

# UPON THE ROCK

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Upon the Rock is published bimonthly for the purpose of setting forth sound biblical material concerning first-principles and evangelism. We strive to print articles that are informative for Christians and non-Christians.

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## FATHER FORGIVE THEM (Luke 23:34)

By A.J. Cox

Jesus Christ lived a humble, sacrificial life in service to others. (Matthew 20:28; Philippians 2:4-8). He was a compassionate person who went about doing good. (Matthew 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:13; Acts 10:38). He taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35). And he taught that the path to true greatness is a life of ministry and service. (Matthew 20:25-27; Mark 9:33-35; Luke 22:24-27). His entire life was a seamless demonstration of compassion and goodwill toward humanity. It is his death, however, that serves as the greatest manifestation of his love for mankind. Jesus said "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13). The Lord not only laid down his life for his friends, he also died for His enemies! Christ died for the unworthy. He died for sinners. (Romans 5:6-8). At his death, the Lord continued to show the concern for others which characterized his life.

### Father Forgive Them

Some of our Lord's words from the cross would not have been peculiar to those who heard them. Certainly Jesus was not the only person to ever declare his thirst while being crucified. (John 19:28). It is also entirely possible that others made arrangements for their loved ones similar to the one Jesus made for His mother. (John 19:26, 27). Some of His words, however, would have been very peculiar to those who heard them. For example, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). Generally thought to have been the first of the "Seven Words" from the cross, this statement may have been uttered while the nails were being driven through His flesh. Had the Roman soldiers ever heard such a thing while carrying out their gruesome duties? How could a man utter such sentiments while suffering such violence to his person?

As remarkable as these words may be to some, especially given the environment in which they were spoken, students of the life and teaching of Jesus know that any other attitude would have been inconsistent with his character. Jesus had taught that men ought to

love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. (Matthew 5:44). Likewise, if a man is to have any hope of being forgiven by God he must be willing to forgive those who sin against him. (Matthew 6:14, 15; 18:21-22; Luke 17:3-4). Even while being shamefully abused and mistreated, our Lord longed for the repentance and salvation of his tormentors. (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). If Jesus could pray for their forgiveness surely we can forgive those who trespass against us.

### **They Know Not What They Do**

Jesus knew that his tormentors did not truly understand what they were doing. They did not know who he was; neither did they comprehend the consequences of their actions. (Acts 13:27). Although some who witnessed Christ's death, and the wonders which followed, began to realize what they had participated in, by then their crime had already been committed. (Matthew 27:50-54; Mark 15:37-39; Luke 23:46-48). Peter declared that the Jews had denied the Holy One and the Just, and had killed the Prince of life. He recognized, however, that they had done it through ignorance, as did also their rulers. (Acts 3:13-17). Similarly, Paul wrote "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Corinthians 2:7-8).

Certainly those who had participated in Christ's crucifixion were ignorant of the consequences of their actions and the magnitude of their crime. Would they, however, be excused because of their ignorance? There are those today who would argue that ignorance does indeed excuse. Did Jesus believe this? Obviously he did not. Even though the participants in his crucifixion did not know what they were doing they were still guilty of the crime! Would the Lord have prayed for their forgiveness if they did not need it? Would the Lord have desired their pardon if they were excused of the crime because of their ignorance? J.W. McGarvey stated "Ignorance mitigates, but does not excuse crime." Similarly, of those involved in the Lord's crucifixion, H. Leo Boles wrote "they were ignorant of the enormous crime that they were committing; this ignorance, though it did not excuse them, may have mitigated somewhat their sin."

Perhaps there is a sense in which these words are applicable to every sinner. Do we truly understand the enormity of sin? Do we “know what we do” when we disregard and violate the will of an Almighty God? Do we really know how our sins hurt others, ourselves, the Lord, and his cause? Perhaps the best illustration of the seriousness of sin is the price that was paid to make forgiveness possible. Sinning against an Almighty God is such a grievous crime that only the death of the Son of God could atone for it.

### **The Answer to His Prayer**

Have you ever wondered “when and how was the Lord’s prayer answered?” Were those who participated in his death forgiven immediately upon the utterance of Christ’s prayer? Some might think that this is so based upon the fact that Jesus forgave the thief while he was on the cross. It should be remembered, however, that the thief had clearly repented of his conduct. (Matthew 27:44; Luke 23:39-43). Though the Lord desired that they be forgiven he could not forgive them if they were not willing to repent. Neither would Jesus have asked his Father to forgive them in an impenitent condition. (Luke 17:3). How and when, therefore, was the Lord’s prayer answered?

