

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS

WHILE DYING ON THE CROSS

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INTRODUCTION:

- A. Let's suppose you knew you were dying. Around you was a crowd made up of some of your family, some of your friends, and some of your enemies. What would you say with your dying breaths?**
1. A person's dying words are very important – If a person knows they are dying they know they don't have a lot of words left to speak, so the few they say are very precious. They are likely not going to waste their time saying things that don't matter. Every statement is important!
 2. People's last words usually reflect their mindset at their death **(Give Examples)**. If a Christian had the opportunity to make some "last words" they should reflect his/her faith! **(Give Examples)**
- B. Tonight we are going to begin a study of some of the last words of Jesus... These are often called "The Seven Sayings Of Jesus On The Cross" – As we will see, these words are important and impactful**

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS:

A. The First Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Incredible Forgiveness:

1. Before we can truly fully appreciate the first words of Jesus on the cross, we need to look at the immense suffering He had already endured up to this point:
 - a. For the entirety of Jesus' ministry He had to deal with the hypocrisy and the undermining of the Jewish leaders... Their attacks culminated in His arrest, trial, & crucifixion
 - b. When on trial before Caiaphas the high priest people spit in Jesus' face and slapped Him
 - c. After His trial before Pilate, Jesus was scourged... An extremely inhumane beating
 - d. Then Jesus is taken by soldiers, stripped, garbed in a purple robe, had a crown of thorns placed on His head, mocked, and struck on the head with a reed, & stripped again
2. When you think about the deeply personal mistreatment Jesus faced, His first words are very incredible. He says, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" **(Luke 23:34)**
 - a. These are words of incredible love – It's a love for mankind so great that Jesus could speak words of forgiveness in spite of all that these people had done to Him. Most men would curse, but Jesus knew that what they needed was not a curse but a cure!
 - b. These are words of incredible mercy – He saw the ignorance of those crucifying Him. He saw how they were misguided. He saw they were blind to what was really going on. Paul said if they knew what they were doing, they would not have done it! **(1 Cor 2:8)**
 - c. These are words of incredible contrast → Men prayed in temples, synagogues, and gardens... they didn't pray on crosses. What did they do on crosses? They cursed, shouted, screamed, and cried. Yet Jesus prayed and He prayed words of forgiveness!
3. What exactly was Jesus pleading for to the Father? Immediate dismissal of the sin these men were committing against Him, or was it something else?
 - a. He forgave men their sins while on earth, so why would He need to say "Father forgive them" here? Later, on the day of Pentecost, Peter and the other apostles spoke to the Jewish people about their guilt for crucifying Jesus. Wasn't this sin forgiven?
 - b. Maybe Jesus was expressing His desire for their forgiveness and for their benefit... As they thought about His words on the cross they would be driven to love and follow Jesus

- c. It is likely that these words are words of pleading for the preservation of the people:
- 1) The word translated forgive here has several meanings, "To send away, to permit, to allow, to let go, to not hinder, to leave, to go away from one" – It can be used to refer to forgiveness of sins or debts, but in most cases it does not
 - 2) This term appears 15 times in the NT. Of those 15 only two others refer to forgiveness. The other 12 mean, "Let it be," "Let them come," or "Permit it"
 - 3) In this context of the cross it is also translated "leave Him alone" – Meaning, don't interfere with the suffering by giving Him the sponge (**Matt 27:48-49**)
 - 4) So what could this mean for Jesus' words? That He is pleading for the Father to be patient with people, to not just wipe them out in the wrath that He was no doubt feeling at the time, letting them continue with the crucifixion process
 - 5) A plead of mercy & grace which looks forward to the opportunity for forgiveness and seeks the withholding of the wrath people like Sodom & Gomorrah saw
4. Jesus' example is still standing before us today, some 2000 years later, as a supreme example of the forgiving spirit which we are to have toward one another (**Colossians 3:12-13**)

