

The Fifth Saying from the Cross
“I Thirst”
John 19:28-29

INTRO: “I thirst” is the shortest of the seven sayings of Christ from the cross. In the Greek language, it is one word *dipsao*. *Dipsao* was His only cry of physical pain. The other cries deal with His care for others or prayer to God. His cry, “I thirst,” proves that Jesus was made like unto us: “The Word became flesh...” This saying, “I thirst,” tells us that Jesus suffered as a human being, Gnosticism is debunked, Jesus suffered thirst in a real body.

I. “I THIRST” THAT SCRIPTURE BE FULFILLED

- A. In I Cor 15:3, we read: “Christ died for our sins according to the scripture.”
1. This has reference to the purpose of His death– “for our sins.”
 2. This has reference to the particulars of His death– “according to the scriptures.”
 - a. Hundreds of years before Christ went to the cross, minute details of His death were written in the prophetic scriptures.
 - b. His death was according to a settled plan and design.
 - c. His death was anticipated. An anticipated death is not an accidental death.
- B. In Psalm 69:21, we find one of the pre-written details of His death: “In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”
1. Jesus cried, “I thirst,” that scripture might be fulfilled. The scripture to be fulfilled was Psalm 69:21.
 2. The fulfillment of Psalm 69:21 is found in John 19:29.
- C. There, hanging on the cross, Jesus scanned the whole of scripture. His mind, not deranged or disturbed, rested upon one scripture, not scriptures, that had not been fulfilled: “that the scripture might be fulfilled.”
1. His work was finished for “all things were now accomplished.”
 2. Theirs was not yet finished for they had not given Him, “vinegar to drink.”
 3. He had done His part and now He prompts men to do theirs. At His prompting, they filled the sponge, put it on a branch, and put it to His mouth and fulfilled the scripture.

- D. Because of Christ's passion for the Word of God, as well as His raging thirst, He cried, "I thirst."

II. "I THIRST" THE CRY OF HIS HUMANITY

- A. Our Lord Jesus Christ was very God of very God, but He was also very man of very man.
 - 1. The Bible teaches us that Jesus is God and that He is man.
 - 2. Jesus Christ is the God-man (John 1:14).
 - a. In the incarnation, God became flesh. He took into union with Himself a human nature.
 - b. Many years ago in Asia Minor was found an old Latin inscription chiseled in marble. It presented Christ as saying: "I am what I was— God; I was not what I am— man; I am now called both— God and man."
 - 3. "I am forsaken" was the agony of a tormented spirit: "I thirst" is the agony and anguish of a tortured body (1 Peter 3:18).
- B. His humanity is the subject of prophecy:
 - 1. Prophecy declared His birth: "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son" (Isa 7:14).
 - 2. Prophecy declared that He would, "grow up.... as a tender plant" (Isa 53:2).
 - 3. Prophecy declared He would be a "man of sorrow" (Isa 53:3).
 - 4. Prophecy declared that Christ was to be born, develop, suffer, and die as a man.
 - a. He was to know physical agony by the piercing of His hands and feet, the thorn crowned brow, and the stripes upon His back.
 - b. Jesus suffered for man as the God-man (1 Peter 2:24).
- C. The humanity of Christ is a fact of history.
 - 1. Men saw Him face to face.
 - 2. Men talked to Him.
 - 3. Men walked and worked with Him.
 - 4. Men saw the events surrounding the crucifixion and the blood shed on the cross.
 - 5. Men heard Pilate cry, "Behold the man."
- D. Jesus experienced the experiences of a man (Heb 2:17).
 - 1. As a babe, he was "wrapped in swaddling clothes" (Lk 2:7).
 - 2. As a child, He "increased in wisdom and stature" (Lk 2:52).

