

S. N. Feb 7, 1971 A.M. -

THE FIFTH WORD FROM THE CROSS

John 19:28, 29

The first word, "Father, forgive them."

The second word was spoken to the thief, a word of mercy.

The third word was a word of affection to his mother.

The fourth word, a word of desertion, forsaken of God.

The scene at the cross now changes as we come to the fifth word,

a cry of anguish, a cry of agony. He knew that it was finished, that he had

fulfilled ~~his~~ the scripture, and he said, "I thirst."

Jesus did not run away from his task that was set before him on the cross. He ~~is~~ was working for peace.

Every major nation on earth today has a ^{sept-}war to fight. But there is no nation on earth anywhere that cares very much about peace. Of course, peace is sought through tranquilizers and other ways. There are people who believe that peace comes through various means. Jesus was here on the cross and these six horrible hours were drawing to a close. A strange darkness for three hours had settled about the cross. The sign, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" had been placed upon the cross.

Standing beneath the cross is John and perhaps John got a little closer than the group of women, and his mother. He had received instructions about taking her to live with him. Now we are indebted to ~~John~~ this disciple for what he tells us about the event on the day of the cross. John tells us about the mother, how she is going to be taken care of. Throughout his gospel, he urges the phrase, "after this" or "after these things". It seems to indicate that he is joining this account with that of another at a given point. When he says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" we are prone to think of that as a cry of physical exhaustion. But it had a far deeper meaning.

V. 28.A
 This was a cry not just in the midst of the battle, but this was a cry after the battle was over. It was the cry of victory.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things had been finished - after this refers to his conquest of all other things, he says, "I thirst."

Now there are two or three things I want us to note about this fifth word on the cross. First, the thirst, second the cry, and third, the answer.

I. The thirst

He was human and he was divine. It was of course humanity that thirsted.

Christ's humanity was perfect, but it was . It made him alive to suffering. It thirst. And his weariness and suffering were more real and

intense than we can imagine.

The perfection of humanity implies the perfection of suffering. Had there been one sin of imperfection about Jesus' body or his soul, he could not have tasted the whole bitterness of our guilt and anguish. He could not have drained our cup. He could not have paid our penalty. He could not have felt the supreme thirst. In a way that as no other man ever felt it. Yet on the cross this did not exempt him from pain. But on the other hand, it made his thirst more real - with that spirit he was filled.

By the spirit he was strengthened. By the eternal spirit, he offered himself without spot to God. The indwelling spirit added to his perfection. And every addition to his perfection was an increase to his suffering.

He was (God and man) Every time you think about this - the glorious truth - that Christ was God and man at the same time. We know that this did not do away with his suffering. It was the humanity of Jesus that thirst, and it proclaimed him truly a man in body, in soul, in sorrow.

No mere man could have passed through Gethsemane and endured the agony on the cross.

Now, to emphasize the humanity is not to discredit his deity in any sense. It only emphasizes the extent to which Jesus went for our salvation. He did not

walk across the stage of life as a play actor, pretending to be what he was not. Heb. 2:12-18, "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren that he might be merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." His complete identity with us on the ~~xxx~~ cross. And this is seen in our Lord's word, "I thirst."

He had known thirst before. John 4:7. He stopped in the midst of a journey and he talked to the (Samaritan woman.) He ~~xxx~~ said, "Give me to drink." He doubtless was thirsty many times. But on the cross, this was a thirst indeed. Man may live many days without food. An (Irishman named McSweeney) lived for 63 days without a bite of ~~of~~ food. ~~xxxx~~ But man can live only a matter of hours without water. This is true under normal circumstances. The crucifixion is one of the greatest tortures ever endured by man.

It had been many hours since Jesus had quenched his thirst. Perhaps the (last liquid) he had sipped was that at the supper 18 ~~xxx~~ hours before his cry on the cross.

We must remember that he sweat drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane. Then the (strain) of the trial, the rugged trip through the hills. This was taking ~~xx~~ away the ~~moisture~~ moisture out of his body. Then he was nailed to the cross and exposed to the open sunlight. Thirst indeed is used in (medical) reports in

connection with fever. The mounting fever accompanied Jesus when he was suffering, and his thirst was unbearable.

His exhausted body is still fastened to the cross. His tongue has been parched by the very fires of hell. Luke 16:24.

Maybe it was merely a whisper, but God heard his cry.

An athlete in the midst of a race thinks only of one thing. The job to be done. He concentrates upon this task in spite of his thirst. After the victory is won, he need no longer to think about the race or the contest.

And here Jesus had conquered the struggle. He knowing that all things were now accomplished, he asked for a drink of water.