B. The Second Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Gracious Salvation:

1. As if the agony of the cross was not enough, Jesus had to endure the pain of having crowds of people mock Him and shoot at Him with verbal missiles (**Matt 27:38-43**)
 - a. The people passing by are taking all of the things Jesus said and throwing them back in His face as ridicule. If they only understood the nature of the mission of Jesus they would know that this was all part of fulfilling those roles and those works.
 - b. I think the toughest thing said to Jesus was the last – His dying on the cross and enduring all the suffering there had to have taken incredible trust in His Father. He was having to experience things He had never experienced before and suffer things He had never suffered. Certainly Jesus knew the Father couldn't "deliver" Him and save the world, but these words were meant to chip away at that trust He had in His Father.
 - c. What's amazing is that even the two thieves being crucified with Jesus also attacked Him verbally. You would think they would've been a little more compassionate than that!
2. Initially, the thief on the cross took part in the reviling of Jesus, but then his attitude changes and he pleads with the Lord for salvation (**Matthew 27:44; Luke 23:40-41**)
 - a. The two robbers who were with Jesus join in on the mocking – Both men are likely flinging the same accusations and blasphemies at Jesus as what all the others were saying.
 - b. His attitude toward Jesus & himself changes – We may not know for sure why, but perhaps it was the way Jesus suffered on the cross, maybe it was Jesus' forgiveness... He didn't act like a dying criminal... His behavior supported His innocence & His claims
 - c. The thief saw himself as a condemned sinner, he came to develop a fear of God, and he realized he was about to enter into eternity with no hope and no fellowship with God
 - d. So this hardened criminal humbles himself and pleads with the Lord for grace and mercy!
3. When Jesus saw the faith and penitent attitude of this thief, He spoke words of grace and salvation saying, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (**Luke 23:42-43**)
 - a. Many of us may have thought, "After all you have said about me? After all the grief you have added to my suffering by making fun of me? You really think I would save you!"
 - b. Also, this was not just a man guilty of a misdemeanor, he was a major criminal... A person who was a malefactor... One guilty of robbery, likely violent robbery, & likely murder

- c. Two great things about Jesus' promise here – He would be WITH Jesus and he would be with Jesus in PARADISE... These are words of hope and fellowship for a dying sinner!
- d. Paradise is from an ancient Persian word that referred to a private extravagant garden where the king walked with his closest friends. Jesus promises more than eternal life to this thief... An honored place of companionship in the garden courts of Heaven!
- 4. It's sad that some people have taken Jesus' words of salvation to the thief on the cross and used them to try to teach a different road to salvation than what is in the gospel of Christ!
 - a. Some will say, "Since the thief was saved by Jesus apart from baptism, then baptism must not be necessary for salvation." They say He was saved by just saying a little prayer
 - b. People fail to see that this man was saved before Jesus had actually died and before Jesus was raised from the dead. We can't use the thief as an example for what we must do to be saved because we are under a different covenant! **(Colossians 2:14)**
 - c. Another is the fact that Jesus was hanging there right beside Him. He spoke to Jesus and Jesus spoke back. Jesus also spoke other's sins forgiven. Jesus is not physically here to do this... We have His words to follow today! **(Mark 2:5-7; Heb 9:16-17)**
 - d. To use the thief as the example for you must do to be saved is follow an exception while ignoring the rule... Baptism is often plainly taught as necessary **(Jas 4:17; I Pet 3:21)**
- 5. Don't let the misapplication rob this event of its meaning: Jesus' words to the thief on the cross do show us the power of the grace & mercy available through Him! **(Colossians 2:11-13)**
 - a. Like this thief we are all condemned sinners outside of Christ. And like this thief we have to humble ourselves and see our hopeless position without fellowship with the Lord
 - b. Lost people and Christians need to develop the kind of fear of the Lord this man had
 - c. This thief reminds us of two more things: No matter how sinful we may see ourselves as, God's grace and forgiveness is available. No matter how long we've been spurning the opportunities to turn to the Lord, as long as we have breath we have a chance!
 - d. In Christ we have the same promise... Walking with the King in the paradise of Heaven!

