

Words from the Cross



The Purpose of This Guide

The primary purpose of all Scripture is to exalt the name of Jesus. Therefore, the Bible is all about Jesus. The Old Testament points to him, the Gospels tell us about him and the all the rest of the New Testament points back to him. He is the glorious focal point of all scripture and of all creation, “For by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things and in him all things hold together.” (Col 1:16-17)

If all of scripture and history point to Jesus, then the climax of all scripture and history occurs on Good Friday. It is here, some two thousand years ago, the sinless Son of God suffered and was crucified for the redemption of sinners. Jesus spends six hours nailed to a Roman execution stake, between two thieves, and in the sight of all Jerusalem. Yet even in the moments of our Lord’s greatest sufferings, we find Him speaking the words of life.

The gospel writers record seven sayings of Christ from the cross. These words are spoken to his Father, his mother, his friend, his executioners and the thief beside him on the cross. In each statement we find a fresh perspective on both his identity as the Son of God and his purpose as the suffering servant. We will use this weeklong devotional guide to help prepare our hearts for the day that we celebrate His resurrection from the dead.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is written as both a personal devotional guide. The sessions are written to coincide with each day of the passion week, beginning with Palm Sunday and concluding on the Saturday before Easter. Each day will take a specific saying of Christ, from the cross, and expound on its meaning and apply its truth.

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|----------------|-------------------------|
| • Day 1 (3/20) | The Word of Forgiveness |
| • Day 2 (3/21) | The Word of Salvation |
| • Day 3 (3/22) | The Word of Affection |
| • Day 4 (3/23) | The Word of Anguish |
| • Day 5 (3/24) | The Word of Suffering |
| • Day 6 (3/25) | The Word of Triumph |
| • Day 7 (3/26) | The Word of Completion |

Each day will have a personal devotional written primarily for adults and older students. Included at the end of each day are ‘Questions for Reflection’ and a guided prayer. The hope is that this devotional guide will shape your personal quiet time this week to reflect on the work of Christ on the cross and prepare for the celebration of his resurrection.

Thank you for choosing to walk through this study. Our sincere hope is that through the words of our Savior from the cross, you would behold the majesty, beauty, and glory of Jesus this Easter.

In Christ,

The Pastors of Lake Murray Baptist Church



Forgiveness

And Jesus said “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34

“Before we can begin to see the cross as something done for us, we have to see it as something done by us.”

- John Stott

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”

- C.S. Lewis

- “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

- Colossians 1:14

The deed had been done. The blood thirsty crowd, whipped into a frenzy by the scribes and Pharisees, had demanded Jesus be crucified. After minimal resistance from Pilate, Jesus is beaten, flogged, and nailed to a Roman execution stake. Luke records that during these agonizing hours on the cross were made to be a public spectacle as a crowd gathered to witness Jesus’s final moments. Members of the Sanhedrin passed by, deriding and mocking him. Roman soldiers cast lots for his belongings at the base of the cross. Jesus had been falsely accused, humiliated, and now punished for crimes he had not committed. Yet the first words of Jesus from the cross are not condemnation against his oppressors, nor indignation at his circumstances. The first words of Jesus from the cross are a prayer, asking the Father to forgive those who had orchestrated his crucifixion. In doing this, Jesus embodies his teaching of love for one’s enemies (Luke 6:35) and also fulfills the prophecy spoken about the Messiah in

Questions For Reflection:

1. Read Philippians 2:3-11.
What does this passage and the first words of Christ on the cross teach us about the humility of Jesus?
2. How does the example of Jesus encourage us to walk in love for our enemies?
3. Is there anyone in your life that you need to forgive?
What is holding you back from forgiving them? What steps might you need to take to reconcile this relationship?

Prayer

Father, your mercy and steadfast love is too wonderful for me to fully express. Thank you for Jesus who has done what is necessary to secure my forgiveness. Help me today to forgive others as one who has been forgiven all in Christ. In Jesus name. Amen.