Jesus has given us the example when he faced the temptations in the wilderness and he fasted for 40 days. He was not conscious of hunger until toward the conclusion of those days. Even then he refused to provide bread for himself. No relief came until (after the victory) over Satan was won. This is what Paul meant in II Tim. 2:3 and 5. "Therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the ~~affair~~ affairs of this life, that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier."

The reason why we have so few victories for Christ is because our chief concern is our own safety and security. All of us would like to wear the

victor's crown. If it were not for the price and self-sacrifice.

Remember Judas looked to Jesus and said, "What can Jesus do for me?"

But when Mary of Bethany asked, "What can I do for Jesus" with certainty she knew that when he told her he was going to die, she could do something.

How many people since that day have said, "What can he do for me?"

rather than "What can I do for him?"

John was looking into the (fulfillment of prophecy) that was taking place. We see that the Old Testament abounds in symbolic shadows. Heb. 8:5.

There was a prophecy that the Messiah would come with the purpose not to destroy but to fulfill. And that God did not delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices apart from a pure heart. All of the scriptures in the (Old Testament) pointed toward Jesus. Even after his ~~XXXXXXX~~ resurrection, he talked to the disciples about the scriptures, Moses and the prophets. In the light of this, the fifth word, "I thirst". As we examine it, it was the fulfillment of a prophecy ~~in~~ on

✓ the cross. Psalm 69:²¹ "They gave me gaul for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink." Now this has the relation of a shadow.

Many many years before in Psalm 22:18, it was prophecied that the soldiers ~~wax~~ would gamble for the clothes.

Psalm 22:7, that they ~~wax~~ would mock him.

Psalm 22:16 - "They pierced his hands and his feet."

Jesus had reached this goal. Where ~~would~~ would you have stood. And today I think of those who are slow of heart to believe. We still think as we stand in the ~~shadow~~ shadow of the cross - is it nothing to you, all you all that pass by?

II. The Cry

"I thirst" or "I am x thirsty." These are common words among us.

"I am thirsty," says a child to ~~ix~~ its mother. "I am thirsty" says a traveler on the highway. "I am thirsty" says the sick man in his bed of fever. We are familiar with the cry. We know that it would be met with a quick response. It is the cry that can easily, simply be supplied in the majority of cases.

When the lips of the Son of God were thirsty, it was different. x God the creator of this earth, and all the fountains and the streams, and yet here is a cry. Is this cry real? Is it a natural cry?

One thing strikes us much here. His is the only cry heard at this time.

There are two men on the cross, but they utter no cry. One is speaking evil, now the other is praying, and Jesus is crying, "I thirst." How great this thirst must have been.

Many many times he said, "My soul is troubled. My soul is sorrowful even

unto death." But in this last moment, he says, "I thirst." The cry was real anguish. It was terrible for it was the cry of God. It is a fearful cry - and to see strong men and women cry is something that helps us to have compassion. Terrible was that cry, it was the cry of one sinking into death. Under the condemnation of man's sin, under the weight of infinite guilt, he was subjected to the whole wrath of the world.

It was the cry of the substitute. It was not ~~that of~~ a mere man of Israel. It was the cry of one suffering the awful agony - pain of death = because of love. The Blessed Redeemer, the bride elect.

The ~~awful~~ awful cry was the expression of bodily endurance. It causes us to think of what hell must be like. The unquenchable fire, the everlasting thirst, what must be the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. "Have mercy upon me," cries the rich man in hell. And he said, "Lazarus, that someone may dip the tip of his ~~finger~~ finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame."

The scorching sun is terrible. What must be an eternity of thirst in the heat of a devouring fire, having been forsaken of all the fountains of water. And here is opening up the living water. Rev. 14:10. His ~~cry~~ cry shows that his soul was undergoing the pains of hell.

On the battlefield, the flow of blood, the anguish of thirst. They tell us that wounded men fall in a rage when no one can get to the body. And they cry, "Water, water, water!" Jesus and his cry is unspeakable.

This is the human side. As a very devout woman once with a deep problem, the pastor said to her, "And Christ cares and understands." She said "How can He understand?" He was perfect, he was divine. How can he know about my troubles?" Now Jesus went through all the hurt and the suffering and he was human as well as divine. He could have prayed for the miracle of rain to have refreshed his parched lips. He could have called a legion to deliver him. But it is the humanity that calls for the water from Jacob's well at this time.

