

## SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS

Few words are of more significance than those spoken in the face of death. Many words of loved ones will be forgotten, but rarely forgotten are those final words spoken to us from a loved one's dying-bed. Certainly the words spoken by Jesus upon the cross are words of tremendous meaning. As recorded by the Gospel writers, they are seven in number:

**"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"** (Luke 23:34). What better view into the heart of Jesus could there be than this? This is what the cross of Christ is all about.

**"Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise"** (Lk. 23:43) was spoken to a dying thief. These words emphasize that the cross is not just about saving those with exemplary lives. Jesus died for all.

**"Woman, behold thy son,"** spoken to His mother, Mary,, referring to the disciple John; and then to John, referring to Mary, **"behold thy mother"** (John 18L25-27). Jesus recognized a responsibility for the care of His mother, placing her in the hands of a loving disciple. (Continue next column)

**"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** (Matthew 27:46), a cry prophetically uttered by David in Psalm 22:1. It is the cry of the lost, forsaken by God because of man's guilt. However, it was not for any guilt of His own, of which He had none, but for our guilt. He died as our sin-bearer. It is as Paul declared, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

**"I thirst"** (John 19:238). This was His only reference to a physical need while on the cross.

**"It is finished"** (John 19:30). The divine work of man's redemption had been accomplished.

**"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"** (Luke 23:46). His was a voluntary surrender of His life to God. He had told the disciples, "I lay down my life for the sheep.... No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:15b, 18a).

These words spoken by our dying Savior are truly a window into His heart. –

Ron