

Gospel of Matthew

Chapter 27:45-53

“Six to Nine”

All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid
Matthew W. Thoms, Pastor/Teacher
21 October 2018

10:00 -10:05 Announcements & Prayer

10:06-10:26 Praise & Worship

10:27-11:15 Teaching

11:16-11:20 Praise & Worship

11:21 Dismiss or Other Function

Announcement:

Teaching: We've talked before about the significance of the number seven in the Bible. It's referred to as the "number of perfection or completion".

So, it's no coincidence that Jesus spoke from the cross ... SEVEN times ... His message being both complete and perfect.

And those seven perfect statements will be the primary focus of our study this morning ... and for reference they're listed in your bulletin.

The first three of the Lord's statements were probably uttered before, or with, **Matthew 27:45**. So, let's look at those before we jump into this morning's text ...

Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." ...

This is a big deal because Jesus wasn't only asking the Father to forgive the soldiers and the people at the foot of the cross ... He was setting the stage for our forgiveness as well.

Listen again ...

Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." ...

The latter part of that statement is so important because it means the difference between premeditated murder and manslaughter.

We all agree that Jesus died for our sins. Or better stated ... we killed Him with our sins. But with these words Jesus successfully litigates for the lower charge of manslaughter.

Q. Now ... why does that matter? – Because all the way back in **Numbers 35** and **Joshua 21**, God established Cities of Refuge. Places where those guilty of manslaughter could take refuge, but those guilty of murder were not eligible.

Anytime someone dies, it causes pain for those left behind, but when that death is caused by another human being ... it brings, not only, pain ... but anger.

So, God established these cities of refuge, where those guilty of the unintentional death of another, could be protected from the angry family members who might seek retribution.

But if premeditated murder was the charge, there was no refuge ... no safe place ... no call for forgiveness.

But there was a caveat to this refuge ... those seeking safety within the walls of one of these Cities of Refuge were only granted protection as long as they remained within the confines of that city's walls. They had to abide (**John 15**).

Obviously, this paints a familiar picture of the New Covenant ... only our City of Refuge is Jesus Christ. And indeed, we do have His protection ... as long as we abide!

Luke 23:34 ... "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." ...

Now chronologically, the second thing the Lord uttered ... was a response to the request for salvation from one of the thieves crucified with Him ...

Luke 23:43 ... "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

It seems clear that the Lord's honoring this sinner's request for forgiveness, but in addition ... He makes an interesting promise here "... **today you shall be with Me in Paradise.**"

So, there's no denying that Jesus promises this thief a trip together before sundown, but the question is ...

Q. Where were they going? -- The Lord calls it "Paradise" and many have incorrectly interpreted that as a reference to Heaven ... but that simply can't be.

First because the original language doesn't bear that out, but more importantly ... because to interpret this "Paradise" as "Heaven" would require making Jesus out to be a "liar" ... and that He's not.

Remember, Jesus told the thief ... "I'll take you there today", but three days later He told Mary Magdalene ...

John 20:17 "... I have not yet ascended to the Father ...

So if “Paradise” means “Heaven”, then either Jesus didn’t keep His promise to the thief or He lied to Mary. But, if you don’t like either one of those options ... “Paradise” must be someplace other than Heaven.

So, turn with me please to **Luke 16** and we’ll figure this out ...

19 "Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. 20 "And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, 21 and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. 22 "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. 23 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 "And he cried out and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.' 25 "But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. 26 "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'

In this story, we’re introduced to several locations or places:

- 1.** “Sheol” which simply means the grave.
- 2.** “Paradise” or “Abraham’s Bosom” which basically describes the half of sheol where Abraham and Lazarus were.
- 3.** “Hades” which describes the other half of sheol where the rich man was in agony and ...
- 4.** The “vast gulf” or “chasm” which describes the impassable space between the two halves of sheol.

And on the screens ... you can see a diagram of what that basically looks like. More to come on that topic ... but for now we’re going to move on to ...

The Lord’s third statement from the cross was probably uttered very near the onset of darkness described in **Matthew 27:45**, but it’s recorded in ...

John 19:26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

The Lord's mother would not have needed a caretaker if His earthly father, Joseph were still in the picture, so it's probably a safe bet that Joseph had passed away sometime prior to this.

Verse 45: When Jesus was born ... His birth proclaimed by a bright star ... or light over Bethlehem (**Matthew 2:2**) ... but here, His death is proclaimed by a shadow of darkness.

But **1st Thessalonians 4:16** tells us that there's yet one more announcement to be made ... and that is of His return to get us. And that one will be announced by a trumpet of jubilee!

Verse 46: In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus made the same prayerful request three times ... "**... Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me ...**" (**Matthew 26:39**).

Q. And the question should be asked ...what was in that cup that Jesus so wanted to avoid if possible? – That cup contained the sin of the world. All the sin from Adam to us.

And yet it wasn't the sin itself that caused Him such agony ... it was the consequence of that sin. The momentary separation from the Father that caused Him to cry out here ... "**ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?**"

Jesus is quoting from ...

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. 2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. 3 [for] You are holy, ...

In the instant that Jesus accepted the guilt of our sin, He was separated from His Holy Father.

And He did that so that you and I would never be condemned as guilty and would never be left alone (**Jude 24 and Matthew 28:20**).

The Lord's next utterance is recorded in **John 19:28** and is a quote of **Psalm 69:21**. It's a simple statement that shows us His human side. He simply said ... "**I thirst**".

