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**Text: Luke 23:46** 

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Message #7 Seven Words of Christ at Calvary

In our last letter before the Weekly SERMON we said the difference between success and failure in our lives is not <u>WHAT GETS US DOWN</u> but <u>WHAT KEEPS US DOWN</u>. It's not a disgrace to become <u>DISCOURAGED</u>, it happens to all of us, to some more than others. In fact some of you are going through it right now, and if you are not today cheer up it will come to you tomorrow. It is not a disgrace to become **DISCOURAGED**, it is a disgrace to stay there.

Now the word **DISCOURAGE** means "TO **MELT**" as in "I am melting under the circumstances." It also means "To be cast down." Sometimes <u>DISCOURAGEMENT</u> comes when you start worrying over a situation, usually one you have absolutely no control over.

May I encourage you at this point to etch in your memory bank three passages of scripture?

FIRST: <u>I PETER 5:6-7</u>, reads this way, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due season, Casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you." Now let me read verse 7 this way, "Throw ALL your WORRIES upon God for it is God who CARES for you." What a promise from God.

SECOND: Philippians 4:6-7, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." The summary of these verses tells us to "REJOICE and PRAY." Pray about everything and rejoice, that is thank God, for everything.

THIRD: <u>Proverbs 3:5-6</u>, "Trust in the Lord with ALL thy heart and LEAN NOT UPON THY OWN UNDERSTANDING ..." There is nothing wrong with seeking all the advice you can get. There is nothing wrong in thinking through all the details you have at your disposal. But leave it there. Do not try to figure it out. Why, because that is the time when you begin to worry. The verse continues, "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths." My friends, that admonition means to acknowledge the SOVEREIGN GOD of the Universe.

In 2 Kings 4:1-7 we read, "Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.(2) And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.(3) Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.(4) And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.(5) So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.(6) And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.(7) Then

she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

I want to call your attention to the little phrase in verse 2, "Nothing...but a jar of oil."

There was a time early in the ministry, a pastor's wife confided in an older friend that she had run out of strength and was resentful and exhausted. Her attention was directed to the little pot of oil within her. "You have all you need within you," said the woman, "in the person of the Holy Spirit. You have heavenly help a heartbeat away. It works as you begin to appropriate what you have. Go home, shut the door, and spend time with the Lord. Then begin to pour out whatever you have into the empty vessels of your neighbors."

That was not exactly what she wanted to hear; but she went home, shut the door, and asked God to show her where to begin pouring. "Give me an idea, Lord," she prayed. Then she arose, called a babysitter, and set off for the town center where she began pouring her life into high-risk teens, opening a period of ministry that transformed the lives of many young people.

If you are at the place God wants you to be, do not quit. Instead, shut the door, pray, and ask God to give you a fresh idea for His work. Then begin pouring out of your little pot of oil. And as you pour out, God will pour in!

In His Amazing Grace **Bastor Babid Miklas** 

## "Father, Into Thy Hands I Commend My Spirit"

**INTRODUCTION:** What do you picture in your mind when you think of the cross?

Some think of it as just a mere ornament to be worn as a piece of jewelry around a woman's neck or as a pin to be worn on a coat or dress. To others it is only an architectural ornament to adorn the steeples of cathedrals and churches.

But the cross of Jesus was not an ornament of beauty. Rather it was a curse, the emblem of suffering and shame.

Paul expressed it in Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:..."

The hymn writer also expressed it when he wrote,

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

In the Old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died
To pardon and sanctify me.

No wonder the Apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you save Christ and Him crucified." Everything about Calvary was significant, but this was especially true regarding the statements of our Lord as He hung on the cross.

These <u>SEVEN</u> statements were made by Christ at Calvary between 9:00 AM in the morning and 3:00 PM in the afternoon.

These <u>SEVEN</u> statements become a marvelous demonstration of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. They help us in a very real sense to understand the purpose and heart of the crucifixion.

The number <u>SEVEN</u> is associated with **COMPLETENESS OR PERFECTION**. Herein is a comparison between the creation story and the account of Jesus on the cross.

When the work of creation was completed we read in Genesis 1:31-2:1, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Likewise Jesus having completed the sacrifice for our sins on the cross, he spoke in a triumphant declaration, "It is finished."

