

Title: **INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT**
Text: Luke 23:46
Date: Sunday Evening — November 5, 2006
Tape # Z-13b

Introduction:

When I try to think about our Savior's death upon the cross, I am utterly overwhelmed. It is impossible for me to conceive, and much less describe, the things our blessed Savior endured when he was made sin for us on the cursed tree. I cannot even grasp the things that surrounded him during his agony. —

- The jeering taunts of the Jews
- The darkness that covered the land at mid-day.
- The rending of the veil of the temple in twain, from the top to the bottom.
- The opening of the graves.
- The dead bodies of the saints arising from the dust, going into the holy city, and appearing to many.
- The centurion compelled to acknowledge Christ for the Son of God.
- The rabble that watched the Son of God die, beholding these things, and returning to their places with the horror they had witnessed tormenting their minds.
- And all his acquaintances and the women who followed him. — What must have gone through their minds as they witnessed these things!

How quickly we read and rehearse these things; but how little we enter into them. I pray for grace ever to stand by faith at the foot of the cross. Never to be moved from this place, going over the scene again and again until I see him face to face who loved me and gave himself for me. Oh, that I might know him who by the sacrifice of himself has put away my sin, who by dying for me causes me to live with him! Let me be made conformable unto his death. May God the Holy Spirit ever give me wisdom and grace “*to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*” (1 Cor. 2:2), to “*glory only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Gal. 6:14), and to set him before you continually who is made of God unto us “*Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption*” (1 Cor. 1:30).

GOD'S WORK

“INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT”

I want us to take another look at our Lord Jesus on the cross. As we do, I want us to purposefully look over the heads of men and devils and behold the hand of God the Father in all that transpired on that glorious day when he sacrificed his darling Son for us. The Scriptures tell us, that “*it pleased the LORD to bruise him,*” that it was God the Father himself who “*put him to grief*” (Isaiah 53:10). It was the hand of his Father that gave the finishing wound to his Son’s agonies. It was the hand of God that pierced the Redeemer’s heart. His Father’s own hand drove the death nail into his soul.

No angel is competent to explain these mysteries; and I know that I cannot do so. But some things are clearly revealed concerning them. These things I hope I shall never cease to adore and never cease to proclaim.

God slaughtered his darling Son in the unmitigated wrath of his holy justice **because, all the sins of all his people were made his.** — When the holy One of God who knew no sin was made sin for us, he was made a curse for us, and all the fulness of his Father’s holy fury and wrath were entirely spent upon him, it was because he who alone is the man of God’s pleasure became the object of God’s utter displeasure and fury (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

Surely the mid-day midnight that covered the land was intended to intimate the darkness of our Savior’s soul agony. The darkness was altogether supernatural. It was not merely to show the Father’s anger against those who tormented his Son. It was the Lord Jesus himself who cried, “*My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?*” It was the Christ of God who was forsaken, who was now expiating sin by the sacrifice of himself. The whole weight of all our sin, and the punishment due to us because of sin, fell upon him. As the damned in hell have eternal darkness, utterly without the slightest glimmer of the light of God’s favor, the Son of God in our nature while sustaining the judgment due to our souls forever because of sin, was engulfed in darkness, unvisited by that light whose absence he had never known before.

JUSTICE SATISFIED

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He endured and completely exhausted all the hell we must have endured but could never exhaust, had he not suffered and died for us. Yet, he did not, as many have suggested, go to hell itself. — It is not the place of suffering and wrath, but the infinite extremity of it, that filled his cup of woe and formed the baptism with which he was baptized. — *“There is therefore, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus!”*

There is a statement in **Mark 10:39** that I want you to see. When James and John asked that they might sit at our Savior’s side in his kingdom, he asked them, — *“Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can.”* They did not have a clue what they asked or what they said. But I want you to see what the Savior said to them in verse 39. — *“Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized.”*

Was our Savior telling these disciples that they would suffer the same wrath, the same fury, the same hell he suffered? Was he saying that his people would drink the very cup unmitigated of woe he would drink? — Indeed he was! When our blessed Savior suffered all the hell of God’s wrath for us, when he was baptized in the abyss of divine vengeance, when he drank the last dregs of that bitter cup of damnation, and drank it dry, when he died, we suffered all the hell of God’s wrath, we were baptized in the abyss of divine vengeance with him, we drank the last dregs of that bitter cup of damnation, and drank it dry, we died. — We were crucified with Christ! We were one with him!

One with Him e’er time begun,
 One with Him, the God-man born,
 One with Him as He obeyed,
 One with Christ our cov’nant Head!

One with Him in agony,
 Baptized with Him in fury’s sea!
 One with Him when He died for me,
 And one with Him in victory!

When God’s darling Son was lifted up upon the cross, he was suspended between heaven and earth, as one unworthy of either. He was then, as it

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were, in the territory of Satan, “*the prince of the power of the air*” (Ephes. 2:9), when hanging on the cursed tree, and made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13). There, he cried, “*The sorrows of death compassed me; the pains of hell gat hold upon me*” (Ps.116:3). — “*All thy waves and billows have gone over me*” (Ps.. 42:7).