C. The Third Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Tender Affection:

1. I believe that one thing we fail to appreciate about the work and difficulties which Jesus faced was the fact that He did have a physical family which He no doubt cared deeply about:
 - a. Jesus was the first born child born to Mary, but there were other children born to her. So Jesus had a mother, at least four brothers, and some sisters as well **(Matt 13:55-56)**
 - b. We can surely say with certainty that Jesus had a special place in His heart for His family and that He would've felt great loyalty to them... He was a physical son and brother
 - c. For Jesus, His physical family was often a source of heartache and disappointment as His brothers did not believe until after His resurrection and they appear to have acted antagonistically to Him and His mission at times **(John 7:1-5)**
 - d. It's one thing to face difficult times, it's another thing to face them with a family to care for. Jesus knew His mother and family would have been impacted by the things which He faced and Jesus was impacted by their support or lack thereof of Him.
2. As we fast-forward to the cross, we find the third statement of Jesus directed to Mary, His own mother in the flesh, and John, the disciple which Jesus loved **(John 19:26-27)**
 - a. From Jesus' birth on, Mary was soaking in the things which were said and done and "treasuring them in her heart." Now her heart is breaking as she has to helplessly watch her first born son be crucified. Can you imagine the look of pain in her eyes?

- b. Jesus saw it. As Jesus looks at his mother, he sees the sword skewering her soul. He can feel her agony and pain. He sees the look on her face as the soldiers roll the dice for his clothes. She flinches as one of them holds up the tunic she had lovingly made for her son. She saw the child she bathed and fed being stripped and flogged. When the soldier eventually shoved the spear into Jesus' side, it had already filleted her heart.
 - c. Standing by her side is John, the disciple of Jesus who is often simply known as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He too must have been terribly hurt & troubled by what He was witnessing. The One John loved, followed, & obeyed was dying on the cross
 - d. His words are full of compassion & care – "Behold your mother" and "behold your son." Most of the time we talk about this showing His concern for His mother, but this was also about John. They both were to fill the void left by His death & His ascension
 - e. Mary was watching in agony as Simeon's prophecy concerning not only the death of her son, but also the piercing of her own heart was being fulfilled (**Luke 2:34-35**)
3. These words may have been especially important for Mary. Joseph hasn't been mentioned since the trip to the temple when Jesus was twelve. If he is out of the picture due to death or some other reason, then it makes sense that Jesus wants to make extra certain that His mother would be loved and someone would take care of her.
 4. As we turn our attention to the Pharisees, we see an example of the lack of care and nurture which people ought to have for their parents (**Matthew 7:9-13**)
 5. Christians ought to follow the example of Christ in their honor and concern for their parents as well as anyone who faces days of need or loneliness (**I Tim 5:4-8; Eph 6:2**)

D. The Fourth Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Deep Internal Anguish

1. We often think of the cross in terms of the great physical pain Jesus suffered, but there was also the great pain of loneliness, rejection, and disappointment which came through His relationships
 - a. Jesus experienced the pain of betrayal from the kiss of Judas
 - b. Jesus experienced the pain of rejection from the denials of Peter
 - c. Jesus experienced the pain of loneliness from the fleeing of His own disciples
2. After three hours of hanging on the cross in an eerie darkness Jesus cries out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (**Matthew 27:41-46**) – The emotional pain continues!
 - a. This "darkness" that covered the earth is not just a cosmological coincidence!
 - b. It is against the backdrop of this darkness and against the backdrop of the verbal assaults of the Jewish leaders against Jesus' trust in His Father that Jesus utters this cry
 - c. This is a difficult statement, and over the years people have understood it different ways:
 - 1) Martin Luther sat in his study for hours thinking on this passage, oblivious to the world around him. Finally, he was overheard saying, "God forsaking God . . . no one can understand that" and he went on about his business.
 - 2) Some say Jesus was not really forsaken at this point. Some believe He was just saying this to fulfill prophecy... That there's no way God would abandon Him
 - 3) Others believe Jesus is speaking of suffering a spiritual separation from His Father and this is the result of Him being the sacrifice for our sins. Some will use stronger language stating God abandoned Jesus, God turned His back on Him
 - d. Perhaps there is another option somewhere between these two extremes:
 - 1) The word means, "To leave, loose, forsake... to depart from, leave behind, let alone" (BDB) or "To loosen, that is, relinquish, permit, etc" (Strong's)