On the day of Pentecost the apostles stood and addressed the people of Israel. They accused them of taking and, by wicked hands, crucifying and killing Jesus. (Acts 2:22, 23, 36). At the hearing of these words they were pricked in their heart and they asked “men and brethren what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). The answer was given “repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” (Acts 2:38). When some three thousand souls gladly received that word and were baptized they received the forgiveness for which Jesus prayed. (Acts 2:41, 47). Similarly, when sinners obey the gospel today they too obtain the salvation which the Lord desires them to have. (1 Timothy 2:3,4; 2 Peter 3:9).

### **Conclusion**

Upon the cross the Lord left his disciples an example of the kind of attitude that is pleasing to God. Though we cannot be expected to forgive those who are impenitent, we must forgive those who sin

## **WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?**

Hear - (Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:24-27).

Believe - (Hebrews 11:6; Mark 16:15-16).

Repent - (Acts 2:38; 17:30; Luke 13:3).

Confess - (Matthew 10:32,33; Acts 8:36).

Be baptized - (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27).

Live faithfully unto death - (Rev. 2:10).

positions, Jesus had emerged victorious. He didn't quit early or give up, although the temptation was there in Gethsemane. It wouldn't be a stretch to imagine His own words pushing Him on to victory, "my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). I wasn't there and have no way to prove it, but I wouldn't be surprised if He was smiling when He said it. God had done His part and it was now up to man to do his. God paved the road to heaven with the blood of Christ, but man had to travel that road himself, and no there are not any shortcuts. If you are close to quitting or thinking of giving up, please don't. Whether you are a discouraged parent, a frustrated spouse, a senior with deteriorating health, or a Christian with a wounded and weakened faith, hang in there; finish. Pray for strength and endurance, then pick up your cross and carry it to heaven's gate. I can only imagine how Satan must have been swelling with pride as he watched Jesus taking His final breaths. For so many centuries he had worked to destroy the seed of woman who would crush his head (Genesis 3:15). Perhaps he thought Abel was the Messiah, and no doubt he worked to influence and tempt Cain to violently murder his own brother (Genesis 4). Maybe he thought Jacob was the One and did all he could to entice him into sin by yielding to greed and covetousness. Is it possible he thought it was Joseph, Moses, David or a host of others who were descendants of Abraham. Despite all of his best efforts he had failed miserably, but his greatest defeat was yet to come. Just as Satan began to boast of his victory, Jesus crushed his head with a cross and three little words, "It is finished." 2 John 3.

against us when they repent. (Matthew 6:14, 15; 18:21, 22; Luke 17:3, 4). Jesus also indicated that ignorance does not excuse man of sin. The only way for the sinner to escape the punishment for sin is to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Romans 1:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). Finally, the next time you are tempted to sin, pause and remember the terrible price that was paid to atone for your transgressions.

## TODAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN PARADISE

Mark Lance

When we think of Paradise we think of a place of happiness. It is a place that everyone would want to go. Most families plan a vacation, and they plan to go to a place that they would consider to be beautiful, and a place they will find joy and contentment. Well there is a waiting place for the soul of man that certainly could be described with these words, a place the Bible calls paradise.

### PARADISE A REAL PLACE

The scripture under our consideration says: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43). Many people in our world sadly live with the thought that this world in which we now live is all that there is to man's existence. But the child of God knows from God's word that this world is only temporary: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor.5:1).

We have another example of paradise: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar oft and Lazarus in his bosom" (Lk. 16:19-23). We

learn that there is life after death, When we die we will find ourselves either in torment or paradise. Whether we are in torment or paradise depends on how we live in this life.

There are so many blessings God has bestowed upon us in this life, but at the same time we will admit that there are a lot of difficulties. With that in mind we should look forward to going to a place called paradise, and even father joy should be the Christians as we look beyond paradise to our ultimate goal of Heaven.

### PARADISE IS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD

This place called paradise is not for just anyone. No doubt all people will want to be there, but paradise is reserved only for those who love God. Jesus said: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24). God seeks those that will worship Him, and that worship must be according to the pattern God has given to us to by which we are to worship.

