

# SEVEN LAST OF WORDS SERIES

## INTRODUCTION

Easter holds a weight and beauty that can be missed by doubters, seekers, and followers alike. Our hope for this year is that we would prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration that is Easter Sunday. To do this, we are spending the seven weeks leading up to Easter examining the seven phrases Jesus spoke from the cross.

The words of a dying man.

Consider this: when you're in your final moments, what flashes through your mind? What images, what memories, what regrets will you wrestle with? If you know your death is inevitable on that day, what would you want to say to those gathered around? Words are not wasted in those last moments of coherence before death overtakes you. Your desires, your values, what you hold most dear is revealed.

We live in an unprecedented society that oversimplifies words, consuming and spouting thousands of meaningless phrases every day. We type and backspace, we easily delete what we just posted for all the world to see. There is little weight given to our words, so we quickly skim over thousands of words without truly considering any weight they have.

This year, we want to slow down and consider exactly what Jesus, the greatest man who ever lived, said as he was dying. We will spend one week in each phrase.



VINTAGECHURCH

# WEEK ONE: “Father, forgive them...”

## LUKE 23:34 | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

After Jesus arrives at the place of the skull, he is crucified between two thieves. As he is crucified, he prays for the forgiveness of his opponents. Lots are cast and Jesus’ garments are divided. While the people watch, the rulers taunt Jesus, repeating some of his Christological claims. The soldiers also taunt him over his claim to be king of the Jews and offer him sour wine. The account concludes with the inscription “this is the king of the Jews” (23:38). Thinking of others, Jesus still desires that they change their thinking and that God not hold their act against them. Jesus love is evident even from the cross.

### Read Luke 23:33-46

## 1. Knowing & Understanding

Before the Gospel takes shape in our lives we first must come to grips with our sin and need for forgiveness.

- **What strikes you the most from v.34?**
- **What does the request in v.34 reveal about Jesus?**
- **Who is Jesus asking forgiveness for?**
- **Why does Jesus mention forgiveness?**

## 2. Evaluating

The Gospel offers us forgiveness making what was once impossible, making much of Jesus and enjoying him forever, possible.

- **Why is God’s forgiveness of our sin necessary?**
- **Why does God want to forgive you?**

## 3. Applying

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32 ESV)

- **What are some of the general benefits of forgiving one another?**
- **How can we model forgiveness for others? What does this accomplish?**



VINTAGECHURCH

# WEEK 2: WITH ME YOU WILL BE IN PARADISE

## LUKE 23:43

### Intro

Luke now introduces an account unique to his Gospel. Whereas Mark 15:32; Matt 27:44 refer only to the criminals insulting Jesus, Luke adds that one also gives a taunt (the third taunt in Luke) that if Jesus were in fact the Messiah he should save himself and them. The other criminal promptly rebukes him and contrasts their just suffering and guilt with Jesus' unjust suffering and innocence. Then turning to Jesus he asks to be remembered when Jesus enters into his reign. The account ends with Jesus' pronouncement that the "repentant" criminal will enjoy paradise with him that day.

### Read Luke 23:39-43

#### 1. Understanding

- **What does the first thief's comments tell you about what he believes?**
- **What does the second thief's comments tell you about what he believes?**

#### 2. Evaluating

- **Why does the second man get to be with Jesus for eternity in paradise and not the first man?**
- **How is Jesus' promise to the second man possible?**

#### 3. Applying

- **How does Jesus' work on the cross and response to the second thief take away our doubt?**
- **Based on these verses, how should we respond to Christ's death on the cross?**



# WEEK 3: "WITH ME YOU WILL BE IN PARADISE"

**John 19:26**

## Intro

Jesus displays his care for his mother as both she and the beloved disciple are passing through their darkest hour, on their way to full Christian faith.

## Read 19:16-30

### 1. Understanding

- **Look at 19:19. What irony do we see here?**
- **Why did Jesus say his statements in verses 26 and 27 while on the cross?**
- **What does this tell us about Jesus' priorities while on the cross?**

### 2. Evaluating

Based on Luke 8:19-21 those who hear the Word of God and do it have a more ready access to Jesus' fellowship and help than do his own family members.

- **Read Luke 8:19-21 together. What is Jesus' point in saying this?**
- **What implications does this passage in Luke have for the relationship we have with God as believers?**
- **In the past week or so, how has your response to God's word resembled obedience or disobedience?**

### 3. Applying

Jesus is illustrating the meaning of the church in the relationship between John & Mary: a loving, sustaining, encouraging family.

- **Why is the church (and more specifically, our group) called to be a family? How does this enable ministry and evangelism?**
- **What are some ways the Holy Spirit has transformed this group into more of a family and less of a study group?**
- **How can we continue to live out Jesus' call to John and Mary to care for one another? List areas of weakness and bring them to God in prayer.**
  - Consider who in your group is gifted in hospitality and would be willing to think through how to lead the group in becoming more of family.

# WEEK 3: “WOMAN, BEHOLD YOUR SON”

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# WEEK 4: "WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

## Mark 15:33-39

### Intro

Up to this point, the narrative of the crucifixion has focused on the physical sufferings of Jesus: the flogging, the crown of thorns, and his immolation on the cross. Six hours have now passed since the nails were driven home. The crowds have jeered, darkness has covered the land, and now, suddenly, after a long silence, comes this anguished cry from the depths of the Savior's soul.

### 1. Knowing & Understanding

Read 15:33-39

- **What does Jesus mean when he says, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"**
- **Read Psalm 22. How does this help us understand Jesus' moments on the cross?**
- **Read back over Mark chapter 15. How has Jesus suffered up to this point on the cross?**

### 2. Evaluating

- **God could have stopped the suffering of his son at any point. Why didn't he?**
- **What does this tell us about God's attitude towards sin?**

### 3. Applying

- **What needs to change in your attitude towards your own sin?**
- **How does the work of Christ make that change possible?**

# EASTER SERIES WEEK 5: “I Thirst.”

**JOHN 19:28**

## 1. Understanding

- **In your own words how would you describe spiritual thirst?**

## 2. Evaluating

- **Read John 4:7-15. Do you see any resemblance of the Samaritan woman in yourself?**
- **How would you describe your own spiritual thirst (e.g. intense, consistent, nominal, apathetic, non-existent)? Share thoughts, stories, or feelings that you believe have led you to this place.**
- **How does Jesus’s death and resurrection make it possible for us recognize our spiritual thirst and to have our thirst quenched by him alone?**

## 3. Applying

- **How have you tried to quench your own spiritual thirst?**
- **What does the act of drinking from Jesus living water look like in your life? (Lead your group by identifying any barriers, dysfunction, people, worldview, and habits that prevent us from regular encounters with Jesus).**

# EASTER SERIES WEEK 6: "INTO THY HANDS..."

**LUKE 23:44-46**

## 1. Knowing & Understanding

- **What insight do Jesus's words in verse 46 give us to understand his relationship with the Father?**
- **What does this passage teach us about submission to the Father's will even in suffering?**

## 2. Evaluating

- **Why is it so difficult for us to fully trust the Father?**
- **How does Jesus's actions make it possible to trust the Father?**

## 3. Applying

- **In what ways have you not fully trusted God?**
- **What has been the outcome of not trusting God with those things?**
- **What would be the outcome if we trusted God with these areas of life?**