

# Meditations Around the Cross

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Date: 07 April 2023

[0:00] Well, good morning and welcome to our Good Friday service this morning. This morning we've gathered to commemorate the highest point and the greatest moment in salvation history.

! Indeed, we have gathered to commemorate the greatest moment in all of history. Because 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ went to a hill called Calvary and there on a cruel Roman cross, while he was suspended between heaven and earth and extended between two thieves, he did what the scriptures say that he came to do, to give his life as a ransom for many.

And all of us who have put our trust in Jesus this morning can have assurance that we are among the many for whom he gave his life.

This morning we are going to be having seven meditations around the cross and they are around seven statements that Jesus made as he hung on the cross.

These meditations are not sermons. They will be on average five to seven minutes long. And the reason for that is that they're really designed to just bring a particular thought or two to our hearts to get us to contemplate more deeply about what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross for us.

[1:45] I pray that we are blessed by these meditations. I pray that they would cause us to grow in our love and our affection for our triune God. I pray that we would leave here with hearts filled with amazement.

That the righteous would die for the unrighteous. That we received from God what we didn't deserve, mercy and grace.

We deserve judgment and wrath. But he gave us mercy and grace. And so this morning I'm going to ask Brother Lyndon if he would come and he is going to lead us off with the first meditation.

We find these words in Luke chapter 23 verse 34. And Jesus said, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

And they cast lots to divide his garment. To understand the weight and the meaning of those words we need to understand context.

[2:53] And so today I wish us to consider just for a few minutes those words of Jesus under the topic, A Singular Act of Grace. To do so I will offer responses to this question.

What is the evidence that makes those words of Jesus a singular act of grace? Evidence number one.

Jesus was singular in his being. John says of him, He was in the beginning with God. He was God. All things were made through him.

And without him was nothing made that was made. Throughout scripture he was referred to as Messiah. He was perfect in all his ways.

He was fully God and fully man. He was indeed God incarnate. He emptied himself, the scripture says, By taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man, And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, Even death on a cross.

[4:08] Scripture records that he was and is the Prince of Peace, An everlasting Savior, Messiah, Lamb of God. Indeed, all of scripture is about him.

There is, was, and never will be one like him. Evidence number two. He, Jesus Christ, was singular in his suffering.

Wrongly accused. Mercilessly ridiculed. Viciously beaten. Incessantly mocked. Cruelly dehumanized. Brazenly lied on.

Shamelessly betrayed. Unjustly convicted. And while the physical and emotional pain inflicted on Jesus in the moment was excruciating, He also felt the weight of our sins.

Only he would and could experience that. Evidence number three. Jesus was singular in his ministry.

[5:11] Forgiving someone who has wronged you because they misunderstood your motive is one thing. Forgiving someone for whom you gave your life is another.

That's what we see here. Had this been an ordinary man, perhaps some might suggest that he was partly guilty or and or stood within the judgment of man's imperfect judgment.

He was neither. He was perfectly innocent and subjected himself to man's judgment. But consistent with his earthly ministry where he taught that his followers should forgive their enemies.

Jesus did just that. He had the presence of mind, concern, and love during betrayal. Pain and suffering to think of the needs of others.

But there is more. He not only implies in these words, Father forgive them for they know not what they do. He not only implies that he forgave, but he pleads with the Father to forgive.

[6:21] Not to hold the sin against them. Here we see Jesus in his high priestly ministry. Isaiah prophesied that he would make intercession for transgressors.

And the New Testament is replete with references to the fact that he now lives out his high priestly ministry. Void of vengeance. Full of love and compassion.

Full of pity. Never in history has the creator of all things suffered ignominiously at the hand of those he created.

Even as he pays the penalty for the sins they committed against him. There has never been grace greater than what Jesus displayed on the cross.

A singular act of grace. What matchless love. Amen. Good morning everyone.

[7:17] Thank you Brother Lyndon. And we have just heard how God in Christ forgave and forgives sin.

A singular act of grace. And now we are going to look at St. Luke chapter 23 verse 43. And we will see how that plays out.

And according to St. Luke. It reads thus. And he said to him. Truly I say to you. Today you will be with me in paradise.

