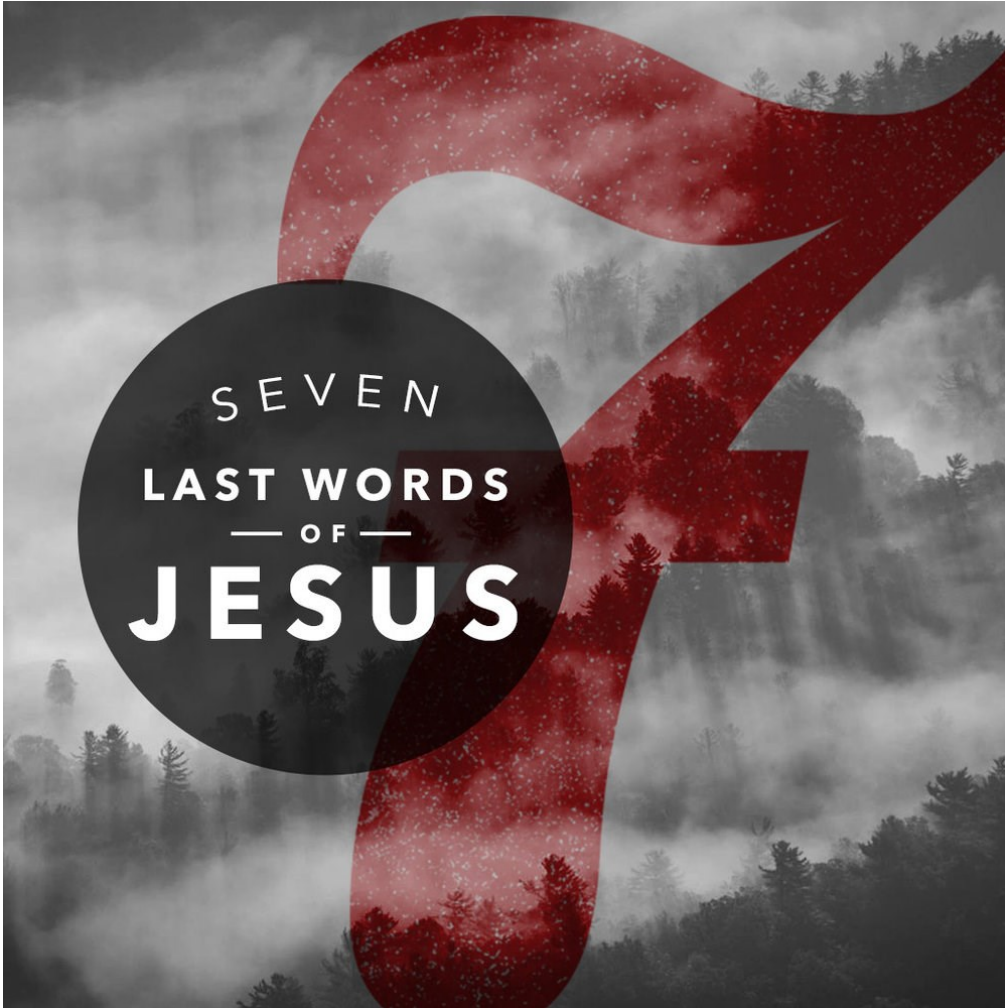


# A Weekly Devotional for the Season of Lent



SEVEN  
LAST WORDS  
— OF —  
JESUS

Christ Presbyterian Church    Tucson, Arizona  
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Dear CPCTucsonAZ family,

During this liturgical Season of Lent I invite you to take a weekly journey with the “7 Last Words” that Jesus spoke from the cross. Each Sunday, beginning February 21st, I invite you to do some prayer and meditation around each of the words (phrases) that Jesus spoke while being crucified. Let the phrase stay with you all week, write notes or draw images on the pages, let it sink in more deeply each day of the week.

I also invite those who are able to connect to the internet and use Zoom (an online meeting space), to join me during the week to talk about the words of the week and pray together. We’ll Zoom for about 45 minutes so that we can help each other take these words and phrases deeper into our lives and faith journeys.