- 2) It could mean to totally abandon, but it could also refer to the Father letting Jesus alone, relinquishing Jesus into the hands of sinners, permitting it all to go on
- 3) Was all fellowship between Jesus & the Father lost for that time? Maybe, maybe not... Nevertheless Jesus was suffering in that relationship like never before!
3. It is clear that as Jesus cries out these words that He is calling attention to Psalm 22 (**Psalm 22:1-2**)
 - a. Both this statement and the last thing Jesus says on the cross ("It is finished") make up the first and the last words of Psalm 22. Jesus is calling our attention to this psalm in its entirety. It's as if Jesus were saying, "This psalm is about Me and how I am feeling"
 - b. The psalmist had been crying to God "day by day" yet He received no answer from the Lord. Ultimately, with no response from God, the answer is clear... He must endure this! Have you ever been in a tough spot, prayed, & not be immediately delivered?
 - c. The psalmist shows the great hurt caused by the words so thoughtlessly flung at him (**vs. 6-8**). These words, especially as they attacked his trust in his God, would have been most piercing! Jesus felt scorned & despised by the very people He sought to save
 - d. The psalmist describes the physical pain caused by the crucifixion, a practice not even in place at that time (**vs. 12-18**). He was spent physically, spiritually, & emotionally!
 - e. In spite of all of this, Psalm 22 shows unwavering confidence → Although it did not look like God was going to deliver him, the psalmist knew God would. Why? God also delivers His people in the end. But in this case, the deliverance came after death!
4. By quoting from Psalm 22 it is as if Jesus was setting a mental recorder in front of the Jews... If thinking at all they heard His words and would be reminded of Psalm 22. If they called to mind the words of the psalm they would hear their own words quoted in it so long before they were ever born! Not only is Psalm 22 about Jesus, it's also about His enemies!
5. As we come to appreciate more fully this very intense part of the suffering of Jesus on the cross, we should walk away impressed even more with some spiritual truths:
 - a. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Promised One → He fit all of the prophecies made thousands of years before Him with perfection. This could only be true of the Son of God! (**Luke 24:44**)
 - b. We may get incensed at the way some of Jesus' disciples forsook Him, but we must think of our own lives. People forsake Jesus today for very similar reasons... May be fear, disillusionment, or material things (**Jer. 2:13**) – "**Jesus is standing in Pilate's Hall**"
 - c. To whatever degree Jesus felt "distant" from His Father for that short period of time, we must be impressed by the agony it caused Him. Sin causes us to completely lose fellowship with God... Do we fill that pain for hurting that fellowship? (**Is 59:1-2**)

E. The Fifth Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Physical Suffering

1. As we look at this statement from Jesus, we are reminded of His nature on earth:
 - a. John opens his gospel with the great declaration that "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God" – Jesus is and was deity (**John 1:1-13**)
 - b. Yet in the same text we read that on earth Jesus was also man. John says "the Word became flesh, dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory" (**John 1:14**). Jesus' favorite description of Himself, "the Son of Man," reflects this truth (**Matt 16:13**)
 - c. This truth is hard to understand and some, because they don't understand it well, simply reject it! While on earth Jesus was fully deity & fully humanity. He was 100% both!

