

# 55\_The Last Promise What Jesus Said Before He Died

By System Import | Sermon | March 13, 2026

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## # The Last Promise: What Jesus Said Before He Died

There is a profound fascination in the human heart with "Last Words."

When a famous person dies, we lean in close. We want to know: What did they say at the end?

We believe that in the final moments of life, the pretense falls away. The mask drops. A dying man does not lie. A dying man does not waste his breath on trivia. He speaks what matters most.

\* Steve Jobs, on his deathbed, looked at his family and simply said, "Oh wow. Oh wow. Oh wow."\*

\* Beethoven said, "Friends applaud, the comedy is finished."\*

\* Voltaire, the atheist philosopher, screamed in terror, "I am abandoned by God and man!"\*

But 2,000 years ago, on a hill called Golgotha, outside the city walls of Jerusalem, a Man hung on a Roman cross. He was dying one of the most excruciating deaths ever invented by human cruelty. His lungs were filling with fluid. His body was in shock. Every breath required him to push up on nailed feet, sending shockwaves of pain through his nervous system.

Most men on a cross did one of two things: they screamed in incoherent rage, or they lapsed into a coma of silence.

But Jesus of Nazareth did neither.

He spoke. And He spoke with clarity.

He uttered seven distinct statements. These are known as The Seven Last Words.

But they were not just words. They were not just the ramblings of a dying victim.

They were the Last Will and Testament of the Savior of the World.

When a wealthy man dies, he leaves a Will. He gathers his children and says, "I promise this to you... and I give this to you."\*

On the Cross, Jesus was executing His Will. He was signing checks in His own blood that you and I are still cashing today. He was dispensing His estate.

He gave forgiveness to his enemies. He gave paradise to a criminal. He gave a mother to his friend. And He gave His spirit to His Father.

Today, we are going to stand at the foot of the Cross. We are going to listen to the 7 Final Promises of Jesus Christ. We are going to deconstruct these statements to see exactly what He purchased for you in His final hour. You are about to discover that He wasn't just dying; He was deciding your destiny.

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Number 1: The Promise of Pre-Emptive Forgiveness — "Father, Forgive Them"

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The first words out of His mouth were arguably the most shocking words ever spoken in human history.

Luke 23:34 records the moment. The Roman soldiers are doing their work. They are driving thick iron spikes through His wrists. They are gambling for His clothes. The crowd is spitting. The religious leaders are mocking.

The pain is blinding. The injustice is total.

And Jesus gasps for air and says: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Notice the timing.

He did not wait for them to apologize. They weren't sorry! They were laughing.

He did not wait for the Resurrection.

He forgave them *\*while\** they were killing Him.

This is the Promise of Pre-Emptive Grace.

Jesus established a new law of the Kingdom here.

Under the Old Law, forgiveness was conditional: *"If you repent, then I will forgive."*

But Jesus introduces a grace that precedes repentance. He paid the bill before we even ordered the meal.

He looked down the corridor of time—He saw you and me, He saw our sins, our failures, our rejections of Him—and He said, "Father, forgive them."

Why? *"For they do not know what they are doing."*

This is the mercy of God. He looks at our sin and sees our ignorance. He sees that we are blinded by the devil. He sees that we are slaves to our own brokenness. He frames our rebellion as a tragedy, not just a crime.

This promise means that the cycle of vengeance stops with Him. He absorbed the violence and returned love. If He could forgive the men who drove the nails, is there any sin in your life He cannot forgive? The first promise of the Cross is that the door of mercy is unlocked from the inside, before you even knock.

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Number 2: The Promise of Immediate Paradise — "Today You Will Be With Me"

Next to Jesus, there were two thieves. Revolutionaries. Murderers.

At first, both of them mocked Him. But as the hours passed, one of them watched Jesus. He saw how He suffered. He heard Him pray for His enemies. And his heart broke.

He turned to Jesus and prayed the simplest prayer in the Bible: *"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."* (Luke 23:42).