Isaiah, that he would “pour out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.” (Isa 53:12)

On the cross, Jesus not only prays for the forgiveness of his enemies, but provides the means by which his enemies might be forgiven! If God is to forgive sinners, it can only be through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Hebrews tells us “without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness for sin” (Heb 9:22) and that in order for a sacrifice to be acceptable before God it must be holy, blameless, and without blemish. Therefore, only Christ can be a sufficient sacrifice for sin. “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21). At the cross, God’s love and justice meet in a violent spectacle of glorious grace, where the sinless lamb of God takes the sins of God’s wayward people upon himself. In doing so he provides the way of forgiveness for sinners.

We must realize that when Jesus prays for the forgiveness of his enemies on the cross, he is not simply praying for the Pharisees or the Romans, but for sinners. Sinners like me and you. The cross is only good news to us if we see the implications the cross has for us. When we were enemies of God in our sin, Christ prayed that God would forgive us, then died to provide the means by which God could. This truth ought to fill us with immeasurable gratitude. “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person - though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:6-8)



Salvation

And he said “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Luke 23:42-43

“Christ took the hell he didn’t deserve so we could have the heaven we don’t deserve.”

- Randy Alcorn

- “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among the sons of disobedience- among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God...”

-Ephesians 2:1-4

The story of the thief, on the cross, is one of the more spectacular displays of the grace and forgiveness of our Lord. Charles Spurgeon has stated, “The story of the salvation of the dying thief is a standing instance of the power of Christ to save, and of his abundant willingness to receive all that come to him, in whatever plight they may be.” In fact there are many amazing conversions in the New Testament. The conversion of Paul, the salvation of Zacchaeus, along with every other miraculous encounter that Jesus has is an amazing testimony to his grace. The conversion of the thief on the cross is strikingly similar to the experience of us all.

First, we can identify ourselves with the thief. Here hangs a man that is condemned to death because of his sins. In Matthew 27:44 we are told that the “robbers who were crucified with him also

Questions For Reflection:

1. How is your experience like the experience of the thief on the cross?
2. Like the thief on the cross, do you recognize your hopelessness and helplessness apart from the saving work of Jesus?
3. The thief on the cross shows us that it is never too late to submit to Jesus as Lord. Have you repented of sin and trusted in Jesus by faith?

Prayer

Father, you are my only hope for salvation. My sins are too numerous to count, yet your grace is sufficient to forgive me. Thank you for sending Jesus to bear the weight of my sin. Help me today to boast only in Christ and him crucified. In Jesus name I ask these things, Amen.

reviled him in the same way.” The Bible teaches that our own sins carry a death penalty. (Romans 6:23) While we are in our sins we are blinded to the truth of salvation found in Christ alone.

Second, we must also see ourselves helpless to do anything about our sinful condition. With the thief hanging on the cross there was nothing left for him to do to try to save himself. His death was sure and his power was gone. His efforts useless. He was hopeless. So it is for us when we are lost in our sins. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves.

Third, at some point we can rest assured that the Spirit of God began to work on the thief. The one that he once reviled he began to see as his only hope. The one he once mocked is now the one that he calls out to for help. In this shift for the believing thief we see both repentance and faith. As the other robber continued to mock Jesus the believing robber spoke up. We see his repentance in the fact that he recognized himself as a deserving sinner. He said, “we are receiving the due reward for our deeds.” He claimed that their sentence was just and they should be fearing God for judgement. At the same time, we see his faith. Looking at Jesus hanging on the cross beside him he states that “this man has done nothing wrong.” (Luke 23:41) Jesus was not hanging there for sins that he had committed. He was hanging there for the thief and all who are like him, sinners condemned to death.

Finally, we must recognize that Jesus is our only hope. The thief saw him as a king entering in to his kingdom, and cried out to the Lord for mercy. “Remember me” is a plea, not a demand, because he recognizes that he is in no position to make a demand. We too must cry out for mercy. If you will, you will be saved!



Affection

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother “Woman behold your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!”