Tuesdays 12:15-1:00 p.m. (starts February 23rd)  
Zoom ID: 852 8796 3970

Thursdays 8:00—8:45 p.m. (starts February 25th)  
Zoom ID: 813 8727 7321

Let’s take this journey together,

Pastor Steve Melde



## Worship Schedule for Lent 2021

### **Ash Wednesday (February 17)**

Connect to our three platforms throughout the day to view CPCTucsonAZ members reflecting on the importance of Ash Wednesday in their lives. *(These are the sameways you worship online each Sunday.)*

[www.cpctucsonaz.org](http://www.cpctucsonaz.org)

[www.Facebook.com/ChristPresbyterianTucson](https://www.facebook.com/ChristPresbyterianTucson)

[www.YouTube.com/cpctucsonaz](https://www.YouTube.com/cpctucsonaz)

Join us for a Drive-through imposition of Ashes:

7:00—7:30 a.m.

12:15—12:45 p.m.

5:30—6:00 p.m.

Pastor Steve will be by the church mailbox in the Broadway driveway (by the Marquee sign) for thirty minutes at these times. Drive in and receive the mark of the Lenten Ashes.

### **Maundy Thursday Communion (April 1)**

7 p.m. Communion Service

Join us online (or in-person [masks required])

### **Resurrection Sunday (April 4) Easter Sunday**

6 a.m. Sunrise Service outside at the church  
(and on-line)

10 a.m. Service in the Sanctuary  
(and on-line)

## **The Seven Last Words of Jesus, the Christ**

Luke 23:34

**Father, forgive them;  
for they do not know what they are doing.**

Luke 23:43

**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.**

John 19:26-27

**Woman, here is your son.  
Here is your mother.**

Mathew 27:46 / Mark 15:34

**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

John 19:28

**I am thirsty.**

John 19:30

**It is finished.**

Luke 23:46

**Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit.**

Week of Sunday, February 21

Luke 23:34

**Father, forgive them;  
for they do not know what they are doing.**

How could Jesus even think of asking God to forgive those who were so cruel to him? His grace is truly amazing. That's LOVE!

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said:

*"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."*

*"Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship."*

*"We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. "*

Forgiveness isn't forgetting. It's more a matter of letting go of the hurt someone has caused you that now wraps around your heart, mind, life... which causes you to change in a way that isn't faithful nor helpful to you. Forgiveness can still hold someone accountable. We're not God. Our forgiveness isn't going to be as full as God's in Christ, but we can work that way. And when we forgive, unravel the pain that strangles us, we are more able to live in the light, love, and grace of God we have experienced in Jesus.

Who has forgiven you? Who do you need to forgive?

How has God forgiven you and what have you done with that gift?

Week of Sunday, February 28

Luke 23:43

**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.**

This was said to the thief who was hanged on a cross next to Jesus. What an astounding thing to ask of someone who is being crucified next to you, of someone who is going through the pain you are, who needs to care for his own life in a moment of incredible crisis. The audacity of the criminal! What could that man have done to earn favor with Jesus?

Nothing.

None of us could. But we learn from Jesus' remark that God's grace in Jesus is far beyond our own imagination, and God is calling us to recognize it and ask for it and live in it and share it.

Don't hold back out of expectations of worthiness or the lack of worthiness. Reach out and ask for God's mercy. Let God work a way in your life that will change you forever. Let's God's grace wash through your whole life and lead you to a deeper relationship with God through Jesus as your Savior. Let Jesus lead you deeper into God's fullness. It's Paradise!

What holds you back from really reaching out into God's grace?

What would it be like for you to just let go and let God's grace wash over your whole life?

How can you show God's Paradise here on Earth?

Remember to join us in Zoom<sup>6</sup> on Tuesday and Thursday

Week of Sunday, March 7

John 19:26-27

**Woman, here is your son.  
Here is your mother.**

Jesus was always expanding understandings, even the concept of family. (Matthew 12; Mark 3; Luke 8) John's Gospel takes it even deeper here when Jesus challenges Mary and John to take care of each other. It's the model for Christian living.

