

Mark 15:21-37 (tx: John 19:28)

THE CONFESSION OF CREATURELINESS

- I. The victorious reason
- II. The saving assurance

INTRODUCTION

Max Lucado, in his book, “No They Wonder Call Him the Savior”, writes about Jesus’ 7 words from the cross.

- he says regarding Jesus’ 5th saying: “[Jesus] sighed, ‘I’m tired,’ So he stopped. [And he said:] ‘You go on & get food. I’ll rest right here.’ He was tired. Bone-tired. His feet were hurting. His face was hot. He wanted to rest. So he stopped at a well [in Samaria], waved on His disciples, stretched bit, & sat down.
- “‘I’m sleepy’ [Jesus said & he] stretched. He yawned. It had been long day. The crowd had been large. And now night had fallen & Jesus was sleepy. ‘If you guys don’t mind, I am going to catch few winks.’ So he did. On a cloud-covered night on the Sea of Galilee, God went to sleep. So deep was his sleep, thunder did not wake him. Nor did the tossing of the boat. Nor did the salty spray of storm-blown waves. Only the screams of some breathless disciples could penetrate his slumber.
- “‘I’m angry.’ You could see it in his eyes. His face red. Blood vessels bulging. Fists clenched. ‘I[‘m not] taking this no more!’ And what was a temple, became a one-sided barroom brawl. What was a normal day at the market, became a one-man riot. And what was the smile on the face of the Son of God became a scowl. ‘Get out of here!’ An angry Messiah made his point: don’t go making money off religion or God will make hay out of you!’”

Max Lucado continues: “We are indebted to [the 4 gospels] for choosing to include these tidbits of humanity.

- “And at just the right times. Just as his divinity is becoming unapproachable, just when his holiness is becoming untouchable, just when his perfection becomes [hard to imitate], the phone rings & a voice whispers, ‘He was human. Don’t forget it. He had flesh.’
- “But we are most indebted to John for choosing to include verse 28 of chapter 19 [which] reads simply: ‘I’m thirsty’ [to remind] us that ‘the Word became flesh.’”

Well, Jesus’ 5th word is His shortest saying, & it may seem out of place & surprise you.

- Max Lucado also writes: “The other 6 statements are cries we would expect: forgiving sinners, promising paradise, caring for his mother, even crying ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me’ is one of power. But, ‘I thirst?’”
- indeed how mysterious, yet how marvelous; how tragic, yet how triumphant--God, the Mighty Maker of the universe, has parched lips, a dry mouth, a burning throat so that He needs a drink!

- how profound Calvary's cross & the 5th saying; yet how very personal & practical, for that's what it took for the Son of God to gain our salvation & eternal life with Him.

Th'fore, like Christ's other cross-words, this 5th statement also tells us much about what that middle cross on **Skull's** hill is all about.

- that's why God put it in Bible, His word of salvation & life.
- so we consider Jesus' CONFESSION OF CREATURELINESS.
 - 1st, the victorious reason, &, 2nd, the saving assurance.

I. THE VICTORIOUS REASON

Now one thing we see from **Scriptures** is how God carefully orchestrated every event that happened from **Palm Sunday** through **Easter**.

- & it reveals Jesus was no helpless, hopeless victim of circumstances. (OVER)
- He was no martyr dying for a lost cause in an attempt to change society.
- but He was the victorious, powerful Lord & Savior.

To be sure, Jesus doesn't look anything like a mighty king as He rode that day on a donkey.

- & He didn't look very much like a powerful person when everyone turned against Him & finally nailed Him to that tree of shame & suffering.
- yet, with a closer look, we see Bible makes it very plain that no one took His life.

Instead Jesus gave it voluntarily & victoriously as the full & final payment for our sins to get us salvation.

- from the very moment He stepped onto this planet through Mary's womb, Jesus knew & lived for one purpose: to go to the cross to save sinners.
- th'fore all during His life, but especially during His final days on earth, we see Him, with kingly calm & control, order & arrange all the events of His saving death & resurrection.
 - He gets the donkey, rides strait into Jerusalem & into the jaws of death.
 - He goes to Gethsemane & turns Himself over to His captors to be tried & crucified.
- He does all that as the One determined to do battle against sin & death & hell to defeat them with a cross & an empty grave.

Now that's what we also see with Jesus' 5th word from the cross when we consider the **VICTORIOUS REASON** for it.