“Even while he was performing the great work of redemption, Jesus was faithful to His responsibilities as a son.”

- Warren Wiersbe

“Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise) that it may go well with you.”

- Ephesians 6:1-2

- “And Mary said ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed.’”

- Luke 1:46-48

When Jesus was only a small child, his mother and earthly father took him to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as was the custom. In the temple was a devout man, named Simeon, who had been told by God he would not die before seeing the promised Messiah. Upon seeing the child Jesus and Simeon said to his mother Mary, “This child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed, (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that the thoughts from many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:34-35). Fast forward 33 years later and we see the prophecy of Simeon coming to pass. The nation of Israel watches as Jesus, the long awaited Messiah, is crucified by those he came to save. The hardness of their hearts revealed in their unequivocal rejection of their Savior. In the midst of this, standing at the base of the cross, is Mary the mother of Jesus. Surely the words of Simeon must have resonated in her mind as she watched her son crucified. Few can know the anguish of a

Questions For Reflection:

1. How does Jesus respond to Mary as she suffers? What does this teach us about Jesus's response to our own suffering?
2. Have you been running from Christ in any areas of your life? How does Jesus's response to John encourage you to return to him?
3. Read John 17:1-26. Where do you see Jesus's affection for his own reflected in this passage?

Prayer

Father, you are the good shepherd of the sheep. Your sheep know your voice and you care for them. Thank you that you speak affection and commission over those whom you have saved. Help me today to be confident in your love for me through Christ. In Jesus name, Amen.

parent forced to watch their child suffer. Even in the midst of Mary's despair, Jesus speaks tenderly to her.

John also records that standing nearby the cross is the disciple whom Jesus loved. We know this disciple to be John, as this was his chosen moniker for himself. The previous night Jesus had been deserted by all of his disciples, including John. Yet we see here John's cowardice and desertion to be only temporary, as in the last moments of Christ, he stands near his Lord and friend.

It is these two individuals, whom Jesus loved dearly, that he speaks to from the cross. A suffering mother and a repentant friend.

Jesus speaks to his mother first saying, "Woman, behold, your son" (John 19:26). In our culture, Jesus's referring to his mother as "woman" can be seen as degrading or impersonal, however in Jesus's context the term "woman" was one of endearment. Jesus speaks tenderly to his mother in her despair and tells her to look to John, for he is to be her son. Most scholars believe that Joseph (Jesus's earthly father) may have passed away early in Jesus's life so it would've been the responsibility of the oldest son to care for his widowed mother. In telling Mary to behold her son Jesus is providing a means for her care after his death and fulfilling his responsibility, as a loving son, to his mother.

Jesus then looks to John and says, "Behold, your mother!" (John 19:27). Jesus response to John is not one of rebuke or of admonishment, but of commission. The disciple whom he loves returns to him and Jesus gives him the unmistakable privilege of looking after his mother. It is here that those of us who have wandered from our Savior can find rest. No matter how far we have run from our Savior, Jesus always awaits our return to him with grace and a commissioning. Even under the weight of the cross, Jesus cared for his own.



Anguish

And in the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” Mark 15:34

“Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God.”

- Charles Spurgeon

“Jesus was forsaken by God so that we would never have to be”

- Tim Keller

- “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

- Romans 8:32

I cannot imagine many words more tragic than the word “forsaken.” The night before his crucifixion, all of his disciples had fled from him. He had been forsaken by his closest friends. Far worse than the moment he is forsaken by his friends however, is this moment, when Jesus is forsaken by his father.

This was not a cry of anger or unbelief. It was not a simple cry of loneliness. It was a real cry of anguish. In hearing this cry of the Lord on the cross we can begin to understand Jesus’ plea in the garden. He was “greatly distressed and troubled”, sweating drops of blood, as he prays, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” For all of eternity the Father, Son and the Spirit had been united in perfect harmony and the great fear of Christ was not dying. It was not the suffering. It was for that moment, that period of time on

Questions For Reflection:

1. What do we learn about the crucifixion from Psalm 22?
Can you name another OT passage that teaches us about the crucifixion?
2. Have you ever felt forsaken before? What was that experience like? Who or what helped you overcome that feeling?
3. God takes the anguish of the cross and turns it into the glory of the resurrection. How should this give us hope in dealing with our own troubles?