Many believers over the years have used this verse to counter the argument of soul sleep. And it is relevant to that.

It has relevance to that. If you notice the word today. How it is used in the text. You will see that the emphasis or the punctuation comes just before today.

[8:19] And so today. Truly I say to you. Today you will be with me in paradise. It is quite a relevant application to the whole business of soul sleep.

But let me ask you a question. Do you think for one minute that when Jesus spoke those words. His intention was to put to rest the argument of soul sleep.

Or do you think that when St. Luke recorded these words. That was his intention. I will suggest to you this one that that was not the intention. In order to understand what is happening here in this passage.

Let us take a quick look back at the events surrounding that. And brother Nian did an excellent job of that. But I will go back to that. Jesus was crucified.

And beside him according to St. Luke were two thieves. Now it is very easy to overlook that whole incident. The crucifixion of Jesus with two thieves.

[9:22] We may think that it is just filling. What we would call filling up the space. Adding events to make the story look good. But that was not St. Luke's intention at all.

He had a purpose in mind. And as we work our way through this text. We will see his purpose. Two thieves were crucified with him.

Only two. Yet only one of them turned to him and said. Lord remember me. In your translation and some others. The translators said.

Jesus remember me. But several translations render it as. Lord remember me. And I kind of prefer that translation.

Because when you work your way through the text. You will see. That the intent of Luke. Is to show the lordship of Jesus Christ. His intention here.

[10:24] Is to plant in the mind. Indelibly in the mind of readers and hearers. That Jesus Christ is Lord. Let us see how that works. In this verse that we have come to.

Jesus said. Jesus said. Truly I say to you. Notice the words Jesus used. Truly I say to you. These are not the words. These don't sound like the words of a dying man.

They sound more like the words. Of someone who is in authority. Someone who is in control. It is as if you have come to the boss. And he said. Yes.

I am telling you this. And as we heard before. You may think that this was just an ordinary man being crucified. But no.

This is the Lord himself being crucified. And his words here are words of authority. They are words that tells that he was in control.

[11:23] He was in control in life. And now in death he is also in control. Death did not stop Jesus. Or caused him for one minute to lose his control.

He is Lord. And so he said to the thief. Truly I say to you. I am telling you this. As my parents would say.

My parents would say. You can take this to the shop. Or you can take it to the bank. Now I am telling you this. Okay. And to understand a little more.

Of Jesus' authority. Look at the next set of words. He said to you. Today you will. Not today. Probably today.

Probably tomorrow. Today you will. Now you should notice here that the word will. The helping verb will. Is not used here. As an expression or something.

[12:21] Futuristic. It is an expression. Of. That which is. Certain. Jesus was telling this thief. That it is absolutely.

Certain. You can bank your life. You put your trust in this. That you. Will. Be. With. Me. Brothers and sisters.

Words. These words. Of Jesus. Are the same words. He speak to us. So. When we come to him. We can bank. Our lives.

We can bank. Everything. On those words. Because Jesus Christ. Words. Will never pass away. And so. Therefore. He said to the thief. You will be.

With me. He. Is. Lord. Of life. And Lord. Over death. That's the only reason. Jesus could make these words.

[13:18] Make this statement. Say these words. Because he is Lord. Of life. And he is Lord. Over death. Notice again. There is nowhere. In this passage.

That shows that Jesus. Was even. Asking. The thief. To look at me. I am suffering. Just like you. I am in pain.

I am in agony. No. He is quite assertive. When he said. Surely. I say to you. Today. You will be. With me. He is Lord.

Of life. He is Lord. Over death. He was in control. Of what was happening. To him. And he was in control. Of what was happening. To the thief. But let's move on.

To look at the rest. Of his statement. Today. You will be with me. In paradise. It is very interesting here. That the thief. Made one request of Jesus.

[14:12] And this was his response. Being in paradise. Suggests. That at that moment. The thief. Was given eternal life.

He was given eternal life. Otherwise. There is no reason. For Jesus to tell him. Or there is no way. He could have been. Told that he would be in paradise. Unless. He had obtained eternal life.

So what is it. That Jesus. What is it. That Luke. Is getting across. To us here. He is telling us. That Jesus Christ. Is Lord of salvation.

