### “Into Your Hands” Steve Finlan for The First Church, Apr. 7, Good Friday, 2023

**Luke 23:46**

Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

The whole Passion narrative tells us a lot about the human experience of Jesus. We hear about his desire to avoid a painful death. We hear much about his concern for others, for the apostles, for the women of Jerusalem, for his mother, for the two thieves, even for his enemies. We see his human emotions and relationships.

The standard or Chalcedonian belief about Jesus is that he is fully human and fully divine. What part of his nature is speaking here, when he cries out? I don’t think it’s his fully divine nature, because his divine self has a complete grasp of his own spirit. He loses nothing when his physical body dies, and he will be raising himself up again. In John, he says “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again” (John 10:18).

I think it is the human Jesus who is telling the Father that he is committing his spirit to him. It seems to be Jesus’ human spirit, or perhaps the record of his whole life, that he hands over to his Father. Luke says he cried out these words and then died. In John, Jesus’ last words are “It is finished” (19:30). There are some differences among the witnesses, as should be expected. As a human who is facing impending death, he is committing his whole life to the Father.

And what a life! Think of all the people he met in so many different circumstances, whose lives were changed, like the man who was blind from birth, like the paralyzed man whose friends lowered him through a roof, like the woman at the well to whom he admitted that he was the Messiah. All these people found their lives changed, and found themselves testifying about Jesus’ power.

Now, faced with his human powerlessness, he is expressing devotion to God, as a son to his Father. In his human life, Jesus practiced wholehearted trust in his heavenly Father. He conversed with him, spent time with him, sought his wisdom and guidance. He also prayed for his fellows, and sought to encourage spiritual unity among them. He did good to others, storing up treasures in heaven, as we can do.

Maybe his “spirit” was the record of all the good he did, and all the faith he practiced, in his life, and now he was humbly entrusting all that to the Father. The Father knows how to preserve all spiritual treasures, and he was entrusting *his* to the Father. All good is preserved. Once again, Jesus is showing us how to live, to live with full trust in God. May we also entrust our spiritual treasures to God’s watchcare. May *our* faith drive our actions to reveal the Father’s love for his creatures.