Prayer

Father, your plan is perfect. Your ways are always good and merciful. Help me to recognize that in Christ, I will never be forsaken. Let my gratitude spill over into praise of your glorious name today. In Jesus name, Amen.

the cross when the sins of the world were placed upon Jesus's back, when the perfect and eternal relationship between the Father and the Son would be rent in two. Jesus was forsaken by God and it was the greatest anguish that he could ever know. He was forsaken by God, his Father.

But why? I think that the answer is found in the Old Testament. "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" is the first line of Psalm 22. David is crying out to God pleading with him to hear his cry but there seems to be no answer, "I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest." It is in this Psalm that we find passages that predict things about the cross like, the mocking of the crowd, the fact that no bones will be broken, and that Jesus's garments will be divided by the casting of lots. When you read the Psalm you feel the pain of the author in the fact that that he has been forsaken by the one that loves him most. From his abandonment something amazing will result. The Psalmist says, "I will praise you." Not only will he praise but,

"All the ends of the earth shall remember

and turn to the Lord,

and all the families of the nations

shall worship before you." (Psalm 22:27)

Jesus's cry of anguish on the cross draws our eyes, ears, and hearts back to Psalm 22. It is Psalm 22 which reminds us that because Jesus was forsaken and afflicted by God, we will never have to be. The cry of anguish from our Savior ought to result in a cry of praise from those he came to save. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:21).



Suffering

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture) "I thirst." John 19:28

"The agonies of God's Son were incomparable. No one ever suffered like this man. Through all eternity, we will contemplate the killing of the Son of God and sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.'"

- John Piper

"The suffering that [Christ] was subject to was dreadful and amazing and yet, how wonderful was his love that lasted and upheld still!"

- Jonathan Edwards

- "Reproaches have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none. They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink."

- Psalm 69:20-21

"I thirst." Jesus's sufferings had reached their apex. After six hours of hanging on the cross, in the heat of the Palestinian desert, gasping and fighting for each breath, Jesus asks for a drink. John records that all that was offered him was a sponge soaked in sour wine. This was a cheap wine, almost like vinegar, and was given to the Roman soldiers to quench their thirst while overseeing the execution (not to be confused with the "wine mixed with Myrrh" a type of sedative used to dull pain referenced in Mark 15). Jesus was not asking for an agent to deaden the pain of his sufferings, but instead was making a much broader statement concerning his humanity and the fulfillment of OT prophecy. Jesus speaking the words "I thirst" from the cross, enables us to recognize the humanity of Jesus, identify with him in our sufferings, and to see how Jesus is the true fulfillment of all scripture.

Questions For Reflection:

1. Often we find ourselves emphasizing the deity of Jesus at the expense of his humanity. In what ways can we be encouraged by the humanity of Jesus?
2. Paul sees his present sufferings as representations of what Christ has suffered on our behalf. How can having this mindset change our perspective on suffering?
3. Read Isaiah 53:1-12. Where can you identify Jesus as the suffering servant in this passage?

Prayer

Father, you are the God who saves your people from their desperate condition. Thank you for sending Jesus to suffer on my behalf. Help me today to see my own sufferings as momentary afflictions in the light of the eternal glory you have promised me in Christ. In Jesus name, Amen.

The humanity of Jesus is on full display in his thirsting from the cross. Too often, Christians tend to elevate the deity of Christ at the expense of his humanity. Jesus was both one hundred percent God and one hundred percent man. His deity was best exemplified in his power and teachings, while his humanity was often best exemplified in his emotions and sufferings. Jesus “wept” (John 11:35), “slept” (Mark 4:38), and “rejoiced” (Luke 10:21). He was “weary” (John 4:6), “angry” (Mark 3:5), “hungry” (Matt 4:2), and in this instance “thirsty”. The humanity of Jesus was on full display at his crucifixion.

