

## Last Words

There's something about a person's last words that inspire our curiosity or seem especially important

While Jesus hung on the cross in His last hours He made several short statements that are commonly known by many preachers as Jesus', "Seven Last Words"

From the cross, Jesus voiced *three prayers, a promise, a piece of family business, a complaint, and a declaration*

- Jesus is not only the Son of God but also the greatest teacher of all time
- He continued teaching to His last breath
- These Last Words still have a great deal to say to you and I

## A Word of Forgiveness

**Luke 23:34 (NLT)**

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."\* And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.\*

## A Word of Salvation

**Luke 23:42, 43 (NLT)**

<sup>42</sup> Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

## A Word of Relationship

John 19:26–27 (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” <sup>27</sup> Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

## A Word of Abandonment

Matthew 27:46 (NLT)

<sup>46</sup> At about three o’clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli,\* lema sabachthani?*” which means “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

## A Word of Distress

John 19:28 (NLT)

*The Death of Jesus*

<sup>28</sup> Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, “I am thirsty.”\*

- God will bypass what you think you need to give you what you really need
- Don’t take the first drink

## A Word of Triumph

John 19:30 (NKJV)

<sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!”

## A Word of Reunion

### Luke 23:46 (NKJV)

<sup>46</sup> 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.

- Usually people who were crucified died silently
- Having become exhausted
- Losing the ability to raise themselves up to take a breath
- Much less speak

Jesus was not usual

- He spoke loudly and boldly
- He wanted everybody to know what was going on

Jesus knew where He came from and where He was going

### John 13:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God

He also was going to prepare a place for you and me

### John 14:2–3 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

After saying to those at the foot of the cross, “I am thirsty” and receiving a drink, he declared, “It is finished”

- Finally, Jesus cried out with a loud voice committing His Spirit to His Father

Jesus, a man who knew, loved, and personally fulfilled the Hebrew Scriptures – died with a verse on His lips

### Psalm 31:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

- Jesus’ life was not taken from Him
- He gave it up voluntarily
- His spirit wasn’t being ripped from His body, out of His control; He was intentionally turning it over to God

### John 10:17–18 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> 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. This command I have received from My Father.”

- He was no passive victim
- He was an active agent of His sacrificial death

We can see clearly that Jesus trusted His Father completely, despite the temporary sense of abandonment

- He knew His Father loved Him and would receive His spirit
- Jesus remained faithful to the very end

## Philippians 2:5–11 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Before coming to earth Jesus enjoyed the splendors of heaven in the company of the Father and the Holy Spirit
  - What was their union and delight in one another like?
- Our purest, closest relationships can only give us a hint
- He was equal with God, yet would never consider using that for His own advantage
- He made Himself nothing to take on the very nature of a servant – being made in human likeness
- Jesus did everything His Father asked of Him
  - He humbled Himself
  - Even by becoming obedient to death on a cross!

What an amazing reunion Jesus experienced when He went back to the Father

- He enabled the same destiny for us
- This same complete union with God awaits us at the end of this life

## Revelation 21:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

- Our ultimate destination isn't a place, it's a person
- And that person is already at work in us
- As we yield to His Spirit

Consider how we tend to think of eternal life

- Most people think it's something we hope to experience for the first time after death
- The truth is it's something we already have
- Eternal life is just another way of referring to our whole spiritual journey

## John 17:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

- Eternal life is not an endless *quantity* of life
- It's an endless *quality* of life
- It comes in *relationship* with God through Jesus
- Still, eternal life does have a future dimension to it

One way to think about the difference between how we live in the presence of God now and how we will live in the presence of God after death is by thinking of it as having our eyes fully opened

### 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

We now live by faith not by sight

### 2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> For we walk by faith, not by sight.

### John 20:29 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.”

One day we won’t need our faith to connect with Jesus. We’ll be in His presence, face to face – walking by sight not faith

## Opened Eyes – The Road to Emmaus

Jesus walking with Cleopas and one unnamed follower

- They are sad about the crucifixion of Jesus
- He starts talking to them from the scripture about the predictions of messiah in the old testament

### Luke 24:28–32 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. <sup>29</sup> But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them.

<sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

- Nothing abnormal about this
- They had walked for two hours and were hungry
- At the right psychological and theological moment, their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus
- Why didn’t they recognize Him on the road?
- It’s here, during the common, every day act of breaking bread
- What happened that caused the sudden revelation?