“Yonder, amazing sight! I see —
Th’ incarnate Son of God
Expiring on th’ cursed tree,
And weltering in His blood.

Behold, a purple torrent run
Down from His hands and head,
The crimson tide puts out the sun;
His groans awake the dead.

The trembling earth, the darken’d sky,
Proclaim the truth aloud;
And with th’ amazed centurion, cry,
‘This is the Son of God!’

So great, so vast a sacrifice
May well my hope revive:
If God’s own Son thus bleeds and dies,
The sinner sure may live.

Oh that these cords of love divine
Might draw me, Lord, to Thee!
Thou hast my heart, it shall be Thine!
Thine it shall ever be!”

Samuel Stennett

SALVATION SURE

Surely, the things we see in the suffering and death of God’s own Son, the things we hear as we behold hi expiring on the tree, suffering all the wrath of God, are intended to assure us that **those for whom he suffered and died shall never suffer the wrath of God and shall never die**. All for whom he bled and died are forever justified!

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- Our sins, made his and charged to him, can never be made ours and charged to us!
- The fury he suffered is forever gone, completely exhausted in him! — “*Fury is not in me*” (Isa. 27:4).
- Because he was cursed, all for whom he was made a curse, are forever blessed!

“From whence this fear and unbelief?
Hast Thou, O Father, put to grief
Thy spotless Son for me?
And will the righteous Judge of men
Condemn me for that debt of sin
Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?”

“Complete atonement Thou hast made
And to the utmost farthing paid
Whate’er thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place
If sheltered in thy righteousness,
And sprinkled with thy blood?”

“If Thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my room endured
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again at mine.

“Turn, then, my soul, unto thy rest;
The merits of thy great High Priest
Speak peace and liberty;
Trust in His efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
Since Jesus died for thee.”

Augustus Toplady

AMAZING LOVE

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Surely, all these things are recorded in the Book of God to constantly remind us of our Savior’s amazing love for us. Oh, how he must love us. — *“Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them to the end!”*

(John 3:16) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

(Romans 5:5-8) “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

(1 John 3:16) “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

(1 John 4:9-10) “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

Now, let’s look at Luke 23:46.

(Luke 23:46) “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

These words were spoken by our Savior, as he was dying the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. — *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”* But they are also found in Psalm 31:5. And words very similar to them were spoken by God’s servant Stephen when he was dying, in Acts 7:59. I want us to look at all three of those text, praying that God the Holy Spirit will show us their meaning and seal their lessons to our hearts.

OUR SAVIOR’S WORDS

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First, let’s look at these words, as they fell from the lips of our blessed Savior, when he died in our place upon Calvary’s cursed tree. — *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”*

Our Lord Jesus was pre-eminently a man of the Book. He lived and died by the Word of God. — *“Never man spake like this Man.”* Yet, almost everything he said, that is recorded for our learning, was either a quotation of Scripture, or a distinct reference to Scripture. — He was evidently familiar with the whole Book of God. — He knew the letter of the Word and he knew the spirit of the Word, the message conveyed by it, in every part of it. — Our Savior did not cite church fathers, learned doctors, or esteemed philosophers to enforce his doctrine, but the Word of God.

- When Satan tempted him, he referred to the Word of God as the rule by which he lived.
- When questioned about his doctrine, he did not argue and reason with men, but simply stated the plain Word of God and enforced it by simple parables and familiar illustrations.
- When dying, our Savior used a passage from the 31st Psalm to express his heart’s satisfaction with his Father’s ways and his contentment with his Father’s will, even in his indescribable agony. — *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”*

Obviously, our Savior did not die in weakness, but in the full strength of life. He had cried earlier, *“I thirst.”* But soon afterward, he cried with a loud voice, as only a strong man could, *“It is finished!”* And, here, as he reverently bows his head, like a servant whose work is done, he says, *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”*

His mind was clear, calm, and undisturbed. In fact, he seems to have been completely content and perfectly happy. He cried, *“It is finished,”* because his agony was over. His sufferings were over, finished. It appears that he was already beginning to enjoy a taste of sweet victory. And, yet, with all that clearness of mind, freshness of intellect, and fluency of words that he possessed, he chose not to say something new, but went to the Book of God, and took from the writings of the Holy Spirit this expression of contentment, *“Into thy hands I commit my spirit.”*

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The Word of God was food to his soul to the very end. He lived upon the Word of God, and died upon the Word of God. What an example he set before us. Let us follow in his steps.

(Psalms 119:11) “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

(Psalms 119:140) “Thy word *is* very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.”

(Psalms 119:160-162) “Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever. (161) Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word. (162) I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.”

(Psalms 138:2) “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

(Proverbs 30:5) “Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.”

(2 Timothy 3:14-17) “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; (15) And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (16) All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (17) That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

(Hebrews 4:12) “For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

(Luke 24:27) “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

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(Luke 24:31-32) “And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. (32) And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”

(Luke 24:45-47) “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, (46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

Oh, that, you and I might get into the very heart of the Word of God, and get that Word into ourselves! As the silkworm eats into the leaf and consumes it, so we should eat and consume the Word of the God, not just crawl over its surface, but eat right into it till we have taken it into our inmost parts.