- to be sure, it was a confession of human weakness & suffering.
- but notice the words Jo.19:28 uses to introduce the 5th saying: “Later, knowing that all was now completed, or so that Scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’”
 - this shows it was also a shout of power & victory as the 4th word was.

You see, it is interesting & important to note that 6 of Jesus' final words form 3 pairs.

- the 1st 2, “Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing” & “Today you will be with me in paradise”, show Savior's concern for the salvation of sinners.
- the 2nd 2, “Woman, look at your son; John, look at your mother” & “My God, my God why have you abandoned me” show He forsook others & was forsaken for salvation.
- the 3rd pair, the last 2, “It is finish” & “Father, into your hands I commit my soul” show Jesus putting His finished work down to rest in God's arms.

But the 5th saying is really different from the rest because the other 6 are concerned about others.

- but Jesus' cry of thirst calls attention to Himself & the real need He had.
- for this cry of thirst wasn't just because the OT.prophets said He would cry for a drink.
 - nor because He thirsted for people, as some say to spiritualize the 5th saying.

No, you see, Jesus cried of thirst because He had a real physical need.

- for no doubt He hadn't had a single drop of water since eating the Passover Thursday night until now Friday afternoon.
- & remember: He had gone through a lot: the bloody sweat in Gethsemane, 2 trials, & then hanging on the cross for 6 long hours before He spoke His 5th word.

And 1 of the terrible agony of crucifixion was thirst as a person hung naked in the hot, blazing sun.

- &, besides all that, Jesus had also gone through the heat of hell itself in those 3 dreadful, dark hours.
 - no wonder then He was physically parched & drained dry.
- that is also seen in the fact that, when Jesus cried He was thirsty, Bible says those near the cross gave Him a drink of sour wine, & He drank it.

But this 5th word was also uttered for another more basic reason.

- we see that when Jo.19 reminds us that Jesus said He was thirst only after He knew “all was now completed & Scriptures were fulfilled.”
- you see, the scene on Calvary had changed once more so that now the sun was shining.
 - the 3 long, dark, hellish hours were over in which Satan & sin, hell & death had tried their very best to do Savior in.
 - but they had failed, for even though, forsaken by God with the whole load of the world's sin on Him, Jesus remained faithful as He cried: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

But then Bible says after this, after the battle in hell was over & the worst part of our Lord's sacrifice for sin was made & all was completed, then Jesus cried, “I am thirsty!”

- you see, it is like an athlete, who runs a race with the burning determination to win, that he gives his all.
 - she strains every nerve, uses every muscle, & forgets about herself & her own personal pain & needs: her aches & stress & strain, tiredness & thirst.

- but, when the race is all over & won, then he realizes his own condition as his muscles cry out for rest & his body for water, & he can now stop for a drink.

Well, that's the picture we have here of Jesus when He spoke his 5th cross-word.

- He had but 1 desire, & that is to win on the cross & obtain the salvation of sinners.
- to that end He gave all He had to bear sin & endure its full punishment.

So our Lord used every ounce of strength, every effort to battle sin & death & hell.

- th'fore He had no time to think about Himself & His personal sufferings & needs.
- but then, when it was all over: the battle won, all the work to get salvation was done with nothing more to do but die,--
 - then, as the exhausted Victor, weary & weak, tired & thirsty after a long, hard-fought war, He became aware of His own need.
 - & so He cried: "I thirst!", & then with renewed strength He could immediately shout: "It is finished!", & commit His soul into His Father's hands, & die.
- you see, with victory in His grasp, & salvation & eternal life for us in His pocket, Jesus could now stop for a moment to get a drink of water before He died.

Now, when **John** says, "all was completed", he is referring to what Jesus did to accomplish salvation.

- all that He came to earth & went to the cross & into death & the grave & arose to do to sacrifice Himself as the full payment for the sins of the world to obtain eternal life.
- & He did a lot which involved such severe suffering in body & soul that we can never really understand it completely.

For what awful, awesome suffering that must have been for God to become a real human being & live in a sinful world.

- to be forsaken by family & friends--by His own city & country.
- but what suffering for sin He endured those last few days that led to Calvary!
 - with the last meal in the Upper Room with His disciples, in the Garden of Gethsemane where He sweated blood as He saw what was coming.
 - the mock trials, the shameful, cruel treatment as they beat Him to a bloody pulp & spit in His face & pulled out His beard, scorned & mocked Him with a crown of thorns.