2. It's easy to get caught up in the miracles and the virgin birth and forget that throughout His life, we can not only see His deity displayed, but we also can see His humanity (**Hebrews 2:17**)
 - a. While His conception was miraculous, Jesus had a very normal birth. In fact, I'd imagine that His birth appeared more humble than any of our own births!
 - b. Jesus had to grow up... He faced growing physically, spiritually, and socially. We see a glimpse of Jesus during the adolescent years as He was 12 years old in the temple
 - c. Jesus faced all the physical needs of man – He experienced hunger, thirst, exhaustion, etc
 - d. Jesus experienced the feelings and emotions of man – He wept, He was sorrowful, He was distressed, He was disappointed, He loved, He became angry, and He hurt.
3. This statement reminds us that as Jesus suffered on the cross, He did so enduring the full blown physical pain that any man would suffer there (**John 19:28**)
 - a. As "God in the flesh" Jesus had the power to avoid the pain on the cross, but He faced it completely! Sure, "He could have called ten thousand angels" or He could have done something miraculous to minimize or take away the pain! – But He suffered it all!
 - b. Psalm 22 spoke of Jesus' tongue sticking to His jaws (**vs. 15**) and Psalm 69 says "My throat is parched" (**vs. 3**) – His mouth was dried out, He still had more He needed to say before His work was completed, and in order to do this He really needed some water
 - c. When struck, He felt the pain of every blow... When scourged, He felt the pain of every gash... When spit upon, He felt the disgustingness of it on His face... When nailed to the cross, He felt the pain of the metal driving through His body... When hanging on the cross, He felt the pain from the weight of His body pulling on those nails. When He tried to speak, He felt the struggle of trying to force words out as He was dying!
 - d. Jesus bore all the pain any of us would bear if we were crucified. Even after His death, His body still bore the marks of crucifixion (**John 20:27**). Interestingly, even when He ascended back into Heaven, He is pictured as still bearing those marks! (**Rev 5:6**)
4. While this statement does remind us of the depth of Jesus suffering as part of humanity, it also reminds us of His role of deity as He completely fulfilled the prophecies! (**John 19:28**)
 - a. Why did He say "I thirst!" – While He certainly was thirsty, it was to fulfill some prophecy
 - b. Notice it says, "So the scripture would be fulfilled" – This tells us why JESUS said it, not necessarily why John recorded it. Jesus' motivation was the fulfillment of prophecy
 - c. Consider two Psalms (**Psalm 22:15; 69:3, 21**) – The Jews knew these were Messianic psalms. It's as if Jesus was saying, "I'm the One these prophecies were speaking of!"
 - d. Interestingly, while both of these psalms speak of His thirstiness they do it in the context of the great internal suffering and struggle the Messiah would endure:
 - e. This is especially impressive to me, because it emphasizes that even though Jesus was suffering so much, He was still thinking about others! He was concerned about giving people even more evidence to strengthen their faith that He is the Messiah!
5. The immense physical suffering Jesus endured reminds us of some vital lessons and challenges us:
 - a. We are reminded that Jesus is our compassionate and faithful High Priest... He experienced our lives and thus knows what we need in our most difficult hours! (**Hebrews 2:18**)
 - b. We should be impressed with the great price at which our salvation has been bought. He suffered and died the way He did for my sins and for your sins! (**I Peter 1:18-19**)
 - c. The more impressed we are with the way Jesus suffered for us, the more determined we should be to live faithfully to Him and to rid our lives of sin (**Hebrews 10:26-31**)

- d. The great degree to which Jesus was willing to suffer also should indicate to us the great degree of His love for us (people pay more for what they desire) **(Ephesians 5:25-26)**
- e. As I pondered the suffering of Jesus this week, I was reminded of the words of a powerful song: "Amazing love, how can it be, that you, my God, would die for me?"