After God completed the work of creation in Genesis 2:2-3 we read that He rested, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Just as the seventh day was the day of rest and satisfaction, so the seventh statement of our Saviour brings Him to the place of rest, the Father's hands.

We now arrive at the seventh and final statement at Calvary, the words of **CONTENTMENT**, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Please follow in your Bible as I read the context in which these words are found in Luke 23:39-49.

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. (40) But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (41) And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. (42) And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said unto him, Verily

I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. (44) And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. (45) And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. (46) And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (47) Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. (48) And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. (49) And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things."

**SEVEN** times the dying Saviour spoke from the cross at Golgotha.

## Four of His statements were addressed to others.

To one of the thieves He promised, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

To His mother and to the beloved disciple John He said, "Woman behold thy Son; Behold thy mother."

To the on-looking spectators He cried, "I thirst."

Then, within the hearing of God, men, angels and the devil, He cried in triumph, "It is finished."

## Three of His statements were addressed to God the Father.

To the Father, in His first statement, He prayed for the forgiveness of His accusers, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

To God, in His fourth statement He uttered this mournful plaint, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

To the Father, at last in His seventh statement He says, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

**SEVEN** times the Lord spoke and in each of these **SEVEN** statements a prophecy was fulfilled

<u>First</u>, He cried, "Father, forgiven them; for they know not what they do." This was a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12, in which Christ is "made intercession for the transgressors."

<u>Second</u>, He promised the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." This was the fulfillment of the purpose for His coming as the angel said to Joseph in Matthew 1:21, "thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

<u>Third</u>, to His mother He said, "Woman behold thy Son; Behold thy mother." This fulfilled the prophecy of Simeon in Luke 2:35, where he said to Mary on the day she and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple for dedication, "A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also."

<u>Fourth</u>, He had said, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These were the identical words from Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"

<u>Fifth</u>, He exclaimed, "I thirst." This was a fulfillment of Psalm 69:21, "In my thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink."

<u>Sixth</u>, He shouted in triumph "It is finished." These were almost the very words which complete the graphic picture of Christ's death by crucifixion which Psalm 22:31 concludes with the words: "They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this."

<u>Seventh</u>, He prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." This was nearly a repetition of Psalm 31:5 in which Christ states: "Into Thy hand I commit My Spirit: Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth."

Make no mistake about this: Jesus was not murdered, nor did He die of exhaustion. He did not die involuntarily. He died because He deliberately chose to die, for in John 10:17-

18 He, Himself said,

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. (18) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

It is the Lord of life who gave up His life. And in doing so he utters the words of this Jewish prayer found in Psalm 31 releasing His spirit as He breathes His last breath.

It is worth observing how Jesus quoted from this familiar psalm. He added something at the beginning of His statement, and He omitted something at the close. Again in Psalm 31:5 we read, "Into Thy hand I commit My Spirit: Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth." From the cross Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Now notice:

At the beginning He added, "Father." This does not appear in David's psalm. The verbal intimacy of the word "Father" was highlighted by the fact that, shortly before this, He groaned with enormous passion, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" However, at this point the penalty for our sin had been paid, therefore the desperate loneliness He felt brought on by our holy God's abandonment was over forever. God had once again faced his Son. Hence the use of the word "Father" was now appropriate.

The other change Jesus made was the omission of the second half of David's psalm, "...thou has redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." The reason for this omission is clear when we remember who is quoting the psalm. Jesus, the spotless Lamb, the sinless and sacrificial substitute had no need to be ransomed.

O the wonders of the Cross! From this last statement at the cross, let us observe **THREE** truths from our Lord's words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

FIRST: We see the Saviour again in communion with the Father. This is exceedingly precious. On the cross, Jesus was still in communion with the Father, as we hear in His first statement while on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Now, His last statement on the cross was, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Between those two statements Jesus hung on the cross for six hours suffering not only at the hands of men and Satan but also of God. During those last three hours, God had withdrawn from the Saviour, evoking that terrible cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Now, "It is finished." The cup which God had given to Jesus to drink was drained. The storm of wrath had been spent. The darkness was past and the Saviour was again in communion with the Father.

