25-27.
 - 1. Mary, Jesus’ mother, stands near the cross with some other women, v. 25.
 - 2. When Jesus saw the disciple whom he loved [John] standing near-by, he said, “Woman, behold your son!”
 - 3. Jesus looked at John and said, “Behold your mother!,” v. 27.
 - 4. From that time John cared for Mary, v. 27.
- B. By the time of Jesus’ crucifixion, Joseph is undoubtedly dead.
 - 1. Jesus more than likely became a carpenter and provided the family’s income after Joseph died.
 - 2. Since Jesus had provided for his mother, he wanted to be sure she was cared for after he ascended.
 - 3. Jesus could have chosen one of his brothers to care for Mary.
 - a. Yet, his brothers were unbelievers at this point.
 - b. More than likely, Jesus chose John so that his mother would be cared for by a believer.

4. Jesus was a grown man out on his own when he spoke this-We are to honor parents regardless of how old we are.
- C. Jesus teaches us to honor our parents.
1. In the Ten Commandments, God told the Israelites, “Honor your father and mother” (Ex. 20:12).
 2. “Honor your father and mother” (Eph. 6:2).
 3. In speaking of honoring widows, Paul said her children and grandchildren should serve her (1 Tim. 5:4).
- D. Are you honoring your parents?

JESUS WAS A THIRSTY DYING MAN

- A. Jesus said, “I thirst” so that the Scriptures could be fulfilled (Jn 19:28).
1. This was a prophecy from Ps. 69:21.
 2. Jesus wanted to be sure that he fulfilled every prophecy concerning the Messiah.
- B. The flogging Jesus endured often led to hypovolemic shock.
1. This shock occurs when someone loses much blood.
 2. One effect of this shock is a great thirst, for the body craves fluid to replace the missing blood.
 3. This shows us that Jesus, not only fulfilled a Messianic prophecy, but that he also suffered a great deal .
 4. Jesus suffered this much because of our sins.

JESUS WAS A FINISHED DYING MAN

- A. Jesus said, “It is finished,” and gave up his spirit (Jn. 19:30).
- B. This is a cry of triumph rather than defeat.
1. Jesus has accomplished all he came to accomplish.
 2. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill” (Mt. 5:17).
 3. Jesus was now finished.
 - a. He had completed his role as Savior.
 - b. Jesus could now die in triumph.

CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus died because of our sins.
- B. “Those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:7).
1. Just as Jesus died for our sins, we are to die to ourselves and live for him.
 2. Have you died to yourself?