3. As a boy, we find Him “asking questions” (Lk 2:46) and amazed the learned.
 4. As a man, He “wearied” in body (Jn 4:6).
 5. He was “an hungered” (Mt 4:2).
 6. He slept (Mk 4:38).
 7. “Jesus wept” (Jn 11:35).
 8. He “rejoiced” (Lk 10:21).
 9. He “groaned” (Jn 11:33).
 10. Here in John 19:28 He cried, “I thirst.”
 - a. This was evidence of His humanity.
 - b. God does not thirst.
 - c. Angels do not thirst.
 - d. Phantoms do not thirst.
 - e. In glory, we shall not thirst (Rev 7:16).
 - f. We thirst now because we are human.
 - g. Christ thirsted because He was man– “Wherefore it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren” (Heb 2:17).
- E. Jesus Christ took our flesh and blood that He might deliver us from sin and death (Heb 2:14, 17).
1. Sinner, if you are without God and without hope, come to Christ.
 2. He being God became man and as a man suffered and died that those believing in Him might have everlasting life.

III. “I THIRST” THE CRY OF ACTUAL PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE

- A. When Jesus cried *dispaō*, “I thirst,” it was a cry of actual experience.
- B. Let’s go back and recount the agonies experienced by the Lord, on the way to and on the cross (Mt 27:26).
 1. As soon as the sentence of crucifixion is passed, the victim is stripped naked, fastened to a waist high post and scourged.
 - a. The scourge was made of leather strips armed with bits of bone and metal.
 - b. The soldiers were not careful as to where the scourge fell. Often eyes and teeth were knocked out. In some cases, the body was so cut to shreds that the organs fell out. The scourging often caused death.
 2. After scourging, the victim was nailed to the cross (stauros)

- a place of disgrace and pain.
- a. Strong iron spikes through the victims hands and feet held him there.
- b. The cross, the body nailed to it, was dropped into a hole.
- c. The bones were dislocated but not a bone was broken as prophesied.
- d. Every movement on the cross brought pain.
- e. The sun and the insects brought agony.
- 3. As Jesus hung on the cross, fever devoured Him. The inflammation which began with the wounds terminated in a burning body.
- 4. Psalm 22:15 says: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou has brought me into the dust of death."
 - a. He was dried up.
 - b. He felt like dust.
 - c. He was athirst.
- 5. From the cross, Jesus cries: "I thirst."

IV. "I THIRST" THE EXPERIENCE OF HELL

- A. The saying, "I thirst," speaks of what sent Jesus to the cross— sin.
 - 1. The Bible says: "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree."
 - a. "He was in the fire and heat of the wrath of God against sin" (Myer).
 - b. He suffered the torment of hell.
 - 2. In Luke 16:22-24, Jesus lifts the lid of hell to let us know of the thirst of men in hell.
 - a. Matthew Henry: "The torments of hell are represented by a violent thirst, in the complaint of the rich man who begged for a drop of water to cool his tongue. To that everlasting thirst, we had all been condemned, if Christ had not suffered on the cross and said, 'I thirst.'"
 - b. Christ suffered the torment of the rich man.
 - c. He tasted as far as possible the torments of the damned.
 - d. The rich man cried: "I am tormented in this flame." Jesus cried, "I thirst" that men might never cry the

tormented cry of the rich man.

V. "I THIRST" THAT MEN MIGHT NEVER THIRST AGAIN

- A. Thousands are thirsty. They are going to the broken cisterns of the world for refreshment and are not satisfied. Their souls are still athirst.
- B. Only Jesus can satisfy the thirsty soul.
 - 1. In John 7:37, Jesus says: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."
 - 2. Jesus can give you water that will satisfy (Jn 4:13-14).
 - 3. Thirsty soul, you are invited to come for salvation (Rev 22:17).
- C. Scott writes: "Christ suffered thirst, in order that we might drink the water of life, and thirst no more."

CONCLUSION: Are you thirsty? Has the longing of your soul been quenched?

- 1. If water is to quench thirst, it must be received. It must be drunk.
- 2. If Christ is to save, He must be received.
- 3. John 1:12.
- 4. The Bible's last invitation is, "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."