

AM John 19:12-27 The Sayings of Jesus on the Cross

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[0 : 00] If you could turn your Bibles to the Gospel of John and chapter 19, we're going to read from verse 12 down to the verse mark 27. This is where Jesus was delivered to be crucified by the religious leaders and they had brought him to Pilate.

And we read from verse 12 of chapter 19. From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, If you release this man, you are Caesar, you are not Caesar's friend.

Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar. So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Stone Pavement in Aramaic Abafa.

Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, Behold your king. They cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him.

Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priest answered, We have no king but Caesar. So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

[1 : 11] So they took Jesus and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull. Which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him.

And with him two others, one on either side and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

Many of the Jews read this inscription. For the place where Jesus was crucified was near, the city. And it was written in Aramaic, in Latin and in Greek.

So the chief priests and the Jews said to Pilate, Do not write the king of the Jews. But rather this man said, I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts. One part for each soldier, also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

[2 : 14] So they said to one another, Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

So the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene.

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.

And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. Amen. And may God bless to us the reading of his own word.

Well, and consider the words. And I want us today, this morning and this evening, to consider the sayings of Jesus on the cross. And there's always something, there is something particularly solemn about our last words, the words of men and women.

[3 : 23] The reason is that at that point we are facing death. And what a person says at that moment, it's obviously it comes to the surface.

And the moment is reflected in what they are saying and what they are feeling. Napoleon Bonaparte, the famous French general and emperor, he said while waiting death, he said this, I die before my time and my body will give back to the earth.

Such is the fate of him who was called the great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ.

There was a man called Thomas Hobbes. He was a skeptic who corrupted the faith of many in England. And he said this, If I had the whole world, I would give it to live one day. I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world at. I am about to take a leap into the dark. Now these final words were not words of hope, but they were words of deep despair for these men.

[4 : 40] The scripture records for us seven sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ that he spoke on the cross on the eve of his death. Now some have termed that these are the last words of Jesus.

And that is not entirely true because we know that Jesus, although he died, Jesus rose again. And Jesus spoke again many words when he spent 40 days with the disciples and those whom he loved.

And also Jesus is still speaking today. He speaks in his word. He speaks to us. He speaks through the church. But there are, however, we are going to consider the last words of Jesus as he uttered them as he did die on the cross.

Because these words, as many, and I'm sure you've heard many people preach on them over the years, they are significant words. And when you consider how Jesus spoke these words, considering what he was going through at the time, crucifixion is a terrible thing.

The agony of dying on the cross. Where you can imagine you saw the feet nailed to the cross and his hands nailed to the cross as well.

[5 : 53] They reckon they used to put a small block of wood, a wedge type wood, under their feet to support them. And at that, they would be able to stretch themselves so as to breathe in.

Because death on the cross was usually by asphyxiation. You choked, seemingly. And this was obviously telling us that it would not be easy for Jesus or anyone to speak on the cross.

So for him to speak would have taken some amount of strength to do so. And imagine pushing himself up, rubbing his back on a rugged cross, a rough bit of timber, something that wasn't dressed in any way.

This was a rugged tree that he was crucified to. So his flesh, imagine, after it had been torn with a whip, would have been so sore, rubbing against this tree.

But what is important for us is to consider the words of Jesus. And he spoke these words to those who were around him. And also we'll see this evening how he spoke to God the Father.

[7 : 00] At the foot of the cross, there were three groups of people mentioned. Now we're going to look at all the Gospels to consider, taking this from all four Gospels to help us understand of what's being said.

The first group of people I want us to consider today are the soldiers, and then there were the women, and then there was John. So what about the soldiers?

Well, we read about them in John chapter 19 and in verse 23, where it says, When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts.

One part for each soldier, also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. Now, Jews in Jesus' day wore five pieces of garments.

They wore a turban, they wore sandals, they wore a belt, they wore an undergarment, and an outer garment. Now, to fulfill the Gospel, the Scriptures, as we have in Psalm 22, verse 18, we read there, They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

[8 : 19] This was something that was predicted years before the crucifixion, but yet here we find that it has been fulfilled in the death of Jesus on the cross.

How cold and callous of them to do this in his very presence. Christ is there, and he's watching them, gambling over his clothing, sharing his clothing out with one another.

And that is the picture of the coldness of people coming to the cross of Calvary. Just as we understand it today, when you speak to people about Jesus and about the cross, it doesn't affect them in any way.

They are cold and callous towards the Lord Jesus. And just like the folk that were at the cross, some of them anyway, they simply walked away. And it didn't affect them in any way.

Just as when we speak to people today about Jesus and his sacrifice for sinners, they just simply walk away. They want anything. They don't want anything to do with it.

[9 : 25] So are we any different today in Scotland to these soldiers? Possibly we would say, well, we're not as violent, but to walk away suggests a cold heart, a world without Jesus.

But it is in this context that we read Jesus praying. And it's in Luke chapter 23 and verse 34. Like I said, we're going to refer to the other Gospels to see exactly, to get a picture of what is happening

here.

Luke 23 and verse 34 where we read there, and Jesus said, while this was going on, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.

And it goes on, and they cast lots to divide his garments. Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.

What a surprise this must have been for soldiers. Because historians tell us when people were crucified, what they used to do would curse the ones who nailed them to the cross.

[10:32] But this man is asking for forgiveness. Father, forgive them for what they are doing. What is this about? Instead of the normal cursing, here is a plea for pardon from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And this is basically an act of love coming from God himself, which is beyond the duty of anyone. And the soldiers knew that this is not what took place.

But what is amazing is this, is what Jesus was doing was although his hands were nailed to the cross, he was simply carrying these people in prayer to his Father at the throne in glory.

Father, forgive them. In order what? For them to be committed to the mercy of God. Have you ever questioned if God answered this prayer?

Jesus prayed, Father, forgive them. Do you think God forgave the soldiers? Well, it is Jesus who prayed it.

[11:46] We do see a couple of things. Luke 23 and verse 47. We'll take our wee time getting to these verses.

Luke 23 verse 47 and it reads, Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God saying, Certainly this man was innocent.

Now, that's the centurion who's in charge of all of this. And he praised God and he affirmed the innocence of Jesus. Mark tells us that he was impressed by the way Jesus died in Mark 15 and 39 where we read there where he spoke about where he said truly is, this is the Son of God.

So Mark chapter 15 and verse 39, I should have maybe marked these to save his time, but it doesn't matter.

Verse 39 where it says, And when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

[13:00] What a testimony by the centurion, the hardened centurion and seeing what was happening here at the cross. But what about the soldiers?

The soldiers that were prayed for? What about them? Well, do you know in Matthew's account in verse 27, it's interesting what he says in verse 54.

Matthew 27, 54. When the centurion and those who were with him, that's referring to the other soldiers, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, Truly this was the Son of God.

the Son of God. So doesn't that seem to include all the soldiers? Because it said, when they saw, they were filled with awe and they said, Truly this was the Son of God.

So this seems to suggest that the soldiers themselves saw it. They were in awe of what happened here. So the amazing miracle then is when Jesus prayed, Father forgive them.

[14:21] Remember what they were doing? They were gambling for his clothes. And yet this prayer was heard in glory when God heard his Son praying for them.

And as the day progressed, it seems that their hearts strangely warmed to the person that was dying on the cross. Was this just another crucifixion for them?

Or was there something happening in their hearts that made them see that this truly was the Son of God who came to die for sinners?

Or they saw a man without hatred for his enemies. He prayed for them. He died not as a victim but he died sovereignly on the cross.

He himself gave up his life on the cross. Amid the chaos of Calvary he died in majestic control over his own life.

[15:27] And he conquered seemingly the most hardened soldiers by his prayer before the Father. Father forgive them.