"Father," how often this word was upon the Saviour's lips!

His first recorded words came at the age of 12 in the temple where Jesus said to Mary and Joseph in Luke 2:49, "...I must be about My FATHER'S business."

In what was probably His most formal discourse, the **"Sermon on the Mount"** in Matthew 5-7, He speaks of the **"FATHER"** seventeen times.

While in His final discourse to the disciples found in John 14-16, He speaks of the **"FATHER"** forty-five times.

In John 17, which contains the Lord's High Priestly prayer, He spoke of the "FATHER" six times.

And now the last time He speaks before He lays down His life He says again, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

How blessed is it that "HIS FATHER" is "OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN"? Ours, all

because of His work of Calvary.

How precious to know having believed by faith, we are the "sons of God." John 1:12 How precious to be able to call God, "Abba" or Daddy Father. Romans 8:15 How precious to say, "Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." Matthew 6:9

What a comfort and assurance the word "FATHER" contains as we walk in LIFE.

Since God is my Father, then He loves me, as He loves Christ.

Since God is my Father and loves me, then He careth for me.

Since God is my Father and careth for me, then He will supply all my need.

Since God is my Father, then He will see to it that no harm shall come to me, and all things will work together for my good.

What a blessed truth to know God the Father, not only in <u>LIFE</u>, but also in the hour of **DEATH**. Since this is true, then why should we as believers fear death?

Remember what David said to us in that Great Shepherd Psalm 23 verse 4, "Yea, though I walk though the valley of the shadow of DEATH, I will fear NO EVIL: FOR THOU ART WITH ME."

Remember what Paul reminded us of in I Corinthians 15:54-55, "...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH is swallowed up in victory. O DEATH, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

However, what a sad state for those dying without faith in Christ to realize in Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Falling not into the hands of a loving God, but rather into the hands of a God of justice and wrath.

On the other hand, what a joy to be able to read a verse like I John 3:1 and know this verse is for those of us who know Christ by faith. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God." And at death be able to say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit."

**SECOND:** We have the "Father's hands" as the place of eternal security. During His 33 years on earth, the life of Jesus was, in a sense, in the hands of other human beings.

His mother held Him as a baby.

In the temple when Jesus was 8 days old, aging Simeon took Him in his arms and blessed Him.

And, as we have seen repeatedly, those who put Him on trial scourged, mocked, and crucified Him. They did so, as Peter later said in Acts 2:23, "...by wicked hands."

Now at long last, He would be back in the "Father's" hands. Interestingly, when Luke records Jesus' final words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit", the Greek word for "commend" meant "to place beside." It conveyed a secure sense of trust as in "I entrust my Spirit."

This is a blessed truth, the ground of the believer's assurance, the foundation of the believer's eternal security. As Jesus expressed it in John 10:28-29,

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. MY FATHER, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of MY FATHER'S hand."

Thank God, all those who are born again through faith in the finished work of Christ are **ETERNALLY SAFE IN THE FATHER'S HANDS.** 

"I know not why God's wondrous grace
To me He hath made known,
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love
Redeemed me for His own.

I know not how this saving faith
To me He did impart,
Nor how believing in His Word
Wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves, Convincing men of sin, Revealing Jesus through the Word, Creating faith in Him.

But I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able To keep that which I've committed Unto Him against that day."

**THIRD:** We see the absolute uniqueness of the Saviour. Make no mistake about this. Jesus was not murdered, nor did He die of exhaustion. The Lord Jesus died as none other ever did. His life was not taken from Him; He laid it down of Himself. Again this was His claim from John 10:17-18.

"Therefore doth My Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

Now the most convincing evidence of this comes from our Lord's seventh statement while on the cross, "Father, into thy hands I COMMEND MY SPIRIT." Here the Holy Spirit, in describing the actual laying down of His life, employed two different expressions.

Number 1: In Matthew 27:45-49 we read, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. (46) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, Iama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (47) Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. (48) And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. (49) The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Now in verse 50 we read, "And Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice yielded up His spirit."

Notice the words, "YIELDED UP HIS SPIRIT." The idea here is that of "dismissing His spirit." Since Matthew is the gospel of the King, this is our Lord's act of authority, as of a king dismissing a servant.

