

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: Jesus' Cries From the Cross

Learning Goals: Students should be able to explain the seven sayings that Jesus spoke from the cross and their significance to his Passion.

Question: If you could write your last words right now, what would they be?

Prayer

Discuss Question on Board

We don't find these in any one gospel, but in combining the four gospel accounts together. Therefore, we are not really sure what order they come in.

Seven Last Words from the Cross:

A word of forgiveness - "Father forgive them . . ." (Luke 23:34)

- Jesus offers radical forgiveness to those who are crucifying him.
- He is setting an example for his followers of the radical forgiveness we should offer.
- *Questions for Reflection:* Do you really believe God has forgiven your sins? Do you take time on a regular basis to confess your sins so that you might enjoy the freedom of forgiveness? Do you need to experience God's forgiveness in a fresh way today?

A word of promise - "truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)

- Jesus was crucified alongside two thieves. Both of the thieves ridiculed him, but only one had a change of heart.
- He confesses Jesus as the "King of the Jews" and asks to be remembered in his kingdom
- Salvation is indeed by grace (unearned) - there is no one so evil or hopeless that they cannot come to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness
- *Questions for Reflection:* Have you staked your life on Jesus? Have you put your ultimate trust in him? Do you know that, when your time comes, you will be with him in paradise?

A charge to John and Mary - "Behold your son, behold your mother" (John 19:26-27)

- Jesus was concerned for his mother's well-being, so he entrusted her care to the "beloved disciple"
- What about Jesus' earthly siblings? It is unclear. (Maybe they were not believers in him and his mission, so he entrusted her to one who was a believer?)
- *Questions for Reflection:* What does Mary's presence at the cross evoke in you? Why do you think was it necessary for Jesus to suffer physical pain as he died?

A cry of desolation - "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

- Jesus is quoting Psalms 22:1 - a psalm of lament
- This happened after "darkness had come over the land" (Mark 15:33) - symbolic of divine judgement and evil
- It is here more than anywhere else that we understand the seriousness and horror of sin
- *Questions for Reflection:* Have you taken time to consider that Jesus was abandoned by the Father so that you might not be? What does this "word" from the cross mean to you?

A cry of physical anguish - "I am thirsty" (John 19:28)

- A cry of physical anguish - shows Jesus' humanity
- He is offered sour wine to drink - almost seems to be mocking Jesus

- *Questions for Reflection:* How do you respond to Jesus' statement "I am thirsty"? What does this statement suggest to you about Jesus? About yourself?

A shout of victory - "It is finished" (John 19:30)

- Jesus' work on earth had been completed
- He had been victorious
- He had fulfilled the will of God and the Scriptures
- Redemption was accomplished, Satan/Evil had been defeated
- *Questions for Reflection:* Do you live as if Jesus finished the work of salvation? To you have confidence that God will finish that which he has begun in you?

A shout of commitment - "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46)

- Jesus was confident that God would not hide his face but would hear his prayer
- There are echoes here of Psalms 22:3-5
- *Questions for Reflection:* Have you put your life and, indeed, your life beyond this life, in God's hands? How do you experience God's salvation through Christ in your life today?

Lesson Summary/Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- What were the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross?