

Discovery Hour
E100, Week 14
April 11, 2010
Dave Timmerman

Though this is the week following Easter, the E100 program had us reading passages from Passion Week including the Crucifixion and Resurrection, this week. One of the aspects of this that I have found interesting, related to the Stations of Cross practiced by the Catholic Church and even the prayer stations we used at our Maundy Thursday service, are what are referred to as the seven last words of Christ. A more accurate name would likely be the seven last statements. In any case, here they are:

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34)

I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in Paradise (Luke 23:43)

Dear woman, here is your son (John 19:26)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Mark 15:34)

I am thirsty (John 19:28)

It is finished (John 19:30)

Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Luke 23:46)

These seven statements are a commonly covered in sermons during lent and a number of books have been written on them including Charles Swindoll, *The Darkness and the Dawn* and William Willimon, *Thank God Its Friday: Encountering the Seven Last Words from the Cross*. They show Christ, even as he experiences the hatred of men, the excruciating pain of the cross, and separation from the Father, forgiving those who crucified him, accepting the repentant thief next to him, caring for his mother, and self surrender to the Father. All this, while the words “I thirst,” powerfully remind us of his humanity. And then, arguably the most theologically important statement, “It is finished,” rings for eternity the power truth that salvation has been made possible for all, the path for reconciliation laid, and the means of justification accomplished.

Discussion Questions

Working inductively, what can we learn about Jesus from these words?

Which are the most applicable today?

Which is your favorite and why?

Which one raises the most questions for you?

Focus on the last one and talk about application to us.

Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus carries His own cross
3. Jesus falls the first time
4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus falls a third time.
10. Jesus clothes are taken away.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.

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