The humanity of Christ allows us to identify with him in our sufferings. Indeed, Paul will phrase it this way, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do share on behalf of his body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.” (Col 1:24) Paul is not saying that Jesus’s sufferings were somehow insufficient, but instead, Paul sees his own present suffering as a visible representation to others of what Christ suffered for those whom he loves. Jesus tells his disciples that in this life they “will have tribulation, but take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Jesus suffers on our behalf, not so that we will have a life of ease, but so that when we suffer, we can be confidently assured that he has gone before us.

Finally, Jesus’ thirst from the cross is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy regarding the Messiah. As we read earlier in the week, Psalm 22 offers us a glimpse of what Christ would suffer on the cross. Particularly poignant, “I am poured out like water... my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death” (Ps 22:14,16). Also, Psalm 69 speaks specifically to this moment on the cross when David writes of his enemies, “They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.” (Ps 69:21). Jesus knows his sufferings are occurring to fulfill the scriptures and he uses his thirst to tune our hearts to his true identity as the suffering servant (Isa 53:1-12).



Triumph

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19:30

“When Christ cried out on Calvary ‘It is finished!’ He meant what he said. All that men must do now is accept the work of Jesus Christ.”

- D.L. Moody

“There is no death of sin without the death of Christ.”

- John Owen

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us - for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree-’”

- Galatians 3:13

The Bible is very clear on why Jesus had to come to earth. Just a cursory glance of the Scriptures will give us a significant list of reasons for Jesus’s incarnation.

He came to confirm the Old Testament promises. Romans 15:8

He came to seek and save the lost. Luke 19:10

He came to serve and to give his life for a ransom. Mark 10:45

He came to grant abundant life. John 10:10

He came to make the Father known and to do his will. John 6:38

He came to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8

He came to be King. John 18:37

Questions For Reflection:

1. The Bible is full of the promises of God. What are some of the promises of God that you are most thankful for?
2. Peter doesn't realize that his good intentions serve only to distract Jesus from his primary purpose. What good things in our lives can become distractions to the mission of God has given us?
3. How does the cry of Jesus "It is finished" help us to walk in victory today?

Prayer

Father, you have provided your son as the means of turning away your wrath against sinners. Thank you that Jesus fully obeyed your will and obediently went to the cross. Help me today to walk in the newness of life given me by the work of Jesus. In His name, Amen.

He came to take away sin. 1 John 3:5

He came to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15

While this list is incredible, it is in no way exhaustive. Jesus came into the world to accomplish the will of the Father (John 6:38) and to save his people from their sin. (Matthew 1:21) Nothing could ever take his mind away from the task.

One story from the Gospels illustrates this point for us. Toward the end of Jesus's earthly ministry, he began to speak "plainly" to his disciples about the trajectory of his ministry, such as the fact that he "must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again." (Mark 8:31) Peter, believing that he must protect Jesus, pulled Jesus to the side and "began to rebuke him." Peter did not want Jesus talking about his death, or even planning on dying. But Jesus would have nothing of it. He "rebuked" Peter before all of the disciples in with a powerful statement. He said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan!" What was the reason for such a powerful rebuke?

Jesus rebuked Peter because Peter was seeking to take Jesus's mind off the will of God for him. God sent his son to die on the cross and put an end to sin, death, and Satan. Anything that would take Jesus away from this task is not the will of God, but the desire of the devil. Jesus explained further to Peter, "For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." (Mark 8:33)

This single and intense focus of Christ Jesus to accomplish the will of the Father and save his people from their sin brings us to his last few breaths before he willingly gives up his life. Every task was completed. Every promise was fulfilled. Satan was defeated. Sin was crushed. Redemption accomplished. Jesus cries out in triumph, "It is finished!"



Completion

Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last. Luke 23:46

“Christ, our High-priest, is ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father, where, without ceasing, he makes intercession for us.”