It's not easy. It's hard enough to take care of ourselves.

This is, however, how God calls us to live... loving others, caring for others, helping them even as we help ourselves.

"whoever does the will of my father is my mother, brother, sister."

"the one who showed mercy" "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10)

Watch the news this week: Where are you seeing people show mercy? How can you show mercy.... Especially to someone Jesus calls your family?

Each day of the week, in the space below, write the names of people showing mercy and the names of people Jesus might be calling your family. Pray for them!

Week of March 14

Mathew 27:46 / Mark 15:34

**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**

This week hurts. Jesus is telling us not only does his body hurt, but so does his spirit/soul. He feels abandoned, even by God the Father.

This week, spend time reflecting on times when you have felt God's absence. Who helped you through? What helped you through?

And now for the real challenge: speak to Jesus, tell him something that might ease his pain. Write him words, phrases, a note below, something each day of the week. Help him through this...



Week of March 21

John 19:28

**I am thirsty.**

Jesus was exhausted. He had been awake all night: an unfair trial, betrayals and denials by his own disciples, he prayed so hard he sweated blood, he prayed for hours while his disciples slept, he was beaten, scourged (look it up), mocked, stripped, he was made to carry the heavy cross beam through town while folks laughed at him, he was hung on a cross. His body was giving out. He was thirsty, and they offered him some sour wine that was like vinegar.

Each day of this week, pray this prayer:

Jesus, I am so sorry. My heart hurts knowing how you were treated. You spoke of love and forgiveness. You challenged people to go deeper in their relationship with God. You healed and fed thousands. And they crucified you.

Jesus, I am so sorry. My heart hurts knowing that I don't always live in the ways you asked me to live. I don't love with your kind of love. I know that I try and sometimes I'm pretty good at it, but really, I, too, sin. And my sin hurts you, too.

Jesus, what can I do to quench your thirst?

Jesus, I love you, too.

## Week of March 28

John 19:30

### **It is finished.**

Today is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. Be sure to join us (on-line or in-person) on Thursday evening to partake in communion.

How could Jesus say that it's finished? Some scholars translate it to say, "It is accomplished." The Message quotes, "It's done... complete." What we surmise is that Jesus understands that his earthly life is about to end, and he knows that the purpose of his life is now to be complete. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

His death pays the cost of our sin. His death paves the way for his resurrection. He did what we could not: he stood against evil and conquered it. It may seem that evil conquered him, but we know that isn't true. His resurrection will prove that.

It's in our hands now. The Teacher has taught us what we need to know in how to live and love and serve God. It's in our hands now. Now the student must become the teacher.

List things that you have learned from Jesus and beside them, list who you will teach them to. Come on, it's time for you to live your purpose: to honor and praise God with your whole life. Will you?

## Week of April 4 (Easter Week)

Luke 23:46

### **Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit.**

Christ is Risen. He has risen, indeed! His last breath on earth was given to God, completely. What else can any of us do? Where else would we give our spirit? To whom else would we want to turn... but to the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer of all life, the one who give us our first breath on earth and our first breath in heaven.

What a witness Jesus gives us in how to live our lives even as we die!

This day, this week, we celebrate that in God's hands God turned death into life, raising Jesus from the dead, proclaiming God's reign of grace, forever. Hallelujah.

Every day this week, take some time to admit to God how you have held back your spirit. What has kept you from fully turning your life over to God? What would that be like? (jot some notes)

Every day this week, pray this prayer:

God, thank you for coming in Jesus. Thank you for all you have done to welcome me into your hands, fully into your spirit. Help me to surrender my self to you. You opened your whole self to me in Jesus, and though the sin of my life continues to have places where I reject, betray, deny him, I am opening my self to you now in gratitude for your grace in my life. I want to be more faithful. I commit to following Jesus as he leads me into your fullness. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. AMEN