And when Christ prays you know when we come to Christ have you ever thought that this action could have taken place? You know when we came of course we were moved by God's spirit to do so but when we come to God Lord forgive them.

Isn't the Trinity involved in our salvation? When we think of the Father listening to Father will you not forgive them? I died for them on the cross of Calvary.

Will you not forgive them? Well you know what is amazing is the special relationship that there is between the Father and the Son. It's not just a heavenly one.

It was an earthly one as well. Because here on earth remember how much Jesus prayed. And if Jesus prayed how much we need to pray as well as a church to be encouraged to keep on supporting the prayer meeting because that is what we've been given.

[16 : 45] That is our access as a corporate body of worshipping people into the presence of God. Of course our own private prayers are important but God loves his people coming together to pray.

Others have rejected Jesus Christ but you know when Jesus prays the prayer do you think the father is not going to listen to that prayer?

How often do we come and we think of others that we love dearly and we take them to the throne of grace? I remember I don't know if I told you before Callum Matheson who used to be a minister up in Lewis but he laterally the last 18 months of his life he died at the age of 42 43 and the last year and a half or so he was a minister in Grey Friars in Inverness and I remember him preaching one night and he said this to the people do you know he said if I could I would lift you up and take you into the bosom of Jesus but you know that has not been given to me to do but I can do it this way he said let us pray so by praying for people what we're doing is we're bringing them into the bosom of the trinity and asking God Lord forgive them forgive them who knows the day that he might answer that prayer and keep on praying that prayer

Father forgive them the second saying on the cross was a saying to the criminal in Luke chapter 23 verse 43 and it is there that Jesus said truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise that is Luke 23 43 if there was ever a hopeless case it was this criminal on the cross next to Jesus you may think that your case is hopeless this morning but can you imagine it for this poor guy nailed to the cross there's no hope at all of getting down no hope of survival of this terrible death and the moment this was the moment that his eyes were opened by God to see the one that was dying next to him now naturally speaking if you see someone dying beside you there's no much hope of that person helping you is there because he's in the same circumstances as he was himself the same pain that he was suffering himself but yet you see what the spirit of

God does is open our understanding to see God there were many signs leading up to the cross that made Jesus different to everyone round about him and who knows maybe this criminal was listening to what was happening round about who is this guy anyway what's so important about him and you know with their crosses together you know there on top of the cross it said this is the reason he's been crucified that's what that was there for but the inscription above Jesus was this is the king of the Jews Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews and then who knows he may be heard Jesus pray for the soldiers saying father forgive them how many people have been saved by listening to other people praying there's something special about it you know special about hearing sinners coming before a holy

[20 : 48] God and we have the privilege to listen to that as they express their love of God as they bring their petition to God as they lay themselves bare before God and this this criminal heard Jesus saying father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing by God's grace he saw hope and the one that hung beside him Luke 23 and verse 42 remember the question that he asked there and he said Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom why did he say this to Jesus he recognized that Jesus had a kingdom because it's kings that have kingdoms and he's basically saying when you get to your kingdom will you please remember me he didn't tell

Jesus what to do he just basically said remember me how often we've said that to people in our dire straits or whatever need we have you just simply say to them will you remember me meaning remember me before the throne of glory that is what Jesus this is what this man said remember me what a mark of grace that we see in that question given to him you may think of coincidences but what was Jesus doing on the cross anyway he was actually dying for this man who asked remember me that is what I'm doing here I am here to die for your sins my concerns are to save you so that you will be with me in my kingdom and the words he spoke to the criminal they were uttered with confidence the promise of God's word

Luke 23 43 saying today you will be surely and he said to him truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise this was his second saying on the cross verse then thirdly we come back to John 19 verses 26 and 27 so John 19 the chapter we read verses 26 and 27 and there we read

when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby he said to his mother woman behold your son and then he speaks to John we look at his mother first and I'm sure as we read scripture and as we know remember John often he would not refer to himself but as he referred to himself he spoke about the disciple whom Jesus loved and if there were two people on earth that