Every person worships someone or something, but not everyone worships the God of Heaven, and there are still others that desire to worship God but only according to the manner in which they chose to do so. All worship is not according to the standard of God: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt. 7:21-23). A lot of the worship services today are designed to please man rather than God. In reality what people are saying even if they do not realize it is, God here is the conditions I will meet you on. John wrote: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God,

life as well! He asks that we commit our spirits into His hands in the same way that He committed His spirit into the Father's hands!

## It Is Finished

Brandon Britton

Few words were spoken, but so much was said. It was the shortest, but at the same time, greatest sermon ever preached on motivation and encouragement for Christians. Paul preached, "let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1) and "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" (II Timothy 4:7-8). John proclaimed, "be thou faithful until death" (Revelation 2:10), but He only needed three words, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Words like these conjure up in my mind the image of a boxer, bloody, bruised, tired, weak, but holding both hands over his head lifting up the heavyweight championship belt. Years of training, sacrifice, preparation, pain, setbacks, obstacles and goals became worth it all in one instant. "IT IS FINISHED!" This was no cry of defeat, no sir, not for a minute. This was just the opposite, this was His greatest victory. It was over.

What was over? The plan of God to redeem man (that had been in the works from before time began). The plan was enacted in the Garden of Eden when man invited sin into the world. The plan expanded when Abraham was invited into a covenant with Jehovah. The plan grew into a great nation descended from Abraham, the Hebrews, the Jews. The plan was strengthened by the enacting of a great law to demonstrate the horror of sin. The plan took a surprising and unexpected twist when it led to a barn and a baby, upon whom the fate of mankind would rest. The plan flourished with His teaching and first person demonstration of God in the flesh. Now the plan was complete with His sinless death on the cross for the sins, of all of man. The blood was shed, the price was paid, the job was finished, it was time to go home. Like a brave and battered soldier who had spent years away from home, fighting in some of the most difficult

men!" (Psalm 31:19). This sure knowledge that He would be received back into the courts of heaven accompanied Jesus throughout His life. He knew that the ear of the Father was open to His pleas in times of adversity as well as in His thanksgivings. Jesus knew that His mission in time would be beset with trouble but that a greater place was reserved for Him by the Father's side once His work here was done. In the shadow of the cross he spoke of going to prepare a place for His disciples and He encouraged them to put away their fears arising from His soon departure. His words of comfort went like this: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:2-3). Jesus could commit His spirit to the Father at the time of His death because He knew that His life would not end there. His Father's commitment to Him to receive Him into glory was inextricably linked to His commitment to the Father!

The thrust is trust! Jesus trusted the Father. He knew that in adversity, especially in adversity, the Father would not forsake Him. Jesus was fully confident that after the temporary trials of this earth were ended, He would ascend to an exalted position by His Father's side. Trust was the operative characteristic in all of His life and at His death. This trust was the basis upon which He uttered the words, "Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit."

If left here, this entire article is nothing more than a look at a historical curiosity, namely a man who lived His life such that trust was at the core of all He did. However, that Man calls is beyond merely a curious glance toward Him and His relationship with the Father. He calls us to walk in His footsteps. To His disciples He said, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me." (John 14:1). The trust that He had in the Father He calls us to have in Him. If we trust Him at all, we must believe Him when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6).

When we trust Christ in that way, we trust the Father also. The Bible was written so that we might believe (trust) in Him (John 20:30-31). Some want to "trust" Him only in death, but He bids us trust Him in

that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:1-3).

When we truly love God we will give up our own will and worship Him in the prescribed manner as found in His word. It was never left up to man to direct himself: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).

### PARADISE IS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PREPARED THEMSELVES

At first the thief on the cross mocked Jesus, but he realized that was not the right way, and he had a change of heart, in other words we would say he repented: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Lk. 23:39-42).

We must understand that the thief lived under the old Mosaic system, not the Christian dispensation, and Jesus had the authority to forgive sins while he was upon the earth. Therefore we can not be saved in the same manner in which the thief was. Still there is a great deal that we can learn from this man. 1) He knew the condition his soul was in would damn him to Hell. 2) He was willing to ask the Lord for help.

Today we must be honest enough to realize when our lives are not in tune with the way that God would have us to live. We must be willing to go to the Lord on His terms and contact His saving blood: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

I am thankful to the Westside and Town Acres congregations for making this lectureship possible, it is my privilege to be a part of

these years' lectureships. I would like to dedicate this study to the memory of my aunt Deloris Rains. She was a faithful member of the Westside congregation. I regret she will not be able to be with us for this lectureship, But I do look forward to that day in which we meet again in Heaven. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen" (1 Cor. 16:23-24).