How in those few minutes. Or moments. Seconds. Whatever. Jesus could look at this man. And say. You will be with me. In paradise. Why could he do that?

How could he do that? I'll tell you how he could do that. Because he's Lord. He's the Lord. Of salvation. He's the boss. What about. The old business.

[15:09] Of the steps. That lead to salvation. What about the sinner's prayer? This man was not asked. To do anything. He made one request. Jesus looked at him.

And said. Today. You will be with me. In paradise. What about. All of those things. That were told. Is necessary. For us to. Become saved.

How could Jesus do this? He did this. Because he's the boss. He saves who he wants. How he wants. When he wants. And he needs no one's.

Suggestion. Advice. Or anything. He is Lord. Brothers and sisters. And this is what Luke is. Getting to us. This is what Luke wants.

His readers. To understand. That Jesus was fully in control. At his death. And Jesus. Is Lord. Of salvation.

[16:03] Even at his death. He says. And brothers and sisters. You and I. Are the thief. No. We have not. Probably. We are probably not thieves.

In career. We are. Probably not doing anything like that. But that thief represents. Each one of us. Notice there were two thieves. But only one of them.

Made this request. Why? I will tell you why. Because in that moment. Before he died. The Holy Spirit. Opened his eyes.

To who Jesus was. He recognized him as Lord. And he received salvation. That God. Had decided. Years before.

He came into this world. That he would be saved. There is no other explanation. The doctrine of election. Playing right out. The Lordship of Jesus Christ.

[16:58] And so brothers and sisters. This is what Luke wants us to see. That Jesus is Lord. Of life. Lord over death. And he is Lord of salvation.

And therefore. Those who come to him. Can have certainty. Of salvation. Selah. Good morning again.

Good morning. We are all familiar. With some level. Of pain and suffering. All of us here. And I can tell you.

From my own experience. Have passed. At least one. Kidney stone. And women who have. Had multiple children. Have said. That passing. A kidney stone.

Is even more painful. Than delivery. I've had some pain. It's an understatement. In that case. So even if you've never. Passed a kidney stone.

[17:59] And even if you've never. Delivered a child. Anyway. We still have. Some familiarity. With pain. At some level. But when we arrive.

At John 19. 26 to 27. We meet. Jesus. In the midst. Of incredible. Suffering. Far more intense. Than I.

Or. Anyone in this room. Has ever. Encountered. But how Jesus. Responds. To. Suffering. In that moment.

Is nothing short. Of amazing. When Jesus. Saw his mother. And the disciple. Whom he loved. Standing thereby. He said. To his mother. Woman. Behold.

Your son. And he said. To the disciple. Behold. Your mother. And from that hour. The disciple. Took her. To his home.

[18:55] With these words. Jesus. Simultaneously. Made provision. For Mary's. Emotional. And. Physical. Welfare. In the midst.

Of this. Unbelievable. Level. Of suffering. We find. That Christ. Is not thinking. Of himself. We find him. Being concerned. For the woman. Who has cared.

For him. His entire time. On earth. Emotionally. Mary was in turmoil. Undoubtedly. Imagine. Her. In her. Anguish. At seeing.

This child. That she had raised. The child. That she had. Carried. In her womb. She was the woman. Who. Had received. Glad tidings.

Of great joy. And she had. Treasured up. All these things. In her heart. That the angel. Had given her. And now. She's looking. On this. Gruesome scene. Of this child. Dying.

[19:51] An incredible. Excruciating death. But in his own. Affliction. Christ. Addresses.

Mary's torment. Without regard. For his own. And he directs. Mary to comfort. He leaves her. In the care of John. Knowing that John.

Would care for her. As his own mother. And it's. It's a shocking thing. To see played out. When you consider that.

Mary had other. Children. Besides Jesus. So really. Jesus could have. Entrusted Mary. To his brothers. And sisters. Care. But he didn't do that.

He shows us. By placing her. In John's care. That. That. We have. An incredible power. In our. [20:49] Spiritual. Relationships. Christ. Binds us. And he knits our hearts together. In a spiritual family. It's a family in Christ. And.

Ultimately. We identify more. With our. Spiritual. Family. Than with our. Earthly relationships. It is a picture. Of adoption. Into the family.