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He didn't have a theology degree. He hadn't been baptized. He couldn't join a church (his hands were nailed down). He couldn't do any good works to "balance the scales." He was dying as a guilty man.

If salvation depends on *\*us\**, this man is hopeless.

But Jesus turned to him and made the Promise of Immediate Salvation:

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Break that down:

\* "Today": Not after 1,000 years of Purgatory. Not "eventually." Instantaneously. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

\* "You will be with me": Salvation is not just a place; it is a Person. Heaven is where Jesus is.

\* "In Paradise": The Greek word is *\*Paradeisos\**, which refers to the King's walled garden.

This promise destroys the religion of "Works."

This thief did nothing but believe. He brought nothing to the table but his sin. And Jesus gave him the keys to the Royal Garden.

This is the promise for you: It is never too late. You have not gone too far. You can't earn it, and you don't have to. The "Last Promise" to the dying thief is that grace catches us at the very edge of the cliff.

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Number 3: The Promise of a New Family — "Woman, Here Is Your Son"

In the midst of cosmic redemption, Jesus paused for personal responsibility.

He looked down and saw His mother, Mary. She was weeping. The sword was piercing her soul, just as Simeon had prophesied 33 years earlier.

Joseph (her husband) was likely dead by this time. As the eldest son, Jesus was responsible for her care. But He was leaving.

He saw John, His beloved disciple, standing nearby.

He said to her: "Woman, here is your son."

And to the disciple: "Here is your mother." (John 19:26-27).

This seems like a simple administrative task—making sure Mom is taken care of. But it is deeply theological.

Jesus was creating a New Family.

Mary and John were not related by blood. But at the foot of the Cross, they became mother and son.

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Jesus was teaching us that the Blood of the Covenant is thicker than the water of the womb.

The Cross creates a new community called the Church.

Many of you have been rejected by your biological families because of your faith. Or perhaps you come from a broken home.

The Promise of the Cross is that you will never be lonely. Jesus created a spiritual family that transcends biology, race, and background.

He gave us to each other.

He was saying, "I am leaving, but I am not leaving you alone. I am giving you a family."

Because of this moment, no believer dies alone. We are all mothers, brothers, and sisters in the House of God.

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Number 4: The Promise of Substitution — "My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"

Now, the scene changes. It is noon, but the sky turns black. For three hours, darkness covers the land.

And then, a scream rips through the silence.

"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (Matthew 27:46).

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

This is the holy of holies of the Cross. This is the mystery we can barely touch.

Notice that for the first and only time, Jesus does not call Him "Father." He calls Him "God."

The intimacy was broken.

In this moment, Jesus was becoming Sin (2 Corinthians 5:21).

He was absorbing the filth of the world—every murder, every rape, every lie, every idolatry. He took the radioactive waste of human history into His own soul.

And because God is Holy, He had to turn His face away.

Jesus experienced Hell.

Hell is not just fire; Hell is the absolute absence of God.

Jesus was "forsaken." He was abandoned. He was cut off.

Why is this a promise?

Because of the Great Exchange.

He was forsaken \*so that you would never be forsaken.\*

He took the rejection \*so that you could have the acceptance.\*

He was treated as an enemy \*so that you could be treated as a son.\*

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This is the Promise of Substitution.

When you feel like God is far away, you can point to the Cross and say, "No. Jesus took the distance. Jesus took the darkness. Therefore, I walk in the light."

He drank the cup of wrath down to the dregs, turning it upside down to show that not a drop is left for you. The only reason He could be forsaken is so that He could keep the promise: *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

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Number 5: The Promise of Humanity — "I Thirst"

After the spiritual agony, the physical agony returned.

Jesus, knowing that all was now completed, said: "I thirst." (John 19:28).

This is the shortest of the seven sayings (one word in Greek: *\*Dipso\**).

Why is this important? Why did the Gospel writers record it?

Because it proves His Humanity.