Number 2: In Mark 15:34-37 we read, "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, Iama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (35) And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. (36) And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. (37) And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost." Again notice verse 37, "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and GAVE UP THE SPIRIT."

Now go with me to <u>Luke 23:46</u> and notice the last part of the verse after Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And having said this, he GAVE UP THE SPIRIT." Both Mark and Luke use the same words. Then in <u>John 19:30</u> we read, "He bowed His head and gave up the spirit." The expression "GAVE UP THE SPIRIT" simply says Jesus "breathed out His spirit." This was His passive endurance of death.

No one else died as Jesus died. In "laying down" His life, His death was different from all others. He decided to do it by an act of His own will. Who but the perfect Son of God could have said, as He finished the work of our so great salvation, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

In the past seven messages on the "Seven Words of Christ at Calvary," I have made

this remark: "These <u>SEVEN</u> statements become a marvelous demonstration of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. They help us in a very real sense to understand the purpose and heart of the crucifixion."

Now as we come to the end of this message and to the end of this short series, what should all this cause you to do?

**First:** If you are without the hope of Heaven, without the hope of eternal life, this should cause you to receive Jesus as your Saviour. The Bible tells us in,

In John 3:36, "He that BELIEVETH on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that BELIEVETH not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

In John 1:12, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that BELIEVE on His name."

In John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and BELIEVETH on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

In Acts 16:31, "And they said, BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."

**Second:** As believers this should cause us to lift up the Saviour more. In John 12:32 Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." There is nothing else that draws a crowd like the uplifted Christ. Other things may draw crowds but nothing really draws and holds men and women who really mean business for Jesus, like the preaching of the cross.

For Paul declared to us in I Corinthians 1:18, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God." Then in Romans 1:16 he said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

**Third:** This should cause us to serve Jesus more than ever before, for we read in Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, WHICH IS YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE." Francis Havergale wrote in her hymn:

I gave My life for thee;
My precious blood I shed,
That thou might ransomed be,
And quickened from the dead.
I gave, I gave My life for thee.
WHAT HAST THOU GIVEN FOR ME?

I suffered much for thee,
More than thy tongue can tell,
Of bitt'rest agony,
To rescue thee from hell.
I've borne, I've borne it all for thee.
WHAT HAST THOU BORNE FOR ME?

**Fourth:** The past seven messages should cause us to understand the Love of God more than ever before. In Romans 5:8 we read, "But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Praise God!

"Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."
Oh, the LOVE that drew salvation plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary.

The Bible is a love story. Every page in the Bible is just one more page of God's love

letter to us. For God SO Loved. Weigh that <u>LOVE</u> and measure it by the sorrows and the pains of Jesus on the cross. Measure it as Jesus hung there on that old rugged cross, tasting death for every man.

There is **NO GREATER LOVE** than that of the love of God in Christ Jesus. In **I John 3:16** we read, "Hereby know we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."

Stop for a moment and consider this. Maybe I am speaking to someone who once embraced the love of God. You know what it was like when you were first saved, Oh how happy you were, what a honeymoon you had with Jesus.

The love of God was radiant in your heart.

You loved Him. You walked with Him. You talked with Him.

Every day of life was like a new beginning in Christ.

Every day of life seemed like the sun shined brighter than the day before because of the Saviour living in your heart.

The Bible was so wonderful you couldn't get enough reading, studying or meditating upon it. You could not wait for church services to begin, because they were like a breath of fresh air to your soul.

How wonderful all this was to you. You were saved, you were justified in Christ. You felt new, and clean, and you knew you had eternity in your soul. But perhaps now, you have drifted.

Perhaps in this message the dear Lord is looking down from Heaven and is saying to you, "I want you to LOVE me again." Wouldn't it be a good thing in this hour to once again FALL IN LOVE WITH JESUS and be able to sing?

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine. For Thee all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, My Saviour art Thou. If ever I loved Thee, My Jesus, 'tis now.

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon on the "Seventh Words of Christ at Calvary," "Father, Into Thy Hands I Commend My Spirit" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in Acts 16:31, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."

Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation."

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know. Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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