According to Jewish custom when Jesus blessed the bread and gave it to them He would have given it with palms up, exposing the nail scars in His hands

- Imagine the shock!
- The formerly dead Jesus, sitting there with them
- Presiding over dinner
- Then before they could ask one of a million questions they must have had – poof! – He was gone
- The moment they “saw” Him, they didn’t see Him anymore

What would be the implications of having been reunited with the risen Jesus?

- Where would the journey of faith lead them now?
- Perhaps the answer lies in the simple act of breaking bread
- This wasn’t a Passover meal, yet it would have been reminiscent of the last one they had together



### Luke 22:15–16 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> Then He said to them, “With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

- Jesus was looking ahead to something called “*The Marriage Supper of the Lamb*”

### Revelation 19:9 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

- It’s no mistake the Bible persistently uses marriage to represent the union of God with His followers

### Ephesians 5:25–27 (NLT)

<sup>25</sup> For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word.\* <sup>27</sup> He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.

- Our unity with Jesus is both pure and intimate
- The practice of communion gives us a hint of it

When we take the bread and the cup we are looking back on His death but also looking forward to the time when we will see Jesus as He is and live with Him forever

## Taken, Blessed, Broken, Given

When Jesus shared bread with the two travelers, He...

- *Took* Bread
- Gave Thanks – *Blessed* it
- *Broke* it
- Began to *Give* it to Them

He had taken the same four steps when He fed the multitudes of the hillside as well as the last supper

Not only is this a pattern in serving food but it is a pattern of how God works in our lives

Abraham:

God *took* Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans

- He *blessed* him with Isaac, the son he had prayed for
- He *broke* Abraham on Mount Moriah when he called him to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice
- Then he *gave* Abraham to be the father of many nations

Joseph:

God *took* Joseph out of the pit where his brothers had left him

- He *blessed* him in the service of Potiphar as the man in charge of the household
- He *broke* him by leaving him in prison for a period
- Then he *gave* him to be the prince of Egypt who would occupy a position where he could save the lives of his people

Moses:

God *took* Moses, as a baby, from his basket stuck in the river weeds

- (In fact, his name means “taken” or “drawn out of”)
- He *blessed* him by allowing him to be raised in the house of Pharaoh
- He *broke* Moses during the long years in the wilderness
- Yet he also *gave* him to be the founding leader of his nation

Jesus:

The Son of God was *taken* from the womb of a virgin named Mary

- He was *blessed* with the ability to teach the truth, perform miracles, and purify the religious system of the day with his grace
- He was *broken* on Mount Calvary for the sins of the world. And now he has been *given* as the Savior of the world

You and I are in one of these stages today

- In fact, you will find yourself going through these stages more than once
- Sometimes you’ll feel like you’re in several stages at the same time

Taking:

When you’re in the taking stage, it can be uncomfortable

- God is taking you out of your comfort zone
- Out of your job
- Out of a relationship
- Out of a place you’ve lived all your life

While you know what He is taking you from you may not know what He's taking you to

- What am I supposed to do next?
- The answer isn't clear
- All you need to know is that God is taking you somewhere and you have got to trust that He knows best

Blessing:

God doesn't "take" to deprive you of something

- He takes you so He can bless you
- When God is blessing, you it makes it all worth while

Breaking:

After the blessing comes the breaking

- Remember it was only after the breaking that the Emmaus followers recognized Jesus
  - Maybe your pride needs to be broken
  - Maybe your will needs to be broken
  - Maybe your stubbornness needs to be broken
  - Maybe your self-reliance needs to be broken
  - Maybe some of your dreams have to be broken

*"It is doubtful whether God can use a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply" – A.W. Tozer*

God uses broken people to do big things!

- He is going to give you to the world, using you in the lives of others
- God is a giver by nature, so if He's breaking you He's going to give you

In the Bible, God's hand represents His might

- By the work of His hand, He created the world
- By stretching out His hand He saves the righteous and punishes the wicked

When Jesus committed His spirit into the Father's hands, those hands are also reaching out to tenderly receive and hold us

Like the loaf of bread in Jesus' hands as He sat at supper you are never out of God's hands!

**John 10:29 (NKJV)**

<sup>29</sup> 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.

- We are safe in the Father's hands
- We will be safe in the Father's hands for all of eternity

There is no detail of our lives too mundane or meaningless to submit to His care

**Psalm 37:4–5 (NLT)**

<sup>4</sup> Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires. <sup>5</sup> Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you.

<sup>7</sup> Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.

<sup>23</sup> The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.