## “Woman, Behold Thy Son”

Mark Reynolds

A. Text: John 19:25-28

B. Life flashes before one's eyes.

1. Reflects back on the major events of his life. Whether true or not.
2. Easy to imagine that while Jesus is hanging on the cross looking around on the people who filled his earthly life.
3. He comes to him mother, looking into her eyes, He reflects back on the 33 years of care and comfort she has given to Him.

I. The Care

A. Mary's life changed forever when (Luke 1:31-33)

1. She was troubled at first knowing she had never been with a man
2. Imagine the anxiety within her when the angel told her that, "The Holy Spirit".... (Luke 1:35).
3. Would be the only virgin in the history of the world carrying a child.
4. Looked at w/ suspicion AND.

The life of Jesus was a life of complete trust. The 31<sup>st</sup> Psalm begins, "In You, O Lord, I put my trust; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness." As a boy of 12, Jesus specifically spoke of His responsibilities to His Heavenly Father. After being temporarily lost by Mary and Joseph, He was located at the temple where He was listening to and asking questions of the teachers there. Luke says that "... all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." (Luke 2.47). When Mary saw Him in the temple, she asked why he had remained behind and in so doing caused this anxiety with His earthly parents. His response reveals His explicit trust in His Heavenly Father: "Why is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2.49). The trust that resided within the heart of a 12 year old lad was still there when He breathed His last upon the cross. The trust demonstrated on the cross enabled Jesus to live and die having committed His spirit into the hands of His Father.

The life of Jesus was a life of controversy and adversity similar to that of the author of the 31<sup>st</sup> Psalm. From the very moment of His birth, Jesus had enemies who were intent on taking His life. King Herod was only the first in a long line of people with the same mind to do Him harm. Herod's desire to kill him even as an infant forced Joseph and Mary to hurriedly flee from Bethlehem and seek asylum in Egypt (see Matthew 2). After the start of His earthly ministry, the hatred that Herod had for Him was transferred to the scribes, Pharisees, and the spiritual leaders empowered within Jerusalem. This hatred was so great that at one point in time, Jesus was unable to move about freely from place to place in Judea due to their desire to kill Him (John 7:1). On another occasion, the Jewish leaders deputized some underlings to go and arrest Jesus and deliver Him into their hands (John 7.32-53). However, they returned empty-handed because, as they said, "No man ever spoke like this man." The desire to permanently stop the mouth of the Christ continued until it culminated in the hiring of Judas to do the betrayal deed. Jesus was well acquainted with adversity. Yet, into His Father's hands He committed His spirit.

The life of Jesus was spent knowing that a place and position more fitting awaited Him after the completion of His earthly ministry. This sentiment is also in the 31 Psalm — "Oh, how great is Your goodness, Which You have laid up for those who fear You, Which You have prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of

essentially become a missionary to the Samaritans (John 14:28-29, 39-42). All of this was because God was thirsty, but willing to put aside the needs of his own flesh for the needs of the spirit of this woman. His humanity never prevented Him from doing the will of His Father, and neither can it be used as an excuse for us. 2 John 3.

## Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit

It was on Calvary, horrible and yet magnificent Calvary. The contrasts in the picture are beyond human description and comprehension. It was the blackest day but it looked toward the brightest dawn that humanity would ever experience. It reeked of crass injustices foisted upon the One whose death would satisfy the eternal demands of a Just and Holy God. It smelled of human suffering and death that was involved in the crucifixion of our Lord and yet it promised an end to all suffering and eternal life with the redeemed of all ages. It was and is the greatest contrast ever painted on time's canvass of real-life experiences!

For reasons that need no explanation, we treasure the last words of a man prior to his death as very special words. The very last words which Jesus spoke on Calvary were, "Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit." Having said this, Luke says "He breathed His last." (Luke 23.46). Like other words of dying men, these words are special. However, because of who spoke these words and the specific conditions under which they were spoken, we ought to pay particular attention to them.

So that we do not appear to be wise "beyond the scriptures," let it be acknowledged that no one knows why Jesus chose these words, or why they were spoken last in the sequence of His seven sayings upon the cross. However, we can examine this saying and draw some very meaningful conclusions from it and from the circumstances under which it was uttered. It should come as no surprise that these words — Into Your hands I commit My spirit — are taken from the Old Testament scriptures. Specifically, when Jesus made this statement He was quoting from the 5th verse of the 1 psalm. The remainder of this article will deal with this saying its connection to the psalm from which it was quoted.