And then, Oh, how that suffering increased as it reached its climax on **Calvary.**

- where He was nailed hand & foot on a cross to be exposed naked & helpless to the blazing hot sun & to terrible shame as each agonizing minute passed.
 - (OVER)
 - as the pain gets worse, & the blood slowly drains from His body.
 - & dehydration increases & raging thirst sets in.
- but worst of all, Jesus, the Lord God, the Sinless One, suffered the very punishment of sin to its extreme, eternal end of hell itself.

- as the weight of the world's sin crushed Him, & God's infinite anger turned against Him.

But then, as I said, when it was all over,--

- after Jesus had been to hell on the cross where the fierce fires of divine, eternal wrath had been so hot that He was drained dry spiritually, & physically too,--
 - & now He was back having paid the price of sin to the very last penny so that the perfect sacrifice for sin was made & the victory was won,--
- only then & for that reason, when Jesus knew everything necessary had been done to win salvation for us, then He could & did utter his cry of thirst.

II. THE SAVING ASSURANCE

But now Jesus' **CONFESSION OF CREATURELINESS** also gives us the wonderful **ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.**

- that there is now full & free salvation & eternal life with God for us at Calvary.
- it does, because 1st of all it assures us that Jesus is God's promised Savior of sinners.

You see, **Jo.19** says, when Jesus cried He was thirsty, that was the fulfillment of **OT.Scriptures.**

- for Ps.22 describes Christ's sufferings as it predicts the 4th word: “My God, My God, why--?”
 - & vs.15 prophesied that the coming Savior would say: “My strength is dried up like potsherd, & my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth, you lay me in the dust of death.”
- Ps.69:2,3,21 describes Savior's sufferings with these words: “I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into deep waters; floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. They put gall in my food & gave me vinegar for my thirst.”

Now, when Jesus said, “I thirst”, He was saying He is One who is the fulfillment of these biblical promise & description of Savior coming from God.

- th'fore we must look only to Him in total trust & obedience for salvation.
- & we can be assured, when we do, that we will live eternally with God.

We can, because we also learn from Jesus' **5th word** that He has defeated & destroyed sin & death & hell once & for all.

- for, as we saw, He would never have asked for a drink to satisfy His own personal, physical needs if His saving work hadn't yet been completed.
- but, because He cries: “I thirst!”, now we see our Lord on the cross triumphantly back from the battlefield where He had met the enemy & won.
 - now we see Him tired from such a horrendous, hellish fight.

- now we see Him thirsty from suffering hell's blistering flame of God's eternal anger against sin in our place.
- & now we know He has paid sin's penalty perfectly, & has obtained total victory & real, new life forevermore for us who receive Him as our only Lord & Savior.
 - that's what Jesus wanted us to believe & be assured of that so He cried: "I thirst!"

But too, when we hear this dying person utter this 5th saying, we see there is humanity at the cross so that we are again assured that this person is the only authentic Savior there is.

- you see, the only person who can save us must be One who is truly & totally God so that He could endure hell & return from it.
 - so He could die, be buried, & then rise again as the Conqueror of death & the grave.
- but to be our Savior, that same person has to also be truly & totally human like us, for divine justice demands the one who sins must die.

Now Scriptures say there is such a saving person who is both real God & a real human being.

- it is none other than the historical Jesus Christ of Nazareth, born of the Virgin Mary, who walked the dusty roads of Palestine, & died on a hilltop cross centuries ago.
- for Jo.1 says He created all things, which Gen.1 says God did.
 - yet He was born a baby from a human mother, grew up to be a boy & then a man, learned & laughed, cried & sweated & slept proving Jesus was also genuinely human like we are.
- we also see both His divinity & humanity while He walked & talked on earth.
 - as God, He raised Lazarus from the dead; but, as human, He wept for His departed friend.
 - as man, He was so tired He slept through a storm at sea; but, as God, He stilled storm with a mere word.

But on the cross we have already heard Jesus say extraordinary things about forgiveness, giving eternal life, & being with Him in heaven after death.

- that surely shows there something was very different about Him that He is God, for only God can do that.
- but, when we hear Jesus cry: "I thirst!", that reveals that the person nailed to the cross is also 1 of us.
 - a real human being who bled when they tore His flesh & He needed a drink.
 - for God & angels don't thirst; only humans do.

