

HIS CROSS BECAME A PULPIT

(Luke 23:32; 42-43; John 19:25-27)

Through the years there have been many great pulpits where God's wonderful Word was taught. It has been my privilege to stand in some of those. Spurgeon's, Calvin's, Moody's, MacArthur's, and Boice's.

As we move into the Easter season, again it is needful for us to be reminded of the suffering and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. After Jesus was nailed to the cross He spoke 7 times. Each of these comprise His sermon from the Cross. Each of these is rich in truth. His cross became a pulpit. Take off your shoes...this is holy ground!

SEVEN WORDS FROM HIS CROSS, HIS LAST PULPIT, THAT SHOULD PIERCE OUR HEARTS MOVING US TO WORSHIP.

For these final words of our Lord have great importance for us.

I. A Word Of Forgiveness: "Father Forgive Them, For They Do Not Know." (23:32)

It should not surprise us that Jesus is praying, and the first word out of His mouth is "Father."

- A. Jesus wholly identified with us, His people. He was our representative on the cross.
 - 1. Never before did Jesus ask the Father to forgive sin, for He forgave it Himself.
 - 2. Only God can forgive sin. (Mark 2:7) Now, on the cross, Jesus was our sin substitute. He was no longer in the place of authority. Now He was "sin" for us. (2 Cor 5:21)
- B. Forgiveness from God is man's greatest need. It is your greatest need!
 - 1. In essence, Jesus was praying, "Father forgive them and condemn me." For He and His death was the only way that sin would ever be forgiven. He would pay the price!
 - 2. They were ignorant, but not sinless. Ignorance is no excuse. They did not know they were executing the Lord of Glory, the Creator.
- C. Jesus practiced what He preached. He loved His enemies even as they killed Him. In this He fulfilled Scripture, Isaiah 53:12 "made intercession for the transgressors..." Here was love triumphing over evil. We are to pray for our enemies. He did not curse or spit at them. He prayed for them, and the Father heard and answered. (Acts 2:41; 6:7) Pentecost saw many saved. It was not so much Peter's preaching, but Jesus' prayer...

II. A Word Of Salvation: "Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise." (23:42-43)

Jesus while suffering hears and answers the plea of the penitent thief who is on his deathbed.

- A. Before his salvation, this thief was no different from the crowd. He mocked Jesus. (Matt 27:41) Like him, each of us must come to the end of ourselves and see our true condition. Hopeless!
- B. Yet, God opened his eyes by grace. He saw that he was a sinner and deserved his punishment.

