

WHAT IS JESUS SAYING TO US ON GOOD FRIDAY AD 2008?

Jesus is saying to us exactly what He said to His followers 2000 years ago. During the six hours He lingered on the cross, He spoke 7 great words, what I call “Gold from Golgotha.” In each word, He gives us four golden nuggets explicit, or implicit:

1. An Eternal Truth
 2. A Clear Command
 3. A Glorious Promise
 4. A Serious Warning
- I. **The First Word:** “Father forgive them for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).
1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus Christ will forgive anyone, even the most violent sinners, if he will repent.
 2. **The Clear Command** – Forgive everyone, not just 7 times, but 7 times 70 (490), meaning forever and always (Matthew 18:21-22).
 3. **The Promise** – “If you forgive men their trespasses, the Father in heaven will forgive you” (Matthew 6:14).
 4. **The Warning** – If you forgive not other’s their trespasses, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you” (Matthew 6:15).
- II. **The Second Word:** “Verily I say unto you, today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43).
1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus will save any repentant sinner and at death take him to heaven immediately to be with Him. Thus salvation is independent of religious rituals or works, such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper; also there is no “soul sleep” or “purgatory” or “limbo.”
 2. **The Clear Command** – Use every opportunity you have to win the lost. Think: Jesus took time out when He was dying to win a miserable thief. In Acts 8:4 we read, “*Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere gossiping the word.*” In Philemon 6 we read, “*I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.*” (NIV)
 3. **The Promise** – This is our blessed assurance, that to die as a believer is “to be with Christ which is far better” (Phil. 1:23)
 4. **The Warning** – If we do not warn the wicked, their blood God will require at our hands. “*When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you shall surely die!’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand*” (Ezek. 33:8).
- III. **The Third Word:** “Woman, behold you son...behold your mother” (John 28:26-27).

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1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus honored His mother but He did not worship her. He introduced John to Mary as His mother and John as her son. But it is noticeable that He did not call her Mother. Neither did He venerate or worship her in any way. Pope John Paul II is fond of using the Latin phrase *Totus Tuus*, meaning, “wholly thine,” which in his case means “I belong wholly to the Virgin Mary.” The Scriptures teach that for one to be saved Jesus must be first, foremost, the one and only one (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5).
 2. **The Clear Command** – Honor your Father and Mother (Exodus 20:12).
 3. **The Promise** – Long life on earth (Ephesians 6:3; Exodus 20:12).
 4. **The Warning** – Honor your mother (wife, children) but do not worship them. Exodus 20:12 must be balanced with Luke 14:26 which says, *“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”*
- IV. **The Fourth Word** – “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34).
1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus suffered our hell in order to save us. Not only did He bear our sins, but while doing so He was separated from His Father as will the lost be in hell. Martin Luther said “Mysteries of Mysteries, God forsaken of God,” for God could not look upon His Son as He became a sin offering for our sins.
 2. **The Clear Command** – “Fear not him who can destroy the body, but rather fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell” (John 10:28).
 3. **The Promise** – Because He suffered hell, no saved person can go to hell (Revelation 20:6)
 4. **The Warning** – God deals with sin in only two places: at the cross and in hell. Unless you bring your sins to the cross, you must bear them eternally in hell.
- V. **The Fifth Word** – “I Thirst” (John 19:28)
1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus suffered excruciating (*ex-cruces*, out of the cross) pain in His body on the cross.
 2. **The Clear Command** – Expect to suffer for the cause of Christ in a sinful world (John 15:19; Col. 1:24; 1 Peter 4:12).
 3. **The Promise** – Those who suffer with Him shall reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12; Romans 8:17; 2 Timothy 4:17; 1 Peter 5:14).
 4. **The Warning** - If you do not suffer, that is a sign you are not living godly and perhaps lost (2 Timothy 3:12).
- VI. **The Sixth Word** – “It is finished” (John 19:30).
1. **The Eternal Truth** – God the Father assigned Jesus a perfect plan for His life – the task of saving human kind from the penalty, the

power and the person of sin (the devil). Jesus finished this task to the fullest extent (John 17:4).

2. **The Clear Command** – Discover God’s plan for your life and be sure to finish strong and well (Acts 20:24).
3. **The Promise** – A crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8).
4. **The Warning** - You will suffer great loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ if not faithful (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

VII. **The Seventh Word** – “Father, into your hand I commit (deposit) my spirit” (Luke 23:46).

1. **The Eternal Truth** – Jesus passed immediately into the presence of His Father when He breathed His last breath.
2. **Clear Command** – Fear not death. Believe Jesus when He says in Revelation 1:17-18, “...*Do not be afraid: I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*”
3. **The Promise** – If you can say “*For me to live is Christ*, you can also say, *to die is gain*” (Phil. 1:21). Ponder also John 11:26 and 8:51.
4. **The Warning** – If you can’t say “*For me to live is Christ*” you cannot claim the resultant promise “*to die is gain.*”

However, Good Friday is the best time I know for one to turn from his sin and trust Christ and receive eternal life now and forever. “*He who believes on me has (right now) eternal life*” (John 6:47) and shall never come into judgment (John 5:24).