Jesus dearly loved they would have been this woman his mother and John his beloved disciple I want us to think of Mary first of all and the pain that was hers at the cross the pain that was hers she was used to sorrow wasn't she the child the child born to her there was no room for this child at the inn he was born in a stable or a cave somewhere in Bethlehem and she had to lay him in a feeding trough do you know the way mums are kind of proud of their babies they want to show off their children and show this is my little bundle my bundle of joy and what she had was a feeding trough where animals used to get fed to lay her beloved beautiful baby the anguish she must have felt when word went round that Herod was killing children up to the ages of two and what this must have been like this is awful and the angel warning them to flee down to

Egypt for a time to become refugees as we see families fleeing war torn Ukraine in our own day Mary could understand that the piercing of soul she felt in life when she saw her son rejected and despised by many who can go where Mary is now as she stands at the cross if you were to ask her Mary where is your eldest son Jesus what is he doing these days oh that is my son that is my Jesus that's there on the cross as we think of Mary we are reminded of Simeon when the boy remember was taken to the temple we read in Luke 2 verses 34 and 35

[26 : 26] Luke chapter 2 verses 34 and 35 and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother behold 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 thoughts from many hearts may be revealed these are quite strange words a piercing sorrow for the one that was so highly favored how unlikely this would seem that this would happen yet the occasion of her piercing would become the occasion of her comfort the occasion of her piercing was to become the occasion of her comfort Jesus is now in limitless pain and the agonizing for breathing he knew that darkness was coming over from midday to three o'clock and here he is busy dealing with those he cared for and in his extremities we see the love of

Jesus for sinners he said to his mother in John 19 and verse 26 woman behold your son why did he call her woman does that not seem distant no this is not an indicting distance at all but it is a loving respect it is actually better translated dear woman dear woman but we should also conclude that he is telling his mother that from now on she would relate to him in a different way that he was approaching his work of redemption and she had to realize that there was to be a new relationship between mother and son Jesus said of his family in Luke 8 21 when folks said your mother and brothers are outside and

Jesus said this my mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it you see Mary had to come to this point from now on Mary would relate to Jesus as a member of the family of God and this comfort comes as seeing him a saviour to see him a saviour Moody Stewart said this what would have rent in pieces the heart of nature is most loving and tender and soothing in the heart of grace that is why we are able to call this terrible Friday good Friday because we see it with a heart of grace we understand it with a heart of grace

Mary went to Calvary as a sad mother but her son didn't go there as a disappointed or a frustrated son he went there to be his mother saviour although she had unique privileges she was still a sinner she was not saved by what she did for Jesus but Mary was saved by what Jesus did for her other persons involved here well there is John the beloved disciple he's here at the cross oh what about garden of Gethsemane oh he went away like the other disciples remember running away from Jesus Jesus did warn them of the cowardice Peter remember so bold in regards to this they might desert you but

I never will and then they all said no we will not desert you but they forsook him and fled John's cowardice though was only temporary what brought him to Calvary the very same thing that brought Mary to Calvary it was his love for Jesus he couldn't he could not stay away and although they couldn't do anything for Jesus their hands were tied just as Jesus hands were tied they just wanted to be with him just to be near him just as we like to be with loved ones to hold their hands as they pass from time into eternity it is something that is in all of us do we love Jesus this morning

[31 : 54] I'm not asking if you ignored him up until now I'm not asking whether you've served him up until now I'm not asking whether you denied him in the past no I'm just asking what Jesus asked Peter Simon Simon John do you love me do you love me and remember the third time Peter was grievous his heart broken the fact that Jesus said to him the third time do you love me actually the Greek word says Peter do you like me do you like me it wasn't even as strong as love the third time no wonder he was heart broken because Peter did love this Lord although he denied him like John did John came to him in spite of his earlier failure did

