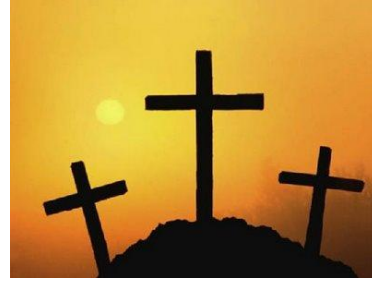


† GOOD FRIDAY: IN SEVEN GOOD WORDS

By Stuart Epperson, Jr. † April 3, 2015
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Each Holy Week, when Christians are celebrating tradition and contemplating the most serious and meaningful time in the history of their religion, I try to publish something which reflects the occasion. This I found and considered it quite interesting. Maybe I'm too sheltered, but I hadn't seen anything similar to this before. - SB

His silence remained unbroken all the way to the place of the Skull.

“And He, bearing His Cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha” (John 19:17). And then, Jesus opened His mouth:

*Seven Words of Life He cried,
Seven Words with His last breath.
Seven Words as Jesus died,
Seven Words of Life from the Tree of Death.*

A close look at Christ's seven final sayings from the cross clearly explains why there's so much “good” in “Good Friday.”

First “A Word of Prayer:” Then said Jesus, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...” (Luke 23:34).

Remarkably, the Savior's final seven sayings start with prayer. In history's darkest moment He finds himself in prayer's familiar light—a prayer of forgiveness.

Secondly, “A Word of Pardon:” “And Jesus said unto him, ‘Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise’” (Luke 23:43).

Of all those present at the cross, to whom does the savior grant divine pardon—a despicable thief! While His broken body was suspended high, the thief's broken heart was bowed low before the Lord of Glory. His humble prayer, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” was divinely answered.

Thirdly, “A Word of Paternity:” “...He saith unto his mother, ‘Woman, behold thy son!’ Then saith he to the disciple, ‘Behold thy mother!’” (John 19:26, 27).

We see in Mary and John a picture of Christ's divine care for the widow and orphan. Miraculously, while Jesus' physical body was being torn, His spiritual body was being formed.

Fourthly, “A Word of Pain.” “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34).

This cry of dereliction is accompanied by three hours of inexplicable night, in the middle of the day. God's wrath upon ALL evil and sin—aimed like an arrow at the heart of sinners, is now fully absorbed by the Friend of Sinners. The “Light of the World” hangs abandoned—enveloped in a world of darkness.

Fifthly, “A Word of Passion.” “After this, Jesus...saith, ‘I thirst’” (John 19:28). Here hanging on the brink of death we hear the source of ‘Living Water’ cry, ‘I thirst.’”

How remarkable that the briefest cross saying was the only word uttered about His own discomfort. In the “passion of His thirst,” the Man of Sorrows endured unspeakable agony on the Tree of Death.

Sixthly, “A Word of Perfection.” “It is finished...”(John 19:30). Victory over sin and death is triumphantly proclaimed!

Lastly, “A Word of Peace.” “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit...” (Luke 23:46). Jesus died as He lived, depending upon His Father. The Prince of Peace now rests in peace so that restless sinners can experience the supernatural peace of God. And though he rests, he will *RISE ON THE THIRD DAY!*

So dark and barbaric was His death, but so glorious His resurrection. **“THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED!”**

Good words on a Good Friday.