

THE STATEMENTS AT THE CROSS

I. THE STATEMENTS *FROM* THE CROSS

1. **Texts:** Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19

2. Seven Statements “from” the Cross

1. **FORGIVENESS:** “*Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing*” (Luke 23:34).
 1. This was a prayer, not a declaration.
 2. Jesus desired mercy for His tormentors.
 3. Such a prayer for executioners was unthinkable, rare, and from a pure heart—greatest show of forgiveness that the world has ever known.
2. **SALVATION.** Jesus said to the thief beside Him, “. . . *today you shall be with Me in Paradise*” (Luke 23:43).
 1. The statements were for the crowd in general and the thief in particular.
 2. Jesus could forgive sin-soaked sinners (Matthew 9:6; Mark 2:10; Luke 5:23, 24).
 3. As Isaiah said, Jesus was numbered with the transgressors.
3. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Jesus said, “*Woman, behold your son!*” (John 19:26, 27).
 1. Jesus called Mary, “Woman” not “mother.”
 2. In spiritual matters, unbelieving family does not count—believing disciples count.
 3. Jesus called John to care for her during this time of agony at the cross (Luke 2:35).
4. **PATHOS.** “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” (Matthew 27:46).
 1. God did not abandon Jesus; God abandoned sin! (Psalm 22:1).
 2. Cruel people thought Jesus called Elijah for help; Jesus called God in his loneliness.
5. **THIRST:** After six long hours, He said, “I thirst” (John 19:28; KJV).
 1. Fulfilled Psalm 69:21.
 2. Jesus refused a drink to dull his senses, but requested one to keep them (John 19:28).
6. **VICTORY:** He said, “*It is finished!*” (John 19:30).
 1. With one Greek word—*tetelestai*—Jesus sums up the entire scheme of redemption!
 2. Jesus completed God's will and redeemed sinful man once and for all.
7. **FAITH:** Jesus said, “*Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit*” (Luke 23:46).
 1. Jesus died in victorious, joyous faith!
 2. “No one has taken it [My life] 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” (John 10:18).
 3. Jesus, the “Word” (John 1:1) obeyed the word in life and death (Psalm 31:5).

II. THE STATEMENTS *TO* THE CROSS

1. **Texts:** Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19.

2. What was said “to” the Cross?

1. **“COME DOWN”:** People said, *“If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross”* (Matthew 27:39, 40).
 1. “. . . come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!” (Mark 15:32).
 2. People with demands cannot and will not believe.
2. **CHANGE:** A thief said, *“Remember me”* (Luke 23:42).
 1. The selfish life of one impenitent thief ended in his selfish death
 2. The other thief repented and secured forgiveness and paradise.
3. **MAGIC:** The people said, *“Are you not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!”* (Luke 23:39).
 1. “Amaze us with a trick,” they were saying; but Jesus is not a magician.
 2. Some men would rather die than think, trust and obey.
4. **GAWKERS:** Others said, *“Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him”* (Matthew 27:47–49; see Mark 15:36).
 1. Bystanders (thrill-seekers) see everything and observe nothing.
 2. They see all that happens and understand little.
5. **GAMBLERS:** The soldiers said of Jesus’ tunic, *“Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it”* (John 19:24).
 1. Jesus was dying for our sins, while men were gambling for His clothes.
 2. A man can gain the whole world and lose his soul (Matthew 16:24–26).
 3. We know the price of everything and the value of nothing.
6. **TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE:** Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus asked boldly for Christ’s body (John 19:38–40; Luke 23:50–53).
 1. Two men who could have done so much did so little!
 2. Jesus asks us for our lives; we are only willing to perfume His body!
 3. Their action did take nerve, but it takes true courage to confess Jesus, to make Jesus who He is—Lord.
7. **CONCLUSION TIME:** A centurion, observing what had happened, said, *“Truly this man was the Son of God”* (Mark 15:39).
 1. He watched every movement; he heard every word.
 2. Jesus was different; this cross was different.
 3. Unknowingly, this honest man immortalized himself.
 4. What the world, the crowds, and the enemies totally missed, this man saw!
 5. He drew the only conclusion that one can honestly draw.
 6. Either Jesus is the Son of God, or He is not!
 7. The centurion made his decision; we must make ours!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the Cross appeal to our emotions?
2. How does the cross appeal to our human dignity and moral obligations?
3. List the statements Jesus made while on the cross. What can we learn from each one?
4. Consider statements made by those who were watching the crucifixion. What comments might you have made?
5. Why did listeners think Jesus was calling for Elijah? What did they expect to happen?
6. What impact did the crucifixion have on the various onlookers?
7. What impact does the crucifixion have on us?