Of God. Even in his. Darkest hour. In the midst. Of his. Greatest pain. We see Jesus. Caring for Mary. Christ is saving.

Even in this moment. Saving Mary. In a particular way. He is demonstrating. Love. And care. For others. But in the wider concept.

Even though this is. Directly pointing to Mary. Here. This also speaks. To more than Mary. It speaks to all of us. Who have been called. To God's salvation.

[21:51] From the moment. Of salvation. We. Adopted. We are converted. From children of wrath. Into children. Of God. We become a family.

In which we should. Encourage. Older men. As we would fathers. Younger men. As brothers. Older women. As mothers. And younger women.

As sisters. We are the children. Of promise. The spiritual descendants. Of Abraham. And Christ. Even in this state. The state of misery. On the cross.

He perfectly demonstrates. The privilege. We have. As children. Of God. He demonstrates. That God. Is a gracious. And a giving God.

Who has compassion. On his children. The compassion. That Christ. Displayed. Throughout. His ministry. Didn't just go away. Because he was suffering. On the cross. Because he's in discomfort.

[22:46] We still see it. Even on the cross. So this is the question. Do you doubt. That the Savior cares.

Do you doubt. That you have a Savior. Who grieves. When you grieve. Who is in. Care for you. When you are distressed.

Because if you do. You can remember. These words. That Christ spoke to Mary. And you can know. That in all circumstances. The Savior. Loves you.

He cares for you. As he cared. For his mother Mary. While enduring. The agony. And the shame. Of the cross. So let us then. With confidence.

Draw an heir. To the throne of grace. That we may receive. Mercy. In every hour of need. Amen. Amen. Thank you very much.

[23:47] Our clients. Thank you brothers. For. This is wonderful. Meditations. I'm. I'm on. I am on right.

Yeah. Well we've now come to the fourth meditation. It's. In the middle of.

The. Statements that Jesus made. And. The place for it is fitting. It's. It's the fourth of. Of seven. It's. Right after Jesus.

Entrusting. His. Mother. To his disciple. Jesus experiences. The worst aspect.

Of the crucifixion. Indeed. Jesus. Experiences. The darkest moment. Of his life. In Mark. 15. Verses.

[24:49] 33. To. 34. We read. These words. And when the sixth hour. Had come. There was darkness.

Over the whole land. Until the ninth hour. And the ninth hour. Jesus cried. With a loud voice.

Eloi. Eloi. Lema sabachthani. Which means. My God. My God. Why. Have you forsaken me? When the sixth hour came.

Jesus uttered. What was. The most unusual. Of all the words. That he uttered. As he. Hung on the cross. In truth.

Though we are referring to these. As sayings of Jesus. This was not a saying of Jesus. This was an anguished cry. Of Jesus. Jesus. He bellowed. These words out.

[25:51] Words. That those who heard him. Say them. Were confused. And did not know. What he was saying. Exactly. And I think. When we hear this. Anguished cry. Jesus crying.

Out to his father. And asking. Why his father. Forsook him. I think naturally. We should ask. Why. Why did the son of God.

In the midst of. Unusual darkness. At that moment. Cry out. My God. My God. Why. Have you. Forsaken me.

Why didn't Jesus cry out. When the. Roman soldiers. Were. Beating him. And spitting on him. And mocking him. And torturing him.

And crucifying him. Why didn't he cry out. In agony. And in despair. In that moment. Well here's why Jesus cried out.

[26:48] When he cried out. Jesus cried out. Because. In that three. Hour window. Of darkness. He was experiencing.

Far more. Than what the Roman soldiers. Had done to him. What he was experiencing. Was far more horrific. Far more.

Perplexing. Than what the Roman soldiers. At their very best. At their most cruel. Extent of their souls.

He was experiencing. Far more. Than what. They did to him. And that hour. The. Brightest. Time of the day. From 12 noon.

To 3 p.m. Outer darkness. Fell over the land. And in the midst of that. Outer darkness. The unrelenting.

[27:43] Righteous. Wrath of God. Was being poured out. Upon Jesus. In the place. Of sinners. And what their sins.