We ought never merely glance over the words, learn its poetry, or the historic facts it contains, or merely memorize its words. We ought to read and study, meditating and praying, that we may consume its contents, until our souls are saturated with the Book of God.

Not only does this statement, “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,*” display our Lord’s reverence for Holy Scripture, it tells us that **he was completely content with his Father’s will**, conscious of his relationship to him, as his Father. — What a blessed thing it is to live in complete reconciliation to God! — What a blessed thing it is to live in contentment with the will of God! — What a blessed thing it must be to die with the conscious awareness that God is our Father, that we are sons of God! Oh, how sweet, in life and in death, to have in our souls the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, “*Abba, Father!*” We may go even into the jaws of death without quivering hearts, if God is our Father.

“*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*” — Those words tell us this, too, — **Our blessed Savior laid down his life for us, as a voluntary sacrifice and sin-offering**. Strictly speaking, no mere man can use those words. The most accurate reading of our text might be, “Father, into your hands I now place my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

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- You and I die by necessity. But our blessed Savior died freely, without constraint. There was no necessity for him to die except the necessity he laid upon himself in becoming our Substitute.
- You and I die passively. But he died actively, by the act of his own will.

Again, when we hear our Savior say, “*Father into thy hands I commend my spirit,*” we see that our Savior died as a man **fully confident that he would be received by his Father into his heavenly kingdom.**

- As One who had done all that God could demand him to do.
- As One who had been all that God could require him to be.
- As One who had suffered all that justice could demand he suffer.
- As One altogether worthy of his Father’s acceptance

When God calls us me die, I want to die like that. Don’t you? It will be a sweet dying if we can, like our Lord, died, with a text of Scripture upon our lips, with God as our Father, ready to receive us, joyously resigning our will entirely to the sweet will of the ever-blessed One, and saying, “*It is the Lord,*” “*my Father,*” “*let him do as seemeth him good.*”

WORDS FOR LIFE

Turn now to Psalm 31:5, the passage which our Savior had in his mind just when he was dying.

(Psalms 31:5) “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”

These are words to be used by God’s saints while we live in this world. — “*Into thine hand I commit my spirit.*” Happy is that man whose Rock and Fortress is the eternal God! That man has every reason to commit his life entirely to the Lord. Just take a quick glance at the reasons David uses for committing his life to the Lord.

1. “*Thou has redeemed me*” (v. 5).
2. He is the “*Lord God of truth*” (v. 5).
3. “*Thou hast considered my trouble*” (v. 7).
4. “*Thou hast known my soul in adversities*” (v. 7).
5. “*My times are in thy hand*” (v. 16).
6. I am “*thy servant*” (v. 16).

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7. “*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!*” (v. 19).
8. “*He hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city*” (v. 21).

Let us cheerfully entrust our souls to our God, and know that we completely quite safe in his hands (Rom. 12:1).

(Romans 12:1-2) “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*”

He will do us good (Rom. 8:28, 32).

(Romans 8:28) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose.*”

(Romans 8:32) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

DYING WORDS

If you will turn to Acts 7:59, you will see that the words by which our Savior died are words by which his people may die. Here, God’s servant Stephen is dying, stoned to death because of the gospel. What a way to die!

Look at what he saw (vv. 55-56).

(Acts 7:55-56) “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, (56) And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

Hear what he said (v. 59).

(Acts 7:59) “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

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- **What does this prayer mean?** — If I can die as Stephen died, as my Savior died, I will die with in the certainty of immortality. — “*Forever with the Lord!*”
- If I can die as Stephen did, I will die with a conscious awareness that Christ is near, so near that I can speak to him!
- If I can die as Stephen did, as my Savior died, I will die with confidence that all is well.
- If I can die as Stephen died, as my Savior died, I will die with assurance of everlasting approval and acceptance, with no sin laid to my charge, without fear.

Since Jesus is mine, I'll not fear undressing,
But gladly put off these garments of clay;
To die in the Lord, is a covenant blessing,
Since Jesus to glory thro' death led the way.

- If I can die as Stephen died, as my Savior died, I can die willingly.

Look at what he asked. — “*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*” (v. 60.) Spirit of God, let me die like that, without a trace of malice toward any man!

Look at what Stephen did. — “*He fell asleep*” (v. 60).

Blessed be his name, I have every reason to hope that I shall die like Stephen died, like my Savior died, because He who has put away my sin is the Lord my Righteousness, and he has made me the righteousness of God in him!

Then, as I wanted to show you this morning, had time not prevented me, **he shall turn my fasting into everlasting feasting!**

(Revelation 7:16-17) “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. (17) For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

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(Revelation 21:4-7) “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. (6) And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. (7) He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

(Revelation 22:3-4) “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.”

(Revelation 22:20) “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Amen.

Luke 23:46 —Luke Series
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