III. The Answer

It seems that God was silent. But man answered this plea and this call. Man answered this plea ~~xx~~ and this call. God who feeds the young ravens when they cry = God who ~~xx~~ looks down upon the needy when they pray to him - God who blesses those who are destitute, what terrible thirst it must have been. The heat, the ~~noise~~ noise, the dust, the pain, and this cry of physical torment that Jesus uttered.

A big hearted soldier rushed in and showed some ~~px~~ pity. Perhaps you could not see this in his heart and in his life. But he came forward with a bowl

of vinegar and a sponge, and dipped it and touched it to the lips of Jesus.

I read of an Irishman who was rather crude and rough during the World War. One day as they were marching along, they came by a group of displaced persons. There was a little child among them utterly lost. This sinful rough Irishman gave his rifle to a comrad, picked up the little girl, and carried her on his shoulders for miles and miles and miles. Now, there was a rough soldier, who moistened the lips of our Lord with vinegar, who listened to his cry, and who answered that cry.

When Haggar cried out for thirst in the desert, God sent an angel to lead her to an unseen well.

When Israel cried at Marah, God sweetened the water that was bitter for them.

When they cried at Horeb, he told Moses that there was a rock, and he smote the rock, and water came forth.

God quenched the thirst of Samson by opening a jawbone which he used as a weapon.

But now God answers not. Not as Haggar, or Israel, or Samson, or one of the great ones who calls upon him.

This is the hour of the power of darkness. Jesus has taken the place

of the sinner, and he must bear the sinner's anguish, of body and soul. He must die the sinner's death. And eventually Jesus is going to say, "It is finished."

But there is silence in heaven until this transaction has taken place.

Jesus had won the victory. There is an illustration in colonial history. The struggle between England and France. The French troops were strong in their position overlooking Quebec. Gen. James Wolfe dared to attempt the seemingly ~~a~~ impossible. With an inferior force, he made his way through a ravine up the ~~walk~~ walls to the plains of Abraham on Mt. Calm. He ~~surprised them~~ surprised the ~~enemy~~ enemy, he won Canada for England, but it was a desperate ~~a~~ battle. ~~Gen~~ Gen. Wolfe was carried from the field mortally wounded. As he lay dying, he heard the cry, "They run. See them run." "Who runs?" he demanded. "The enemy, Sir, They give way everywhere." Thereupon, the General, ~~f~~ after giving a few last orders, turned on his side and said, "Now God be praised, I will die in peace."

In a little while, the exhausted conqueror was dead.

The situation here on the cross - the water of life had been drained from Jesus. He had won the victory. It had been accomplished. This was the grace of God, and we are heirs of this grace.

(God's great answer) to the cry of his son is this. He was going to raise him from the dead, and crown him with glory and honor, and exalt him

as the Prince of Peace, and enable him to give forgiveness and repentance.

(He thirsted) that we might not thirst.

A great bishop tells the story that when he was a schoolboy delivering morning newspapers, it was a financial help for the family, and he would arise at 3:30 in the morning and the alarm would go off, and he remembers one winter morning, the wind was blowing. It was miserable on a bicycle on the rainy day. He had managed courage enough to go pick up his papers, putting them in a bag, and after he warmed up a bit, he came outside ready to go on his way. And he saw across the street the (family Ford) his father was waiting for him. The father said, "Son, it's too cold and miserable to ride the bicycle on the route this morning." Bishop Kennedy says, "In gratitude, I can remember my feelings as if it had been yesterday. My daddy had to go to work early in the morning, and I had no legitimate claim whatsoever upon him for his kindnesses. I think I came closer to him that morning ^{and} ~~than~~ I had a more profound understanding of what fatherhood meant than at any other time in my life. I think that act of my own father who had gone far beyond a reasonable claim because of his love and concern. And this was the word on the cross. The word of identification. I think my father had gone beyond ~~by~~ any reasonable claim because of his love and concern. Now, this is exactly the great identification that Jesus made with the Heavenly Father when

(Pakistani) - cyclone - storm Nov 70 - salt water, death etc -
So. Prop. miss - agreed put 200 tube wells - hand pumps - villages without
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he said, "I thirst."

He was doing this so that (he might say), "Let him that is a thirst, come,
and whosoever will, let him come and taste of the water of life freely."

John 4:10 - Jesus talks about the living waters. He talks about flowing
rivers of water in John 7:38.

The final word in Rev. 22:17. The spirit and the bride say, come,
and let him that heareth, every Christian, say come. And let him that is a
thirst, lost men, come. And whosoever will, let him taste of the water of life
freely.

The fifth word from the cross, if I might turn it around, is the word
for you to speak this morning. You must cry, "I thirst for God." For the ~~HON~~
Holy One is not beyond the sinner's reach. And if you should cry, you will receive
the answer.