F. The Sixth Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Finality And Victory

1. Throughout the ministry of Jesus, it is glaringly obvious that Jesus was a man on a mission!
 - a. Jesus said that His meat, His food, was to do the work of His Father who sent Him... He was nourished and thrived off fulfilling the mission His Father had given Him **(John 4:34)**
 - b. He summarized His mission, the reason He came, with the words, "To seek and save that which was lost" **(Luke 19:10)** → Even the way Jesus is described demonstrates this mission: Like His I am statements, Messiah, Jesus, Savior, Immanuel, etc.
 - c. Perhaps the place where this is clearest is an occasion when Jesus healed a blind man. He spoke about how He must be about the works of His Father who sent Him and that He had a limited time in which to accomplish His Father's works **(John 9:4-5)**
 - d. We are impressed by the great things Jesus accomplished in His short lifetime, the way He reached out to those around Him, the way He was able to see deep spiritual lessons in common things... These traits go back to His focus and devotion to His mission!
2. So we come to the next statement from the cross – Although it is only three words long, it is full of meaning! After tasting the wine mingled with gall Jesus said, "It is finished" **(John 19:30)**
 - a. This is from a single Greek word – "Teleo" → It means, "To bring to a close, finish, end; to perform, execute, complete fulfill, to pay" → It's interesting that receipts from the ancient Greek culture have been found with this word, meaning, "paid in full"
 - b. It's the word of a servant when a task has been completed for his master... It's the word of a priest when he finishes making a day's sacrifices... It's the word of an artist when his drawing is done... It's the words of a merchant when the debt has been paid
 - c. What do you mean when you say, "It Is Finished!" – Could be seen positively or negatively
 - 1) Some use it like a sports team who has just been eliminated from the playoffs... Defeat! This is probably what the Jews heard when they heard Jesus say it
 - 2) Others use it in a way like Michelangelo would when he put his final brush stroke on the masterful Sistine Chapel ceiling painting... Victory & accomplishment!
 - d. As we hear Jesus say, "It is finished" we immediately think about His suffering on the cross being finished; however, the meaning of this phrase is much deeper than that!
3. When we hear the words "It is finished" we should ask, "What is finished?" One thing that was finished were the prophecies, promises, & portrayals of Christ in the O.T. **(Matt 5:17-18)**
 - a. From the last day in the garden to the last prophecy before the 400 years of silence, God was revealing His plan to man piece by piece – Every piece pointed man to Jesus!
 - b. It is finished... Jesus has crushed the serpent's head! It is finished... all nations of the earth are blessed! It is finished... God's Servant Isaiah spoke about has been crucified!
 - c. In fact, all of the Old Covenant, with its laws, feasts, days, & sacrifices were accomplished with the death of Jesus Christ... They pointed to Jesus, they found their fulfillment in Jesus, and as a result, they were nailed to the cross & are no longer in force today!
4. What was finished? The fulfillment of and giving of meaning to all of the sacrifices which took place before the sacrifice of Christ: **(Hebrews 10:1-4, 11-12)**

- a. From the days of Abel through the life of Christ, God's people were making sacrifices. How much blood was shed? How many animals had to die as a result of man's sins?
- b. For all that time, blood flowed from the altars men had erected. Once a year in Jerusalem the amount blood from the sacrifices of the people was so great it flowed out of the temple & through the city! When would the blood end? When would it be enough?
- c. When would the last high priest come & offer the final sacrifice? Jesus says, "It is finished"
- 5. What was finished? Jesus' work in providing the perfect sacrifice for man's sins was finished!
 - a. Over 500 years before His birth, Isaiah prophesied of the great sacrifice the "suffering servant" would make for man's sins. When Jesus spoke said, "It is finished" He was saying that sacrifice was completed & forgiveness accomplished (**Isa 53:5-6,10, 12**)
 - b. There was more work to be done in providing man salvation from sin... God would raise Jesus from the dead in an incredible demonstration of His power... But as for what Jesus would do, His work in providing a perfect sacrifice was now complete!
 - c. We have a song that speaks of this – "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe, sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow" → Jesus did pay it all! Sadly, there are some who reject His payment because of that next phrase... All to Him I owe!
- 6. As we conclude our thoughts on this statement of Jesus, let's consider the words to a very powerful song: "It Is Finished" by Bill and Gloria Gaither (Songs of Faith & Praise #xxx)

