



Week of September 16, 2018

***Devotional Focus: Completion***

**Monday – Completion for God's Will**

*“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’ Saying this, he breathed his last.”*

**Luke 23:46 (CSB)**

**Psalm 31:1–5 (CSB)**

- <sup>1</sup> Lord, I seek refuge in you; let me never be disgraced. Save me by your righteousness.
- <sup>2</sup> Listen closely to me; rescue me quickly. Be a rock of refuge for me, a mountain fortress to save me.
- <sup>3</sup> For you are my rock and my fortress; you lead and guide me for your name's sake.
- <sup>4</sup> You will free me from the net that is secretly set for me, for you are my refuge.
- <sup>5</sup> Into your hand I entrust my spirit; you have redeemed me, Lord, God of truth.

Does this passage sound familiar? It should. In Jesus' last saying He quotes/fulfills this scripture, which was written around 1060BC. Nearly 1,100 years before He would be nailed to the tree. The cross was not a surprise to God.

In fact, every statement of Jesus that is recorded in the Bible has immense meaning – most of which we cannot even fathom (which is why He often spoke in parables). How much more, though, His statements from the cross. This is our final week of daily devotions. Throughout this week, we will look specifically at His final statement. As you continue in your devotions, I hope that it has been, or will become, evident that everything in your life has purpose and meaning, just as Jesus' did. In fact, He said that we (believers) are a light to this dark world (Matthew 5:14; Ephesians 5:8). Paul further explained that God has a purpose for all things the believer might face and/or endure (Romans 8:28), whether good or bad in this world. Just as what seemed to be a horrific defeat on the cross, was made to be an eternal victory for all mankind!

In today's prayer time, do an inventory of everything that has happened in your life, and everything you are facing today – whether good or bad, happy or sad, understandable or obscure. Is it possible that you can see how God can use it for good or glory? Remember, this does not mean that God caused something bad to happen – it may even be the result of personal choice(s). What it does mean; however, is that God can still work in and through it. He's likely not done yet.

I'm sure the soldiers and religious leaders thought, as Jesus spoke His last, they had won – He was defeated. And friend; He was just getting started!



## Tuesday – “Father”

*“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’ Saying this, he breathed his last.”*

### Luke 23:46 (CSB)

Jesus begins his final (seventh) statement by once again crying out to God. And as is common and predominant for Jesus to do, He refers to God as Father. Now, for those who have studied the Bible, you are certainly aware of the trinitarian relationship of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. However, Jesus wants us to know and understand the relationship not only He has with God, but also the relationship that we have with the God of the universe; The Great I Am!

He is our Father. Most of us have either had a relationship with our father, with a father-figure, or perhaps you yourself are a father. In any case, God is the Father of all mankind (Ephesians 4:6), whether a person acknowledges it or not. However, for those who accept God as Father; through receiving His Gift, His Son, we are His children. **John 1:10–13 (CSB)** <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

I wonder, do we really believe the God who created the universe is our Father? Not only that, but He is our perfect Father who knows everything about us, and still loves us unconditionally. His love for us is perfect in every way. Do we realize the empowerment of this? Do we trust in His perfect will and love for us? If we say “yes”, then do we show it? Is it evident in our actions and spirit? Would your friends and family members say that it is evident (visible) in your life?

### Matthew 7:9–11 (NIV84)

<sup>9</sup> “Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? <sup>11</sup> If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

In today’s prayer time, if you have acknowledged that Jesus alone is your Savior and God is your heavenly Father, I want you to talk to God as though He is just that – your Father. You don’t have to use big, fancy, churchy words – just talk to your Dad. He loves you as no other and He desperately wants to spend time with you.

Great/Easy read: <https://www.ivpress.com/my-heart-christ-s-home-booklet>



## Wednesday – “into your hands”

*“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’ Saying this, he breathed his last.”*

**Luke 23:46 (CSB)**

When you think about the “hands of God”, what comes to mind? Perhaps the seven days of creation (Psalm 19:1)? Or perhaps you picture the finger of God engraving the stone tablets with His commandments (Exodus 31:18)? For me, one of the most meaningful verses of scripture is found in Genesis 2:7 (CSB) “Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.” This is such a beautiful and intimate picture of God’s “hands-on” relationship with mankind. It also reminds me that, if God can make a living person out of dust, well, He should be able to take care of anything I may face in life as well.

Today; however, I want you to consider **John 10:27–30 (CSB)**

*<sup>27</sup> “My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”*

Do you know the two greatest things about the hands of God?

- 1) They are open to receive you.
- 2) When they are around you, nothing or no one can EVER remove you from them.