But then we come to the proclamation that is nothing more and nothing less than a statement of fact ... a statement that should bring every Christian peace and cause us to rejoice. It's recorded in **Luke 19:30** where He cries out ... "**It is finished!**"

In the Greek it's one word ... Tetelastai (Tet-tel-astie). A very common New Testament word with three possible meanings depending on context:

- 1.** It can mean, it is made an end of.
- 2.** It can mean, it is paid, and ...
- 3.** It can mean, it is accomplished.

And in the context of Jesus on this cross ... all three meanings apply:

- 1.** It is made an end of; Christ made an end of our bondage to sin (**John 8:36**).
- 2.** It is paid; the price was paid for our redemption (**1st Corinthians 6:20**).
- 3.** It is accomplished; Jesus accomplished the will of His Father ... He secured our freedom from sin and our redemption (**John 6:40**).

Tetelastai ... it is finished! Now we say that with an inflection in our voice that says victory, but many of the onlookers were fooled into seeing the Lord as a defeated man saying, "it is finished". And I really believe that that's what Satan thought too.

But no ... it was made an end of ... the price was paid, and it was fully accomplished!
But this world does not understand that.

As Paul said ...

1st Corinthians 15:57 ... thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because He died ... we win!

Verse 47-50: Jesus' specific last words are recorded by **Luke** ...

Luke 23:46 ... Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

Matthew says that Jesus "... yielded up His spirit". And **John** records Jesus as saying ...

10:17 "... I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. ..."

Verse 51: Now to the screens for another diagram ... this time, of the temple.

As you look at it ... take note of three things; the area called the Holy Place, the area called the Holy of Holies containing The Ark of the Covenant and the veil that separates the two.

Now, all of the priests were allowed into the Holy Place, but only the High Priest was allowed into the Holy of Holies. And that was only once per year after an elaborate process of preparation and purification.

So, crossing through the curtain from the Holy Place into the Holy of Holies ... into the presence of God ... was a rare and guarded event, because anything unholy is forbidden in the presence of our Holy God.

Any part of the preparation process wasn't just so, and the priest would enter the Holy of Holies and drop dead because imperfection and a perfect God simply don't mix.

“Atonement” is a word that means to make an amends for a wrong. To offer enough good to counter the bad.

And Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, was the only day of the year that the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies.

The Ark of the Covenant was a gold box with a lid called the Mercy Seat and it was the only thing that was in the Holy of Holies. It was an on-earth representation of God.

And on Yom Kippur ... once the High Priest was in the Holy of Holies ... his job was to sprinkle sacrificial blood on the Mercy Seat. But even when everything went perfectly ... it only provided atonement ... it only made things right with God for one year. It was very temporary.

But not so with Jesus ...

Hebrews 10:11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD ... 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

The blood of sacrificial bulls and goats could only cover sin, but the blood of Jesus takes sin away ... “as [far as] **the east is from the west**” **Psalm 103** tells us.

Now think again about this veil being torn. It's hard to appreciate the mass of this thing from the diagrams, but **Exodus 26** says that it was made of twisted (or woven) linen and the scholars estimate that it was 10” thick!

So, tearing this thing from top to bottom wasn't an accident or a natural occurrence ... even in the midst of an earthquake ... this was an act of a Mighty God.

Q. And why was it worth the exercise of God's might?

Hebrews 10:19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil ...

Because the veil was torn open ... you and I now have access to God ... everyday!
That's why it was worth it!

Verse 52-53: There are both physical and spiritual sides to this event.

The physical side was delivered by an earthquake that physically shook the mountain at the Lord's death and opened the graves of the "saints".

The spiritual side was delivered by God Himself in the resurrection of those saints ... three days later.

1st Corinthians 15:20 ... now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

Without the resurrection of Jesus there is no resurrection at all. But once Jesus was resurrected ... the saints who'd been laid to rest in those, now open, graves were also be resurrected.

Q. But who are these saints that Jesus resurrected? – Well ... let's go back to the diagrams as we consider ...

Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, "**WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.**" 9 (Now this expression, "**He ascended,**" what does it mean except that **He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?** 10 **He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.**)

I see no reason not to include these saints in the "host of captives" that Christ set free from Paradise or Abraham's Bosom when He rose from the dead Himself.

Q. And remember that thief that asked Jesus to save him? -- It seems that he got to spend about three days in Abraham's Bosom and was then resurrected to enter Jerusalem and ultimately escorted to Heaven at Lord's ascension forty days later (**Acts 1:3**).

Conclusion:

2nd Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Paul says there that Jesus actually became sin on our behalf. That He willingly allowed Himself to be transformed into something detestable to the Father.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

The late preacher, Robert Lee, said, “Jesus became sin and the Father dealt with that as He must deal with all sin ... in severe and unrelenting judgment. He sentenced sin to death in the person of His Son.”

That’s a reality that should help us quantify His love for us. The sin that Adam brought into this world on a tree in the Garden of Eden ... Jesus took out of this world on a tree at Calvary.

The way has been made ... the Holy of Holies is open. You and I have 24-hour a day ... 365 day a year access to God. His door was permanently opened when Jesus tore that curtain in half.

Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Invitation as the Spirit Leads: Scharry, [_____] and I will be available in the back of the sanctuary and if you’ve never made a commitment to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior or need to recommit or just have questions about what was covered this morning ... please come and visit with one of us.

Invite to fellowship: Potluck NOW
Christian Fundamentals 4pm