Deserved. In that darkness. Jesus. Was experiencing. The justice of God. Who was pouring out. His furious wrath. Against sin. While at the same time. Expressing. His gracious love. For sinners. Jesus hung on the cross.

As our substitute. And so what happened to Jesus. Should have happened to us. He took our place. He bore our sins. He absorbed. The.

Punishment. For our sins. The atmosphere of darkness. That engulfed the land. Reflected the spiritual reality.

[28:40] Of the darkness of sin. And the separation from. God the father. That Jesus was experiencing. On behalf of. Every.

One of us. Sinners. Some believe that Jesus cried out. Because he. Was. In such excruciating pain. And the pain of crucifixion. Had gotten to him. But if you think about that. If Jesus cried out. As we've heard. There were two thieves. On the side of him. And if he was crying out.

When they were not crying out. They would show him to be. A coward. A coward. And one who was just breaking down. Under. Physical pain.

Some say that Jesus cried out. Because he felt forsaken. He felt forsaken by the father. But brothers and sisters. Jesus didn't cry out. Because he felt forsaken.

[29:35] Jesus cried out. Because he was forsaken. He was forsaken. Because in that moment. God the father. In his justice. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!! God forsook him.

! God forsook him. Because he was standing in our place. And brothers and sisters. We don't appreciate the grace of God. Until we understand the wrath of God.

It is only when we understand the wrath of God. Wrath. Not. In a vacuum. But wrath that we deserved. That we can really appreciate.

The grace of God. That we have received. In place of that. Wrath. It was necessary for God's wrath to be poured out on Jesus.

[30:46] So that. God's grace. Could be extended. To us. Jesus experienced. Utter darkness. And separation from God.

So that every sinner who puts his or her trust in Jesus. Will never know darkness. And will never know eternal separation from God. The Bible tells us that.

The father. Loved the son. Eternally. And the Bible tells us that the father. Loves his own. With that same eternal love.

That love will never be broken. That love will never be severed. When God sets his love on us. What we know is that because Jesus has taken our place.

Because Jesus was an effective substitute. We will never. Brothers and sisters. Have to experience. And we can't. Have to experience. Separation from God. Or the kind of darkness.

[31:51] That Jesus experienced. And instead. We can do what we're doing on this good Friday. We can gather. And we can remember. Instead of.

Right. Rightly. Crying out. In our own agony. For our sins. This morning. We can sing. About the power of the cross. We can sing. About the amazing grace of God.

That has come to sinners. Who do not deserve it. Instead of. Tears of deep sorrow. Brothers and sisters.

We can have. Tears of great joy. And right now. The worship team is going to come. And they're going to. Lead us. In a song. That reminds us.

Of the amazing love of God. That has come to us. All because Jesus. Cried out in our place. He took our place.

[32:47] For our sins. And absorbed God's wrath. Let's stand together. Now normally. After strenuous activities. Which may involve.

Exercising. Cleaning. Gardening. You know. Especially on the outdoors. In the elements. In the heat. The sun. We would require some liquids. You know. To replenish the loss of water.

Through sweating. Because our mind. Informs our bodies. That we are thirsty. Now during the last moments. Of our Savior's life. On the cross. We see how Jesus.

He forgave. He granted pardon. To sinners. To enter into paradise. He explained the uniqueness. Of the universal. Christian family. Through adoption.

We also saw the cosmic effects. Of God's righteous judgment. On his son. What we see clearly. Being demonstrated. Is the climatic conclusion.

[33:42] Of Jesus's finished work. On the cross. In John chapter 19. Verse 28. After this. Jesus knowing. That all was now finished.

Said. To fulfill the scripture. I thirst. Now after reading this passage. We may become perplexed. By Jesus's statement.

I thirst. Because we know. That Jesus. Is the eternal one. The son of God. The ancient of days. The alpha and the omega. He is God in the flesh.

He is the creator. He is omnipotent. And here. We see him naked. We see him on a cross. And we see him thirsty. In John chapter 4.

Verses 1 through 15. The passage. With Jesus. Meaning the woman at the well. The Samaritan. Scripture again. Is clear. And tells us. That Jesus was weary. And he sat on the well.