- Martin Luther

“Go forth, O conquering God, and show me the cross, mighty to subdue, comfort and save.”

- Puritan Prayer

- “I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distresses of my soul, and yet you have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy, you have set my feet in a broad place.”

- Psalm 31:7-8

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” Luke records these words as the last of Jesus before he gave up his life on the cross. Jesus, who would have now been nearly exhausted from his sufferings on the cross, summons the last of his physical strength to call out “with a loud voice” and commit his spirit into the loving hands of his Father. Although this may seem as though it were a cry of defeat and or despair from our Savior in his final moments, a closer inspection of the final words of Christ show us that nothing could be further from the truth.

In Psalm 31, David describes what has befallen him because of his enemies. He writes that he is “afflicted” (v.7), “distressed” (v.7), “wasted from grief” (v.8), “failing in his strength” (v.10), he has become a “reproach to his neighbors” (v.11) “a broken vessel” (v.12) and he has been “forgotten like one who is dead” (v.12). Yet in all of his suffering, David puts his faith in the Lord to deliver him from

Questions For Reflection:

1. Read John 10:18. Why is it important to understand that Jesus gave up his life willingly for those who he loves?
2. What was important about Jesus using the name "Father" to address God? Why is this important for us?
3. In what ways was the cross a victory for Jesus and for us? Praise God for what he has accomplished on our behalf!

Prayer

Father, you have done all the work necessary to bring sinners to salvation. You have won the victory over sin, death, and the devil through the blood of Christ shed on the cross. Help me to walk in his victory today. Help me to be assured of my salvation in Christ. Allow me to rest in the completed work of Jesus. In His name I ask these things, Amen.

the hands of the wicked. In verse 5, David writes, "Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God" (Ps 31:5). The phrase, "into your hands I commit my spirit" became part of the traditional evening prayer offered up to the Lord by pious Jews before they went to sleep each night. The Jews standing near the cross would have recognized the cry of Jesus as a part of their prayers and as a quotation from Psalm 31.

The question becomes, why would Jesus choose to cry out this "goodnight prayer" as his final words before his death? The answer lies in the first word he speaks. Father. No one had ever prayed to God as "Father" before Jesus. Yet, Jesus speaking of God as his Father would bookend his words from the cross. The first words of Jesus on the cross were a plea to his Father to forgive those who were crucifying him (Luke 23:34) and here his final words are for his Father to receive his spirit. By referring to God as 'Father', Jesus is showing us both his identity as the Son of God and his accomplishment on our behalf. Through Jesus's death on the cross, you and I can now know God as Father. "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:11-12).

This final cry of Jesus is not one of despair or of defeat but of victory. Jesus, knowing that he has now fulfilled all that the Father has sent him to accomplish, lifts up his voice and commits his spirit back into the Father's care. Jesus, God incarnate, has now done all that is necessary for sinners to be adopted into the family of God and having "offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb 10:12).

Appendix: Helpful Resources

This guide would not have been possible without the help of some tremendous resources on Christ and the cross. We are especially indebted to A.W. Pink for his work “The Seven Sayings of the Savior on the Cross”. Pink’s insight, exposition, and application of the text is a gift to the church and all those who seek to understand the final words of Jesus. Below you will find several other resources and authors whose writings have shaped this project:

<u>Title:</u>	<u>Author:</u>	<u>Publisher:</u>
Seven Sayings of the Savior on the Cross	Arthur W. Pink	Baker Books
50 Reasons Jesus Came to Die	John Piper	Crossway
The Truth of the Cross	R.C. Sproul	Reformation Trust
The Cross of Christ	John Stott	IVP Books
Scandalous	D.A. Carson	Crossway
The Final Days of Jesus	Andreas J. Kostenberger	Crossway
In My Place Condemned He Stood	Mark Dever & J.I. Packer	Crossway
The Suffering Savior	F.W. Krummacher	Banner of Truth
From Heaven He Came and Sought Her	David & Jonathan Gibson	Crossway
King’s Cross	Timothy Keller	Dutton