G. The Seventh Statement From Jesus Are Words Of Trusting Contentment

- 1. As we walk through the pages of the gospel viewing the life of Jesus, His unwavering trust in His Father is quite impressive (**Psalm 22:7-11**)
 - a. Psalm 22 is not just a psalm of suffering, it is equally a psalm of trust. In these verses the psalmist uses a hyperbole to show how total trust characterized the Messiah's entire life... Think of the control Jesus had to lay aside to be born as a man – A life of trust!
 - b. Jesus was constantly praying to His Father – He could heal the sick, raise the dead, and feed thousands from a basket of food. Why pray? He had a real relationship with His Father that was about trust, love, and fellowship. He leaned on His Father!
 - c. In the garden of Gethsemane I believe it is the human side of Jesus pulling at Him as He prays for a way around the cross. The cross was in His immediate path... He'd be laying aside all control & experiencing something for the first time... DEATH!
- 2. So it's not surprising that the last words Jesus chose to speak were words filled with trust and contentment – "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (**Luke 23:46**)
 - a. Jesus is reaffirming what others had so viciously attacked – They may have attacked His trust in His Father, but throughout all of these events Jesus consistently shows trust
 - b. He is facing one of the most excruciating deaths possible, yet He does so peacefully. He is about to cross over into death, yet He does so peacefully.
 - c. Many have struggled at death with many things – Fear, guilt of sins, broken relationships, uncertainty, unfinished business... Yet Jesus shows peaceful contentment!
- 3. Another aspect of Jesus committing Himself to His Father was the peaceful and contented way in which He endured these hours of intense persecution and suffering (**1 Peter 2:21-24**)
 - a. We stand amazed at the cross for many reasons, but one reason is the graceful way in which Jesus responded to those who abused Him! How could He respond so well?

- b. It was His trust – They verbally attacked His claim to be God’s Son, but Jesus knew who He was... They verbally attacked His Father’s concern for Him, but Jesus knew His Father loved Him... They verbally attacked His trust, but Jesus knew who was in control!
- c. Jesus didn’t have to avenge Himself because He committed Himself and the matter to His Father... He let go of any potential anger & allowed His Father to handle these things
- c. When we commit ourselves to our Father in trust, it will impact even the way we respond to those who fight against us. How are you responding to those who cause you sorrow?
 - 1) There is a peaceful contentment that will consume our spirits and it is with this Christ-like frame of mind that we will respond to others **(Rom 12:17-21)**
 - 2) There’s no need to avenge ourselves because we trust God will handle it! When others put us down, we know we are known by God and that’s what matters
- 4. The death of Jesus was not just powerful in what He accomplished through it, but it was powerful in the manner in which He died. We should desire to die in the same confident and trusting way!
 - a. Remember how Jesus was able to trust in His Father with His death because He trusted in His Father with His life? If we want to die like Jesus, the same must be true about us... You have to trust in God with your life so you can have that peaceful confidence!
 - b. **Illustration:** If I were to have you fall backwards off this stage and I promise to catch you, would you? What if it were a 1,000 foot cliff?
 - 1) The difference in the strength of your answers depends on three things: (1) Your confidence in me (2) Your awareness of what’s on the other side of my arms (3) How much control you have over the end result of letting go of yourself
 - 2) The same is true with our trust in our Father, especially with our death? If our confidence in God isn’t strong, then our being able to face with faith the greatest uncertainty of all in death while losing total control is impossible!
 - c. Paul was able to face his death with the contented confidence of Christ because of the trustful way he had truly sought to live his life **(2 Tim 4:6-8)**
 - d. Most of us cannot say we have arrived at a point where we can face this with perfect faith. Is this totally bad? Maybe - If your faith is not growing, then yes it is bad! But since faith is a growth process it’s not going to be perfect, but it will be getting stronger!

Conclusion: One of the soldiers at the foot of the cross saw and heard all that went on there...