[34:39] At the well. And he asked the woman. For a drink. After some exchanges. Back and forth. We see in verse 14. Jesus says. To her.

But whoever drinks. Of the water. That I will give him. Will never be thirsty. Again. The water. That I will give him. Will become. A spring of water.

Welling up. To eternal life. Question is. How is it then. That Jesus. The son of God. Who has no limitations. Can give water.

To others. That can quench thirst. For all eternity. But yet. He himself. Is thirsty. We must recall. That Jesus.

Yes. He is the son of God. And the son of man. He is unique. He has. Two natures. Fully God. While being fully man. We must remember. Also. That the promise.

[35:33] Of the good news. That was proclaimed. To Adam and Eve. In the garden. That their seed. Would crush the head. Of the serpent. That promise. Was repeated. All throughout. The Old Testament.

With Abraham. Where God told Abraham. Because of your seed. All the nations. Of the world. Will be blessed. Moses. In the book of Deuteronomy. When he was leaving.

He said. The Lord. Will raise up. Someone like me. And we ought to listen. To him. And on and on. We see this promise. Being fulfilled. Through the implementation.

Of the ceremonial laws. And sacrifices. But all foreshadowing. And pointing to Christ. And the work. That he would ultimately do. We see the priests. And the children of Israel.

They were doing something. Right? They were working. But we know. That there is none. None righteous. Not one. And we know. That all the labors. Of our hands. Will never meet. The law's

demands.

[36:28] They work daily. But their sins. Were never fully vindicated. Someone like them. A human. Not an animal. Needed to do the work. Of obtaining. Our righteousness. Someone who would get us.

In the right standing. With God. The person must be true. True man. Pure in heart. Because the justice of God. Requires that the same human nature. Which has sinned.

Should pay for sin. He must be righteous. Because. One who himself. Is a sinner. Cannot pay. For the sins of others. He must be true God.

So that by the power. His divine nature. He might bear. In his human nature. The burden of God's wrath. And obtain for us. Our righteousness. And eternal life.

We know that Jesus. He came to die. For our sins. And at times. Like today. Good Friday. We need to continue to pray. And ask God to help us.

[37:25] So that we do not become. So used of hearing this message. Over and over again. But pray that we are always. Humble. That we are moved. And in awe of what God has done for us. Through Christ Jesus.

Jesus came into the world. To save sinners. And as John the Baptist says. Behold. The Lamb of God. Who comes to take away the sins of the world. That was his mission.

The work he came to do. In John chapter 4 verse 34. Jesus explained. My food. Is to do the will. Of him who sent me. And to finish his work.

Jesus knew. That his work was finished. By his vicarious death on the cross. He accomplished the promise of salvation. And redeemed mankind. God made him.

Who knew no sin. To become sin for us. That we might become. The righteousness of God. To fulfill scripture. Jesus further reinforces. His sufficiency. And helps us to realize.

[38:22] Right before. He was about to die. That he is. Our human representative. He experienced. Our frailty. He was tempted. But without sin. But at the same time.

He is God. And able to save. John chapter 7 verse 37. Says. If anyone thirsts. Let him come to me. And drink. John chapter 6 verse 29.

Jesus replied. The work of God. Is this. To believe in the one. He has sent. So friends. We have work to do. We must believe the report.

Believe and obey. The voice that echoed. From heaven. That said. This is my son. In whom I am well pleased. Listen to him. It is because. Jesus thirsted.

On the cross. That he can quench. Quench the deepest. Longings of our soul. It is because. Jesus suffered. Rejection and cruelty. That Jesus is able. To heal us. Spiritually.

[39:18] It is because. Jesus died on the cross. That Jesus meets us. At the place of death. And transform us. For this. For this life of death. And sin. Into a life of eternal life. Jesus.

Who did not. Who bear these truths. Is for us. And thankfully. And mercifully. That we can rest. If we are truly thirsty. Amen. The passage that.

Or the verse of scripture. Meditation number six. Is from John. 19. Verse 30. And it's a continuation. Of.

The last. Meditation. About thirsting. And it reads. When Jesus had received. The sour wine. He said. It is finished.

Bowed his head. And gave up his spirit. Now Jesus probably. Drank the sour wine. Because. His throat was parched.

