



### Christ Redeems Suffering by Suffering:

"Bear up for a short time,  
O Mother, and thou shalt  
see

How, like a physician, I  
strip and come  
Where they lie dead  
And cure their wounds,  
Cutting their callousness  
and hardness with  
The spear;  
And I take the vinegar and  
use it as an

astrigent on the wound;  
And when I have opened  
the cut with  
The surgical lance of the  
nails, I shall  
Use my cloak as dressing  
Using my cross as remedy,  
I use it, O Mother, so that  
thou mayest sing  
With understanding:  
'He has redeemed suffer-  
ing by suffering,  
My son and my God.'"

—Romanus Melodus

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## Around the Word Bible Study

Lent, 2017

# The Seven Words of the Cross The Third Word

### Lesson Overview:

One of Michelangelo's most well-known statues is the *Pieta*, a marble sculpture depicting the Virgin Mary holding the dead body of Jesus (see the back page of this study). It is as poignant as it is proclamatory. In Italian, *pieta* means pity. This is why Jesus went to the cross for us, out of pity, love, and mercy for us in our sin and death. In Jesus' death, Simeon's words to Mary are fulfilled: a sword will pierce your own soul also. As Jesus accomplishes the redemption that Simeon and so many Old Testament saints longed for, he comforts Mary in her grief and sorrow.

In Jesus' third word from the cross, he speaks with compassion and pity as he says to his mother, the Virgin Mary, and John the beloved disciple: "Woman, behold, your son!" And to John, "Behold, your mother!" As Mary bore the Savior of the world in her flesh, so now, Jesus bears the sin of the world in his flesh on the cross. As Mary looked after the wellbeing of infant Jesus, now the crucified Jesus looks after the wellbeing of his mother from the cross. And as Mary once cradled Jesus in her arms and gave him life, so now on the cross, Jesus draws us to the Father's embrace by his death on the cross, our source of life eternal.

### Opening: Psalm 38

<sup>1</sup>O LORD, rebuke me not in your | anger,\*  
nor discipline me | in your wrath!

<sup>2</sup>For your arrows have sunk | into me,\*  
and your hand has come | down on me.

<sup>3</sup>There is no soundness in my flesh  
because of your indig- | nation;\*  
there is no health in my bones  
because | of my sin.

<sup>4</sup>For my iniquities have gone o- | ver my  
head;\*  
like a heavy burden, they are too heav- | y  
for me.

<sup>5</sup>My wounds stink and | fester\*  
because of my | foolishness,

<sup>6</sup>I am utterly bowed down and | prostrate;\*  
all the day I go about | mourning.

<sup>7</sup>For my sides are filled with | burning,\*  
and there is no soundness | in my flesh.

<sup>8</sup>I am feeble | and crushed;\*  
I groan because of the tumult | of my  
heart.

<sup>9</sup>O Lord, all my longing is be- | fore you;\*  
my sighing is not hid- | den from you.

<sup>10</sup>My heart throbs; my strength | fails me,\*  
and the light of my eyes—it also has- |  
gone from me.

<sup>11</sup>My friends and companions stand aloof |  
from my plague,\*

and my nearest kin stand | far off.

<sup>12</sup>Those who seek my life lay their snares;  
those who seek my hurt speak of | ruin\*  
and meditate treachery | all day long.

<sup>13</sup>But I am like a deaf man; I | do not hear,\*  
like a mute man who does not o- | pen his  
mouth.

<sup>14</sup>I have become like a man who | does not  
hear,\*  
and in whose mouth are | no rebukes.

<sup>15</sup>But for you, O LORD, | do I wait;\*  
it is you, O Lord my God, who will | answer.

<sup>16</sup>For I said, "Only let them not rejoice | over  
me,\*  
who boast against me when my | foot  
slips!"

<sup>17</sup>For I am read- | y to fall,\*  
and my pain is ever be- | fore me.

<sup>18</sup>I confess my in- | iquity;\*  
I am sorry | for my sin.

<sup>19</sup>But my foes are vigorous, they are | mighty,\*  
and many are those who hate me | wrong-  
fully.

<sup>20</sup>Those who render me e- | vil for good\*  
accuse me because I follow | after good.

<sup>21</sup>Do not forsake me, | O LORD!\*  
O my God, be not | far from me!

<sup>22</sup>Make haste to | help me,\*  
O Lord, my sal- | vation!

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**Read Luke 23:35-43**

**vs. 35: And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!"**

Who are the "rulers" voicing this mockery at Jesus? What is the temptation veiled in these words mocking Jesus? Why does Jesus not give in to their jeering?

**vs. 36-37: The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!"**

In the crucifixion account in Matthew 27:34ff, Matthew records that Jesus was offered sour wine mixed with gall, but he would not drink it. Why doesn't he drink of it?

What kind of king do the Roman soldiers have in mind as they ridicule Jesus?

**vs. 38: There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."**

What kind of king were many Jewish people looking for in the Messiah? In what ways did Jesus differ from their false expectations?

Although the sign above his head was made as further mockery, how does it speak the truth about who Jesus is? How does John's Gospel add to the account of the sign above Jesus at his crucifixion? See John 19:17-22.

**vs. 39-41: One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."** What does it mean to fear God? See also Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 111:10; Psalm 103:11-13.

## Bible Study

## The Seven Words of the Cross The Third Word

What is so remarkable about the confession of the thief concerning Jesus' sentence on the cross? Read Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 3:18.

Considering the thief's confession of Jesus' innocence, why is Jesus' crucifixion frequently called "the great exchange"?

**vs. 42: And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."** Where in Jesus' life is he referred to as king? Read Matthew 2:1-12; Matthew 4:12-17; Matthew 6:10;

the parables of Matthew 13; Matthew 21:1-11; Matthew 27:32-44; Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20.

How is the cross the clearest picture of Christ's kingdom?

What is the thief asking of Jesus? Where does Jesus' kingdom come among us today?

**vs. 43: And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."**

To what is Jesus referring by the word "paradise"?

How is Jesus' work on the cross a work of new creation? See Romans 5:12-21.

What is significant about Jesus' use of the word "today"?

What is comforting about Jesus' words to the thief on the cross? Where do we hear similar words of promise today in the context of Sunday morning worship?

**Closing Prayer: Jesus, in Your Dying Woes (LSB, 447:7-9)**

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