I can’t tell you the number of people over the years that I have shared with, who feel like they have sinned either so often, or so big, that they are either beyond God’s reach, or God has allowed them to slip out of His grasp (lose their salvation). Friend, if either of these is possible, then Jesus is a liar. The truth is, no one is without sin, nor is anyone good enough to deserve God’s love. Because of this, His hands were nailed to a cross with the hope and expectation they would one day hold you – a sinner. If He’s willing to go to that extreme to get His hands on you; do you honestly think He would ever give up on you or let go of you? Regardless of where you are, what’s going on in your life, or even how far you have turned from God; please know that He will never leave you, nor forsake/abandon you (Deuteronomy 31:6).

In today’s prayer time, focus on God’s extensive, perfect, and sacrificial love that He has for you. Stand firmly on the faith and promise that no one and nothing can ever snatch you out of His grip. Give Him thanks!



## Thursday – “I entrust”

“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, *‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’* Saying this, he breathed his last.”

**Luke 23:46 (CSB)**

The Oxford dictionary defines “entrust” as a verb with a definition to either **1.** Assign the responsibility for doing something to (someone); or **2.** Put (something) into someone’s care or protection.

As a Christian, we are called to entrust our life to God, just as Jesus did. We often only consider this “entrustment” for our eternal dwelling, which is to say that we trust in the gospel for our eternity. However, we are also called to entrust God with every aspect of our daily lives as well. We are told in **1 Peter 4:19** “So then, let those who suffer according to God’s will *entrust* themselves to a faithful Creator while doing what is good.” (my emphasis added) We need to entrust God with EVERYTHING – our time, relationships, calling, finances, careers, etc. This is exactly what God wants – not just to be our “fire insurance”, that is to say, our ticket from Hell. He wants us to entrust Him with every detail of our life. Any why? Because He loves us. He is our Father.

As you pray today, first realize that is what this time is all about. In our time of prayer, we are to entrust God with all our worries, all our fears, all our joy. Would you take time to do just that? Perhaps there are things that you have been trying to hold on to or control all on your own. All the while, God is waiting for you to entrust Him with them.



## Friday – “my Spirit”

*“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’ Saying this, he breathed his last.”*

### Luke 23:46 (CSB)

Jesus’ final two words “my spirit”. Isn’t it funny how much attention we give to our bodies, while we are healthy? We worry about our weight, our hair ladies – color, men – keeping it (on their head and not gaining it elsewhere), how tall we are, our skin tone, the clothes we wear, etc. Is it not true? Because of this grave concern, we go to the gym, buy hair products, diet, sunbathe, etc. We care so much about our body; until we no longer have a use for it. Then, it is simply discarded. Jesus didn’t say “I entrust my body”, but “I entrust my spirit.” When our time comes and death is at hand, we will care less about our appearance and what will happen to our body; however, it will be of tremendous concern, what will happen to our spirit/soul. In fact, the Bible teaches that one day we will have a new, eternal body and it will look nothing like we do now. So today, consider your spirit – which is eternal. Have you entrusted your spirit to God? There is nothing more important in this world than being confident in your eternal salvation. If you have entrusted God with your spirit, then what about everything else? Have you given Him complete surrender?

In today’s time of prayer, what is on your heart and mind that you need to entrust to God?



## Saturday – What now?

*“And Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.’ Saying this, he breathed his last.”*

### **Luke 23:46 (CSB)**

So this is it! Today is the final devotion in this “SEVEN” series. I pray that your life has been blessed by your devotion, not to this church or even to this sermon series, but to God. Some have shared with me that the past seven weeks have either been the first time they have had a devotional time or at least the first time they have kept their devotional time with God. Friends, there is nothing better you can do, then spending time alone with God. In fact, God desires it more than you could ever imagine. **James 4:7–8a (CSB)**<sup>7</sup> Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

It is also my prayer that we will never look at the cross of Jesus Christ the same again. What have you learned through this study of His final seven statements from the cross? How has your life been changed by your better understanding of all the He endured for you?

You see, it is impossible to know and understand the suffering that Jesus did for your sins, and not be changed. Consider the response of those at the cross:

### **Luke 23:47–48 (CSB)**

<sup>47</sup> When the centurion saw what happened, he began to glorify God, saying, “This man really was righteous!”

<sup>48</sup> All the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home, striking their chests.

The centurion (soldier in charge of 100 men) saw the way that Jesus was crucified and how Jesus responded, he saw the darkness that covered the land, he heard Jesus (a dying man) cry out in a loud voice. And his response? “This man really was righteous!” Translation: Jesus really is who He said He was! And what about the crowd? They went away “striking their chests”, which was a sign of their guilt for crucifying an innocent man.

How about you? How has the knowledge of the cross of Jesus Christ impacted you? Will you accept Him as Savior? Will you entrust Him with all your life? Will you be more committed to sharing His Gospel? Will you continue in your daily time alone with God? What now? How will you be forever changed from the seven sayings from the cross?