There is a heresy (Gnosticism) that claims Jesus was a spirit who didn't really suffer.

"I thirst" shatters that.

His tongue was swollen. His throat was like dust (Psalm 22:15). He felt every bit of the dehydration and fever that crucifixion brings.

This is the Promise of a Sympathetic High Priest.

Hebrews 4:15 says, *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses..."*

Whatever pain you are in today—physical, chronic, emotional—Jesus knows it. He didn't float above the suffering; He dove into it.

He knows what it's like to need a glass of water. He knows what it's like to be weak.

He didn't suffer as a Superman; He suffered as a Man.

This promise tells us that God is not distant from our physical reality. He validates our human needs. He meets us in our thirst.

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Number 6: The Promise of Completion — "It Is Finished"

Then, Jesus pulled Himself up on the nails for one final, victorious shout.

It wasn't a whisper of defeat. It was a roar of triumph.

"It is finished!" (John 19:30).

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In Greek, this is one word: Tetelestai.

It is a word with a rich history.

- \* In Business: It was written on a receipt when a bill was paid in full.
- \* In Court: It was spoken when a sentence was fully served.
- \* In War: It was shouted by a general when the enemy was destroyed.

Jesus was saying all of these things.

- \* The debt of sin? Paid in full.
- \* The prophecies of the Old Testament? Fulfilled.
- \* The power of Satan? Broken.
- \* The work of redemption? Done.

This is the Promise of Rest.

Religion says "Do." Jesus says "Done."

Religion says "Try harder." Jesus says "It is finished."

You cannot add to a finished work. You cannot paint over a masterpiece.

If you are trying to earn your way to heaven, you are insulting the Cross. You are saying, "Jesus, you missed a spot. Let me finish it."

No. He finished it.

Your salvation is not a construction project that you have to complete; it is a completed gift that you just have to receive.

This is the promise that lets you sleep at night. You don't have to save yourself. The check has cleared.

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Number 7: The Promise of Security — "Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit"

Finally, the work was done. The darkness lifted. The relationship was restored.

Jesus returned to the intimacy of the Son.

He quoted Psalm 31:5, but He added one word: "Father."

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46).

And having said this, He breathed His last.

He didn't die as a victim. He died as a Volunteer.

He said, *"No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord."* (John 10:18).

At the moment He chose, He dismissed His spirit.

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This is the Promise of Ultimate Security.

Look at where He placed His spirit: "Into Your Hands."

Those are the safest hands in the universe.

Those are the hands that hold the galaxies. Those are the hands that formed Adam from the dust.

Jesus blazed a trail through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He showed us how to die.

We don't die into a void. We don't die into nothingness. We die into the Hands of the Father.

For the believer, death is not a tragedy; it is a transfer.

It is a transfer from the hands of doctors, the hands of pain, and the hands of this broken world... into the Hands of the Father.

Because Jesus trusted the Father with His death, we can too.

Stephen, the first martyr, echoed this when he died: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."\*

This is the promise that takes the sting out of death. We know who is catching us.

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Conclusion: The Will is Executed

Seven statements. Seven Promises.

1. Forgiveness: You are covered before you ask.
2. Paradise: You are welcome today.
3. Family: You are not alone.
4. Substitution: You are accepted because He was forsaken.
5. Humanity: He understands your pain.
6. Completion: The work is done.
7. Security: The Father holds you.

This is the Last Will and Testament of Jesus Christ.

When a person leaves a Will, the beneficiaries have to do one thing: Claim the Inheritance.

A check that is never cashed is useless. A promise that is never believed is powerless.

Jesus did not speak these words just to fill the silence. He spoke them to fill your emptiness.

He promised you Paradise. Are you living like you're going there?

He promised you it is Finished. Are you resting in His grace?

He promised you Forgiveness. Have you forgiven yourself?

The Cross was not a defeat. It was the moment God signed the adoption papers for the human race.

The promises are signed in blood. They are legally binding in the courts of Heaven.

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And they are yours today.

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

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