Jesus rebuke him did he ask him why did you run John you said you wouldn't but you did no instead he gave him an unmistakable privilege by committing his mother into his care we read in verse 27 of John chapter 19 then he said to the disciple behold your mother and from that hour the disciple took her to his own home the question surely arises is that if Jesus had brothers and sisters why didn't he leave the care of his mother in their hands well surely the reason is because of their attitude toward Jesus in regards to belief up till now they did not believe in

Jesus it is later on we see that some came to faith Jesus wanted his mother to live in a situation of spiritual love and belonging and that love was to be within the fellowship of the church a new family the family of God and you know I often think on the day of the resurrection remember when Mary Magdalene when she went looking for the disciples Peter and John remember we're told how they went to the tomb and the tomb was empty and then they went back home they went back home with their thoughts but also with what they saw or what they didn't see who was back home in John's home Mary I often wonder what he said when he went in Mary I've got something to tell you but the tomb is empty the tomb is empty

God has reasons for things to happen in providence and little things like that makes you wonder was this one of them so that Mary along with John as it spoke of John understanding although didn't really grasp it but just to be there when John came home and reporting about the empty tomb God and providence is amazing well we're going to leave it there and then we'll just consider one or two other things we're going to sing as we come to remember the Lord's death and our item of well we now come to the part of the service where we remember the Lord's death until he comes and obviously the question needs to be asked who does remember the Lord's death well it is those that Jesus died for and those who live their lives in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that God sought us and God found us and God has brought us to himself he has paid the price the redemption price for our sins that the wages of sin is death but he brought that price upon himself where Jesus willingly died on Calvary's cross to die for our sins and the warrant we have in regards to the Lord supper we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 from verse 23 for I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and said this is my body which is for you do this in remembrance of me in the same blood do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the

[37 : 16] Lord's death until he comes whoever therefore eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord let a person examine himself then and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup for anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself well we follow in the Lord's example and we come and give thanks to God Lord as we come and we before us have the symbols of the shed blood and the broken body of our Lord Jesus Christ and that he has done this for us he's done it for me this is Lord personal in the sense that it is a personal salvation but it is also corporate in the fact that we come as a family together to remember the Lord's death and this is what we learn from the

New Testament church that this is how they gathered and to do so remembering the Lord's death until he comes it's quite incredible when we consider all that you have gone through these things Lord are written for our good and for our understanding but also to remind us of the measure of what Christ has gone through so as to save sinners like us

Jesus Jesus the night when he took bread and we had given thanks he broke the bread he broke the bread and he said this is my body which is for you this do in remembrance of me let us we can eat the bread in the same way he took the cup and after supper saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me for as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup you remember the

Lord's death until he comes this family the church family it consists of those whose faith meets with the Lord Jesus Christ at the cross of Calvary and it is you who have experienced us experience the true forgiveness of sinners saved by grace and knowing that we are his beloved children brothers and sisters he is our elder brother we have a loving heavenly father the one that hangs who hangs on the tree is even as we saw today that very late stage of his life he is caring for others and that is what he is still doing caring for his church he was stripped of everything but yet he leaves a rich legacy for sinners like us and it is here for us to drink from

God's well Jesus well of salvation which is ours to have and may we all know as we participate and live for him that we would know the joy of his salvation let us pray Lord we thank you for the means of grace and the importance of the preaching of your word and fellowship together worshipping God we pray that you would bless us in all of these things that you would go before us and watch us and keep us Lord have mercy on us help us to live without putting a spot or blemish on your cause and help us as always to look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith bless the children amongst us that as they witness these things that they would grow up knowing and wishing Jesus to be their Lord and

[44 : 12] Saviour what a privilege for children of the covenant where they are brought before you in prayer where their names are mentioned at the throne room of grace and we pray Lord by your grace that you would remember them so as to be the church not only of the future but now and that they would fellowship in the gospel as the church do together so bless us and go before us we ask in Jesus name Amen our closing item of praise is Psalm 72 and