

SEVEN FINAL WORDS
Cries from the Cross of Christ
Part 5: A Cry of Suffering (John 19:28-29)

INTRO: Three days in spring A.D. 33 serve as hinge point for human history. Days include agonizing prayer of submission in the Garden, betrayed and arrest, cowardice of His closest followers, six illegitimate trials, scourging, journey to cross, nailed and naked for some six hours. From that rugged cross He uttered seven sayings. **First**, a cry for forgiveness. **Second**, a cry for salvation. **Third**, a cry for provision (all before noon). Now, darkness covers the land. **Fourth**, cry of abandonment (desertion). The first three centered upon others (enemies, thief, Mary and John.)

But the last three cries focused upon Himself – all offered in perfect obedience to His Father. This cry is the shortest of all, “I thirst!” Read John 19:28-29... Two words in English, only one in Greek, giving a glimpse of his physical suffering. Fully God? Yes! And fully human! In His humanity He got tired, sleepy, and hungry. As deity He fed 5,000 and calmed storms. As human He wept at Lazarus’ tomb. As God He raised him from the dead. Let’s EXAMINE this painful cry:

I. THE STATEMENT (vv.28-29)

- A. What Jesus KNEW. “Knowing that all was now completed, so that Scripture would be fulfilled” (v.28). “Knowing” means “to know innately, intuitively, to have in mind the facts and then to recall them.” He knew He was fulfilling prophecies related to His death (Psa. 22; Isa. 53). 28 fulfilled that day! Jesus knew all things had been accomplished.
- B. What Jesus FELT (v. 28 “I thirst”).
- Thirst was one of the terribly torturing experiences of death by crucifixion. His thirst fulfilled prophecy (Psa. 22:15; 69:3, 20-21). Occasionally the psalmist (David here) wrote words that had a double meaning—describing his own need and that of the coming Messiah as well. Twice during crucifixion, Jesus was offered drink. First, early in crucifixion, He was offered wine mixed with gall (Matt. 27:34 narcotic effect). Jesus refused, not wanting to dull His senses. The second instance is here (Jn. 19:29), shortly before death. This was a different wine, a sour wine with a vinegar taste. The soldier lifted it up with a sponge and He drank, calming His burning thirst. Hyssop plant dipped in blood of lamb to paint doorposts (Exo. 12).

II. THE LESSONS

- A. *His full and true humanity was displayed on the cross.* God became man. He truly understands human suffering because He experienced it

(Heb. 4:14-16). Therefore, we are able to come boldly into His presence at the throne of grace. Note: Jesus began His ministry hungry in a wilderness of temptation. He ended it thirsty. Both focused on His humanity. He is one of us, yet without sin. Judith Mattison writes. . .

- B. *His unselfishness is also displayed* (Phil. 2:3-11). It has been over 12 hours since His arrest. During that time, He was scourged, beaten, spit upon, nailed, stripped, and mocked. Never offered relief of any kind. Never a complaint. Now, at the end he asks for a drink. All along, He had only thought of others and the fulfillment of prophecy. When those were cared for, He asked for Himself.
- C. *Suffering is not always a sign you are out of God’s will.* Sometimes we suffer for doing wrong. Sometimes we suffer for doing right (1 Pet. 3:14-17; 4:12-19).
- D. *His words express a universal need* (“I thirst”). We all thirst (for peace, hope, freedom, etc.). Where we go to find it is the real issue. Jesus endured hell for us. Hell is a place of thirst (Lk. 16:24). A place of eternal thirst and never being satisfied. This world can never quench our thirst. What did Jesus tell the woman at the well (Jn. 4:13-15)? What did Jesus say in Jn. 7:37-38? Exo. 17:6 He was smitten on the cross that we might have the water of life. Listen to Rev. 21:6; 22:17 “The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. In fact, the last invitation in the Bible is inviting all who trust to come and freely drink. What an offer!

ILLUS: Heard about a Christian couple out to dinner with some new friends (not Christians). Server asked, “Can I get you a drink?” He replied, “Some years ago I took a drink, and I haven’t been thirsty since!” He led their friends to Christ. Our Lord and Savior thirsted on the cross that we might never have to thirst again.

CONC: Cry #5: “I thirst”. The words of an obedient suffering servant.