[40:19] His lips. His lips. Probably all blistered. And. He also was suffering. From dehydration. But Jesus.

Wanted to. Do something. And. As we read. He made a loud cry. And this was a loud cry. Of victory.

At the end. Of suffering. And. The Greek word. Used here is. Tetelestai. Which means. It is finished. And Jesus uttered this.

Word. With his dying breath. And this word. Carries the idea. Of fulfilling. Completing a task. Or also.

Paying. A bill. In full. So the question is. What is. It. That is finished. What was Jesus really saying.

[41:17] Was it the fact. That he was rejoicing. That after. All that excruciating pain. Torture. And suffering. That this crucifixion.

Was coming to an end. Or was he rejoicing. About something else. Vitality. More important. I think he was rejoicing.

Even more. Than we could. Fully. Appreciate. Or comprehend. You see. He had accomplished. As was stated earlier.

A divine mission. And this mission was given to him. By his father. Father. And that is the reason why. Jesus was sent into the world. It was a mission that was planned.

Before the created universe. It was an assignment to redeem. To save lost people. From their sin. By being a sacrificial lamb.

[42:17] And dying in their place. Reconciling us to God. Because we were a people. In really a bad state.

We had a record. A debt of sin. That we could never pay. And what Jesus did. He paid this debt. Of sin for us.

At the cross. And. He did this all. To the honor and glory. Of God. The father. No one took. Jesus's life. He gave it up. Willingly. And Jesus freely. Chose to rescue us. At the cost. Of his life. You see. Jesus knew. That wrath. And judgment. Would be upon. Us as people. So.

[43:16] As we've come to learn. It was a rescue mission. And he basically. As I said earlier. Completed the task. By saying.

It is finished. And. None of us can honestly say. That it is finished. Or it has been accomplished. At the end. Of our lives. Unless we've been committed.

To a divine cause. Throughout his ministry. Jesus told his disciples. That he came into the world. To die. They didn't quite understand.

They didn't get it. In fact. They caught it. After the fact. That he rose from the grave. He also said. He came to give his life. As a ransom for many.

On the cross. And with his last dying breath. He fulfilled. The mission. And. What about us?

[44:13] What about you? What about me? Are we going to allow. The difficulties of life. The distractions. The obstacles. Cause us to give up.

Are not finished. The assignments. The assignments. That God. Has given to each and every one of us. Because we all have assignments. God has given each and every person. Assignments. And the assignment is. As was stated earlier. First thing is. Our relationship with God. Through Jesus Christ. And. Speaking to others.

about this relationship, this good news. So when we come to the last words of our lives, will we be able to say with Christ that the work you gave me, I have finished it, I have completed it?

Or another way of saying it, I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Amen.

[45:22] Thank you, David. It is finished. Those are glorious words. They're glorious words because they clearly communicate that the price for sin had been paid, that sinners could now be reconciled to God.

And now we come to the seventh and the final words of Jesus on the cross. Luke records them in Luke 23, verse 46.

Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

And having said this, he breathed his last. These final words of Jesus stand in direct contrast to his earlier cry to the Father, why have you forsaken me?

But now it's all finished. And as we heard, Jesus finished the work that the Father had given him to do the work of redemption. And he could have simply hung his head and died.

[46:48] But he doesn't do that. Instead, he looks to his Father. He looks to the one who earlier poured out his wrath upon him. And he is now at peace.

And he says to his Father, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. There are some who believe that when Jesus died, he went to hell.

And actually going to hell was to fulfill the punishment that sinners deserve. That he had to fight with Satan over the keys of death.

And that was a part of his work of redemption. But these final words of Jesus tell us otherwise. They tell us that when Jesus, at his very end, before he would breathe his last breath, he committed his spirit into the hands of the Father.

And in these words of Jesus, we have a hopeful example of what death is like for the believer.

[48:02] None of us knows exactly how we will die, when we will die. None of us knows whether we will be conscious, as some people are.

But for those of us who have trusted in Jesus, if we happen to be conscious, as the moment of our death approaches, and we are aware that we are going to die, we can die in peace.

We can die the way Jesus died, knowing that our full redemption is finished. That the price for our salvation is paid in full, as we heard.

And we can commit our spirit into the hands of a gracious Heavenly Father. One whose hands hold no wrath for us.

Whose hands hold no condemnation for us. Because they've been poured out on his Son. Who took our place as our substitute on the cross.

[49:09] We can die in peace, knowing that there is no condemnation that awaits us for us. And God will not judge us again for what he judged Christ for on the cross.

That we can fully expect to hear the words, no condemnation. Because Jesus Christ took our place on the cross and paid for all of our sins.

Our past sins. Our present sins. And our future sins. And we can die in peace.

And we can say, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. And so these final words, Jesus, as he died, assured all of us who have trusted in Jesus, that we can die in peace.

We can entrust our spirits into a trustworthy God. But not only do these words assure us that we can die in peace.

[50:20] They also assure us that we can die with confidence about our destiny. Those of us who have trusted in Christ don't have to wonder what will happen to us when we die.

Jesus helps us to see that when we die, that our spirits are separated from our bodies. Our bodies remain on this earth.

And our spirits ascend to God, our Father. Jesus said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Our spirits will be absent from our bodies and present with the Lord, as the scriptures teach.

And so even on this Good Friday, as we think about Christ's death, brothers and sisters, we would be remiss if we didn't think about our own death.

We would be remiss if we do not contemplate the fact that one day we will all die. But the good news for us who have trusted in Jesus is that these final words of Jesus should remove any fear and any uncertainty about death.

[52:09] The last set of people who should be fearful and anxious about death is those of us who have put our trust in Jesus. Do you know, one of the reasons that so many fear death, and I say so many, and I mean those of us who have trusted in Jesus, and I think of this pastorally just over the years, one of the reasons that so many of us fear death is even though if asked questions about salvation, we'll have all the right answers, that it's all by grace, none of it is by works.

Many of us still contemplate standing before God, and we are fearful about whether he will accept us or not.

And the reason is because we're looking at ourselves. The reason is that we are more mindful of ourselves than we are mindful of Christ. Brothers and sisters, the only way we will have peace in the moment of our death and be able to commit ourselves confidently into the hands of the Father is if we are trusting in Jesus and not in ourselves.

Nothing that we have done are nothing that we can expect to do. And if you're here this morning, or if you're watching by live stream, and you have not yet trusted in Jesus, I want to say to you, the Bible says that it is appointed unto every one of us once to die.

And after death, we will be judged. And only those whose sins have been judged in Jesus on the cross once and for all can have any confidence and assurance of standing before the judgment of God because in the judgment of God for all believers, the judgment of Christ will be credited to

them so that they do not have to endure their own judgment for their sins.

[54:22] But those who have not trusted in Christ, by not trusting in Christ, are saying, I will stand for myself. I will be judged for my sins or the record of my life before God.

And friends, I say to you that because that's a perfect judgment, no human being can pass it. No human being can stand. The only ones who will pass that judgment on that dreadful day will be those who have trusted in Jesus Christ, who cease from their own works of righteousness and have entered into his.

And so this morning, if you would turn away from sin, if you trust in Jesus, you likewise can have comfort from these words of Jesus that you can die knowing that you have peace with God and that you will spend eternity with him.

It's finished. And that means there's nothing left for us to do that adds to the perfect salvation that Christ has accomplished for us on the cross.

And may we, as we leave today, may we leave settled and rejoicing in that assurance.

[55:57] If we look to ourselves, we'll be discouraged. If we look to the cross, we should be encouraged. Amen? Let's pray together. Father, thank you so much that before the foundation of the world, you ordained that Christ will be the Lamb who would come and be slain to take away the sin of the world.

And thank you, Lord, that Jesus Christ came and lived a perfect life that none of us could live. And then he died the death we all deserve to die. And even in his darkest moment, he endured on behalf of undeserving sinners.

And Lord, we thank you that we can sing this morning that our great opponent, death, has been defeated. We can sing that our sins, all of them, have been forgiven.

And we can know peace with you, peace that this world cannot give, peace that this world cannot take away.

[57:27] Lord, we are so grateful for the great salvation that we have received. And now the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen. Amen. God bless you. We will see you on Sunday, the Lord willing. Amen. Amen. Amen.