5. This child would save the world from their sins (Mt. 1:21).

6. The salvation of the souls of mankind was literally w/in her womb.

B. Jesus must have thought of the circumstances surrounding His birth.

1. Pain comes to all women who give birth, but the events that preceded His birth made it even harder on His mother.

2. Hard trip she had to make w/ Joseph to Bethlehem fulfilling prophecy (Micah 5:2), and also to be taxed.

3. "To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child" (Luke 2:5).

4. No rooms in the inn so where did they go?

5. Perhaps Joseph, a carpenter by trade, had a nice handmade cradle prepared for the Son of God back at home.

6. How much it would have meant to Mary to place Jesus in a more appropriate place, but she must lay her child in a place where animals were kept and fed.

7. All these things, the journey, the birth the visit from the shepherds proclaiming the birth of the Savior, did Mary keep and ponder in her heart (Luke 2:19).

C. Jesus knew, as He looked at His mother, that she had a better understanding than most about the role He was playing in the salvation of mankind.

1. He also knew that His mother, perhaps more than anyone else, hated to see her Son leave, especially in the manner in which He had to go.

2. He knew the ambition mothers have for their children; He knew she would make any sacrifice for Him.
3. He knew of the wonderful care His mother provided for Him as He lived on this earth.
4. He also realized what a Son's care for his mother should be.

## II. The Consideration (We turn our attention back to the cross)

### A. Before Jesus fixes His eyes on His mother, He witnesses another event

1. Before Jesus publicly considers the future care of His mother, He has one last opportunity to consider the care His mother had given Him.
2. The soldiers came to the coat of Jesus, and noticed that His robe was peculiar.
3. Not a costly one, but was woven from the top throughout.
4. Garment of the simple folk, homemade.
5. Garment made from the hands of some woman is well accepted, but what woman?
6. Could it be that this was the work of His mother? Tome, little doubt.
7. Why didn't the soldiers tear it? Not convenient?
8. It is hard for me to imagine the pain that would have been inflicted on Jesus had these soldiers torn such a beautiful emblem of His mother's love.

pronouncement of weakness, but of humanity. "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14). "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). No one will be able to argue at judgment, "But God, you don't know what it is like!" Yes He does, He knows exactly what it is like. Knowing that God was thirsty makes me want to talk to Him more, because I know He sympathizes with me and He fully understands what it is like to be me. Actually He can do much more than sympathize, which, in essence, means to have pity for someone; to feel sorry for them. Because the Lord has lived in the flesh He can empathize, which is to share the feelings or emotions of another. Like the beautiful old hymn proclaims, "My Jesus knows just what I need!" This was not the first time that Jesus was thirsty. Preaching is tougher work than it may appear, especially if you have to travel by foot. After half a day of preaching and traveling He was tired, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well" (John 4:6). God was tired. Of course He was still God, which meant that He would even use this weakness of the flesh as an opportunity to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). While sitting at Jacob's well (John 4:6) He encountered a woman who was not living as she should. When asked about her husband she replied that she did not have a husband, to which Jesus admonished, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that sadist thou truly" (John 4:17-18). Whether she was "shacking up" or living in adultery I cannot say for sure, but one thing is apparent, she was living in sin and the Lord wanted to do something about it. Although He was thirsty and in need of a drink of water, His primary concern was not His thirst, but her soul. He quickly steers the conversation from a discussion about water, to one on the state of her soul. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John 4:10). The water in Jacob's well would only quench thirst temporarily, but the water of life that He offered to her resulted in everlasting life (John 4:14). Obviously this woman was not devout in her faith, but she knew enough to know that she wanted everlasting life and that it could come only from the Messiah (John 14:15,25). Upon hearing her desire He replied, "I that speak unto thee am he" (John 14:26). Because of this encounter, this woman of ill repute believed in the Lord and told everyone she knew about Him;

because of the storm, “he was asleep” (Matthew 8:24). God went to sleep.

Nothing makes a preacher angrier than seeing someone abuse the Lord for their own financial gain; peddling God as if He were the latest fad. Like a loving but angry father taking off his belt, He slowly braided a whip out of small cords. Some commentators call this event the temple cleansing, literally He cleaned house (John 2:13-17). God was angry.