And so, when we hear Jesus' simple, plaintiff cry, "I am thirsty!", (& I quote) "we are reminded of the times when we have been overcome by that simple, basic need for liquid.

- "Nurse, please, can you give me something to drink?" "I'm sorry," she replies, 'not yet.' And you shift your position ever so slightly on the bed as you try to forget the thirst that consumes you.

- “[Th’fore], when we hear [Jesus’ cry for a drink] we are almost relieved. Now know the dying man is truly our brother: He has veins & arteries & lungs & nerves as we do. The crucifixion is no drama, no play, no charade. God has actually become man in Jesus.”

And now we understand something of the mystery of **Bible's** good news, the glorious meaning of the cross, the wonder of God's awesome love & amazing grace, don't we?

- that Jesus Christ is indeed the only Savior who can redeem & renew us from sin, rescue us from death & hell, & restore us to eternal life with God.
 - He can, because He is God who became a real human being, went to Calvary's cross where, in our place, He went down into hell & came back triumphantly.
- & we can be absolutely sure of that because of His CONFESSION OF CREATURELINESS & victory in the middle of His divinity: “I am thirsty!”

But too with this **5th word** from the cross Jesus wants us to remember that He isn't just God way out there somewhere out of touch with our little lives.

- that, as someone writes, “[He isn't just] the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Word of Life, the Morning Star, the Horn of Salvation. [But He is also] God [become] flesh & is dwelling] among us.
- “He wants us to know that he, too, was human. He knew the drone of humdrum & weariness that comes with long days. He wants us to remember that [He,] our trail-blazer didn't wear bulletproof vests & rubber gloves & an impenetrable suit of armor. No, He pioneered our salvation through the world that you & I face daily.

(OVER)

And so Jesus’ CONFESSION OF CREATURELINESS reminds us: (& I quote again) “that one to whom we pray knows our feelings, our temptations.

- “He has felt our discouragements. He has been hungry & sleepy & tired. He knows what it feels like when the alarm clock goes off, when our children want different things at the same time. He nods in understanding when we pray in anger. He is touched when we tell him there is more to do than can ever be done. He smiles when we confess our weariness.”
- th'fore He will never fail or forsake us; but He can & He will reach out to help & strengthen us with His all-powerful, sufficient grace so we can get through life's burdens, endure those terrible times of suffering & sickness & sorrow, & when we face & experience death itself.
- He can & He will, because our wonderful Lord & Savior “knew what meant to be a crucified carpenter who got thirsty.”

CONCLUSION

Well then, make no mistake about the great good news **Calvary's** cross brings.

- that, because Jesus, as God-man, cried there: “I am thirsty!”, for He had endured all of the everlasting divine anger against sin in hell,--
 - now we will never have to thirst there ourselves.

- you see, Scriptures describe hell as the final end for those without Christ as a place where they will have to endure the fierce flames of God's wrath against sin for all eternity.
 - where there will be raging, unending thirst with no relief or escape.

And so, if we refuse & reject the only Savior, Jesus Christ, who cried, “I thirst!”, then we will die in sin.

- & ours will be an eternity of thirsting apart from God's love & life.
- &, you know, if Jesus, the God-man, had to cry for relief after suffering divine wrath for just 3 hours,--
 - then just imagine what will be like to thirst for all eternity!

Th'fore, only way we can escape the eternal thirst of hell is to go to **Calvary**.

- & there we must repent of our sin, receive Jesus as our only Lord & Savior, & surrender our entire selves & ours total lives in obedience to His will.
 - for He is the only One who gives the water of eternal life to drink so that we will never thirst again as prisoners of sin & death.
 - but we will possess & enjoy an abundant, joy-filled life with Lord forever.
- & He will provide & preserve & protect us even now in this life through all that it dishes out.

Indeed, “I heard the voice of Jesus say, ‘Come unto me & rest; lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast.’

- “I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn, & sad; I found in Him a resting place, & He has made me glad.
 - “I heard the voice of Jesus say, ‘Behold, I freely give the living waters; thirsty one, stoop down & drink & live.’
 - “I came to Jesus & I drank of that life-giving stream; my thirst was quenched, my soul revived, & now I live in him.”
- that’s our assurance, because Jesus cried there on the cross: “I thirst”!

AMEN