

## **“Forgive them father, for they do not know what they do”**

This is Christ’s radical love for humanity. That is what we see in this last word of Jesus. Imagine the pain and suffering Jesus went through on the way to the cross and then the crucifixion. The lashes on the back, the sores from the cross on the shoulders, the thorns in the head, and the nails on his hands and feet. All this while he is made fun of as the “King of the Jews”. Any person in his state would surely have been resentful, to say the least, but that is not what we see here. No matter the pain Jesus went through, he loved us unconditionally and wanted those that betrayed him, those that spat on him, and those that crucified him next to him in the kingdom of everlasting life. In everything Jesus says, we are taught a crucial lesson, and this is no exception. We are to love even those who hurt us to the point that forgiveness seems impossible, but this is at the core of what it means to be a Christian. We are to forgive those that harm us. But this is not just for the sake of others, but your sake as well. When we harbor this hatred and are resentful of others, our hearts begin to turn to stone, unwilling to allow the warm light of God to radiate in our hearts.

## **“Today you will be with me in paradise.”**

Every day we wake up by God's grace and we have the choice to take in the paradise He has created for all of us to live in. Your neighbors, friends, family, anyone you come into contact with throughout the day, is a sign of God's love. I believe we were all put on this earth to preach and spread His love to everyone regardless of who or what they believe in. Take every day as a blessing and be thankful we are able to live this life. My personal take from this quote is to, every day take it as a way to connect to my faith and make it stronger. To be grateful for the little things such as being able to drive to school and be blessed to attend school in general makes me realize I was born into a paradise hand tailored for me by God. The school I go to, the job I work, the people I spend my time with, the Church I attend, and many more blessings are individual to me and only me. I chose to see God's will through all these components and make the best out of all of them, if I ignore them or neglect them I essentially miss out on that paradise and great opportunity to get closer to God. Letting His call in, will make your life a paradise because you will value every experience so much more, and in return your faith will be fortified.

## **“Behold Your Son; Behold Your Mother “**

As Jesus was on the cross, He spoke these words: “Behold your son; Behold Your Mother.” Today, as we read these lines, we get an idea that the Lord still left a physical part of Himself. His mother stayed to help guide or nurture us into moving towards a more fulfilling and joyful life. Many of us believe that when Jesus went up to heaven, we had to pray for His guidance but His mother; our mother, was still down here for a little more time to help us be guided. Mary was given to us by our Lord and this is one of the many gifts He left behind.

## **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

The Gospel describes Jesus screaming these words in agony as he was crucified on the cross for three long hours. The words themselves sound terrifying and leave a confused yet strong message. They come as a surprise as Jesus is the one to say them, the beloved Son that was sent by the Lord himself to strengthen our faith and bring us closer to God. Knowing that he quoted a Psalm from Scripture, means that he is encountering with us at a more human nature. Jesus was demonstrating his situation as he had the weight of all of our sins on his body. He's crying from spiritual agony and physical pain just like some of us who go through moments that mark us more than our visible scars. As Jesus faced abandonment, we were being cleansed from our sins giving us the opportunity to live with God's companionship. We are constantly encountering with the Lord: an open, loving, and forgiving relationship in earth thanks to Jesus. In hardships and accomplishments, we will always have God protecting us also when we sin and turn away from him, for we can always find his love and redemption even if it feels like there's none.

## **“I Thirst”**

Every day we all ‘thirst’ for the love of Jesus Christ, even though He suffered and faced death, Jesus still wanted to fulfill the will of God and the scriptures. Many believe that when Jesus said ‘I am thirsty’ it symbolizes Jesus’ humanity, but I believe that it symbolizes how Jesus is able to quench our thirst for “life” by providing “living water” that flows from within. The living water refers to the spiritual life mediated through the Spirit of the living Christ, which Jesus’ disciples came to experience after his resurrection/glorification. A spiritual life centered on the way of Jesus can quench our thirst in a variety of ways. One of the primary ways, is in our quest for meaning and purpose, which is connected to our need for real community involving mutual caring, sharing, healing, and a passion for justice for all people. In John 7, Jesus said to the people in Jerusalem, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the ones who believe in me drink”. I believe John wants us to read Jesus' words from the cross, “I thirst.” as He who was the source of living water is now thirsty as he dies on the cross. The source of life, of grace, of hope, of love, of living water is drying up for our sake. This spring, however, will never be extinguished.

## **It is finished**

It is finished can mean a lot of things to us. Could be something great, a change, or for others it may mean an end to something they thought would last forever.

These words completed our salvation. His sacrifice for us. These words illustrated the love that Jesus has for his sons and daughters through sacrificing his life to save us from the consequences of sin. It is finished by way of sacrifice. There are so many things he sacrifices in the name of the Lord to be able to clear all from sin. Jesus devoted his life to make sure our path was clear of sins, that we were not to worry about the power of Satan and with his sacrifice we all have felt the faith and love and the power of our Lord's presence. It is finished is not only the end of his life's task; but his way to assure us and show us that with God and doing good we will always have the peace and love He brings us all by our faith and prayers. It is finished is the ends to a mean, it is the relief he felt when he finished his work and was ready for the beginning of his new life. When Jesus said those words, it meant that he completed the work he set out to do and with that it cleared our debt to His father for the past present and future.

## **Father, into your hands I commend my spirit...**

Jesus uttered these final words in a loud voice as he breathed his last, in a testament of true surrender. Crucifixion in ancient times was intended to be a long, drawn out process in order to torture criminals, a true hell on Earth. Jesus spoke to God intimately knowing that through the bleakest moments, God would elevate his spirit into sweet paradise and his earthly wounds were the ultimate sacrifice for all. In modern times, we often find ourselves straying from the Lord in times of hardships and challenges and instead sulk in the sorrow of our petty wounds. Jesus's last words serve an incredible example of the unwavering faith we must have in God. From this, we can learn that through perseverance and faith, the gates of heaven will always be waiting with the love and embrace of the almighty.