In case you were wondering, no, preachers are not immune to emotions when it comes to preaching funerals. They may hold it together for the fifteen minutes of speaking, but sometimes quickly fall apart afterwards. He knew this wasn't the end of His dear friend, Lazarus was in a better place as we say, but that didn't keep Him from breaking down. “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). God was crying. Why was He crying? After all, wasn't He about to raise Lazarus from the dead? Why would He be sad about the death of Lazarus, when in a matter of minutes Lazarus would be walking around as alive as the day he was born? Actually, this is what caused Jesus to cry. He knew that He was going to be bringing Lazarus back from Abraham's bosom where he had been carried by angels and was now being comforted (Luke 16:22, 25). Once raised from the dead Lazarus would be returning to a place where you can get sick, hurt, sad, weak and can suffer greatly. Lazarus would also become a target for assassination by the minions of the chief priests because as long as he was alive he was walking proof of the Deity of Jesus. “But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus” (John 12:10-11). The human side of Jesus would be like any of the rest of us, wanting a dearly loved friend to still be alive and back with us instead of dead. But the Divine side of Jesus, which always prevailed over His human side, knew that the resurrection of Lazarus would be a great loss to His friend and would mean greater suffering for this faithful child of God. And now, hanging on a tree dying, God was thirsty; “I thirst” (John 19:28). All of the other phrases of Jesus while on the cross seem more appropriate, more “God-like,” but I'm thirsty seems out of place. While some of His other statements may be more moving to me, none touch my heart like this one. It reminds me that He knows exactly what it is like to be me, right down to being tired, sleepy, angry, sad, and yes, even thirsty. These words are not a

B. After this scene, Jesus turns to look into the eyes of the one He had first looked into when He came into this world.

1. In the midst of His physical agony, w/ all the pains of hell grabbing hold of Him Jesus sees His mother.
2. His chest would soon be penetrated w/ a spear, but Jesus knew that His mother's soul was being pierced as she watched the love of her life suffer in this horrible way.
3. But what could He do?

C. Didn't have much time to make His last will and testament.

1. Even if he did all his earthly possessions had already been divided by the soldiers.
2. Nothing to leave her: (Matthew 8:20).
3. Jesus did the best He could when He looked at His mother and said: “Woman behold thy son; Son, behold thy mother.”
4. What selflessness and unconditional love!
5. In the midst of the most titanic struggle between God and Satan His heart thought of His mother.
6. He provided care for the rest of her earthly life until He could take care of her for eternity.

D. Jesus gave her another son, John.

1. Only disciple that dared showed up at the cross.
2. Jesus gave him the responsibility of caring for His mother.

3. "From that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (19:27).

### III. The Contemplation

A. Scriptures are clear that Mary contemplated the place her Son had in the plan of God.

1. The events surrounding His birth; angels announcing it, visit from shepherds, heavenly hosts, etc., and Mary didn't miss a thing.
2. "But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).
3. All mothers like to keep a baby book, and there can be no doubt that Mary made accurate records of all that took place.
4. She pondered them in her heart: Meditated upon them, what is the full meaning of all of this?

B. Second time Bible records Mary's contemplation regarding her Son's role in the scheme of redemption (Luke 2:41).

1. Finding her Son in the temple hearing the religious leaders and asking them questions she asked (Luke 2:38-41).
2. First recorded saying of Jesus, and in it, he laid claim to a relationship to the Almighty that differentiated Him from everyone else.
3. Mary, of course, knew that her son's relationship and duty to God was different, but to what would this special relationship lead?
4. She pondered all these things in her heart until that question was answered they day they nailed her Son to a tree.

C. The relationship she had with the Savior of mankind was reserved just for her, and she saw Jesus in a different way than everyone else.

1. She was standing at the cross, facing her tragedy with dignity.
2. No one saw the cross as she saw it.
3. To others Jesus was a teacher, a rebel, an agitator, an enemy.
4. But to Mary, Jesus was a Son, and she loved Him with all the love of motherhood.
5. All the things that she kept in her heart were coming together now, but it did not take away from the fact that her Son was dying on a cross.
6. What it must have meant to Mary to hear her Son take care of His mother in His last moments.
7. No doubt she recalled that saying until her dying day.

Conclusion:

1. Only one that ends with an exclamation point.
2. Jesus, at that point, with all his humanity cared for His mother than all else.

## I Thirst

Brandon Britton

When you preach your heart out it tends to wear you out and falling asleep is not a problem. Although everyone else was falling to pieces