

THE 7 SAYINGS APPLIED TO THE PRESENT DAY CHURCH

I first must state that I am totally and completely humbled by this opportunity to speak before fellow members of the church. I was apprehended on the road to Miami in February 2002 by God and now by Ken in 2009! When Ken asked me to give a message at this conference, my entire body turned numb and whiter than ever. I was honored, but at the same time humbled and scared. I told him I would need to pray about it before I gave him an answer. I never heard any voices in my head telling me to give a message, but I did suddenly get a much stronger desire to study the word! I hope you will find some kind of edification from this study, I'm not a deep thinker like David, Ken and Dale. I'm a very ignorant man so please bear with me for the message I am about to give.

This study is entitled "The 7 sayings applied to the present day church" and in it I will attempt to show how the 7 sayings of Christ on the Cross can be applied to the 7 post acts letters of Paul. Each saying of Christ on the cross, corresponds to a post acts letter of Paul's. I'm sure if one studied long enough, you could find other incidences, other letters, more than I bring out in this study. So I will leave it up to you to do your own study. But this is the fruit of my personal labor....

Many times I will be referring to the book by A.W. Pink entitled, "The 7 sayings on the cross." In it, Pink outlines the 7 spoken phrases of Christ, just before He perished on the cross. These sayings were not simultaneously, they were spoken over the course of His 6 hours on the cross. Each saying has a different meaning and we must due our due diligence to try and understand the breadth, length, depth and height of them.

The first saying I would like to speak about is found in LUKE 23:33,34 "And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

This verse reflects FORGIVENESS, for Christ had no bitterness or anger in His Spirit.

The word forgiveness here in the context means to omit, put away, leave. It's important to note that Christ is not asking God to forget their sin, but to forgive them. With the first utterance of Christ on the cross we will notice 7 basic truths, they are:

- 1. The fulfillment of the prophetic word.**
- 2. Christ identified with his people.**
- 3. The divine estimate of sin and its consequent guilt.**
- 4. The blindness of the human heart.**
- 5. A lovely exemplification of his own teaching.**
- 6. Man's great and primary need.**
- 7. The triumph of redeeming love.**

Was Christ asking His Father to forgive those who were crucifying Him at that time or for the past, present and future sins of the elect? I know when we sin as children of God,

it's all premeditated, we know we are sinning, however, do we really know the depths of our sin and the total disregard for Christ when we commit them? Do we realize every time we sin, we break every obligation that Paul writes for us in his post-acts letters? Do we think about the price paid not only by Christ, but all other writers of the Word for taking a stand on the truth? Do we understand that every sin we love to commit is abhorred by God. Every sin that we commit is the exact opposite of everything our Lord Jesus Christ stands for and should be admonished! Can we comprehend the grace that God shewed on our behalf to save our retched souls? I can only speak for myself and can honestly say that I don't. Whether Christ was speaking to the men crucifying Him that day or us today, there is application for both.

I have contrasted this first saying of Christ with the book of PHILEMON. In the book of Philemon, Onesimus whose name means profitable, had been unprofitable to his master Philemon; for the slave had probably robbed his master and had fled to Rome. There he was converted through Paul's ministry, and now Paul was sending him back with a request that Philemon forgive Onesimus of his sin. Onesimus as an unenlightened sinner, knew not what he was doing by robbing his master. Before his awakening, he lived in sin and knew no better. It wasn't until after he was converted by Paul that he understood the wrong that he did. Paul is asking Philemon to forgive him for he knew not what he did. Those who have been forgiven by God are obligated to forgive the brethren as well. Do you have a forgiving spirit? Is it hard for you to forgive those who have wronged you? Ephesians 4:32, tells us to "forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." Some would argue that this is only speaking of believers forgiving other believers, others say it means everyone, either way their is application for both. We are instructed to forgive others under any circumstance and to forgive them as God forgave us. When God forgave us, He no longer acknowledged our sins. When He looks upon His children, He sees Christ, not our sin. When we forgive someone, we need to no longer look back at what they did to us. Forgive them as God for Christ's sake, forgave us! I'm not standing up here confirming the fact that I have mastered this gift, I am more guilty of harboring bitterness toward people who have wronged me than anyone. However, the more I can put off this old nature, the easier it will be for me to forgive. Every time others sin against us or wrong us, we should remember these words of Christ and it should prick us in our heart, "Father forgive them for they no not what they do."

For the next saying, we need to turn to LUKE 23:42-43, "And he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Some would argue that this verse is clear evidence that when a believer dies, they are immediately ushered into the presence of God. Others say that the resurrection for the believer has not happened yet (2 Tim. 2:18) and that the verse should read as followed, "verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in paradise" referring to a future time not yet come. I'm not here to debate it one way or the other, but either way this is a statement for SALVATION. Some would also tend to think that this thief had a free will and chose to believe in Christ and therefore asked for remembrance. Nothing could be farther from the truth! God had started his working in this man before asking Christ to remember him. In fact, this was probably God's last dealing with the earth before completely turning His eyes from it and

His Son. Unfortunately, this man's conversion is likened to many “deathbed conversions.” Although I don't personally believe God saves men today hours before their death, I believe this man's conversion was a demonstration of God's sovereignty. It's a demonstration that it's never too late to become enlightened by God. One should never give up hope about being saved no matter what age.

The word SALVATION in the Nelson's Bible dictionary is defined as the deliverance from the power of sin, redemption. Salvation is being redeemed by the blood of our precious Savior the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is seeing yourself identified in the death, burial and resurrection of our Savior. Salvation is longing and desiring to study to shew yourself approved unto God. Salvation is possessing all the fruits of the Spirit. Salvation is being renewed by the inner man and putting off the old. Salvation is not needing the armour of God because of the new nature, however, wearing it because of the old. Salvation is the renewing of your mind. Salvation is putting on Christ daily. Salvation is dying daily. Salvation is God! Salvation is not a past experience, it's lifelong until death. I could go on and on but time wont permit. So I'll let you make up your own list.

Christ's second statement on the cross of Salvation yields 7 more truths....

1. **Here we see a representative sinner.**
2. **That man has to come to the end of himself before he can be saved.**
3. **The meaning of repentance and faith.**
4. **A marvelous case of spiritual illumination.**
5. **The Saviour-hood of Christ.**
6. **The destination of the saved at death.**
7. **The longing of the Saviour for fellowship.**

The word of salvation that Christ spoke on the cross can be contrasted with the book of Ephesians. This can be found very early in the book in chapter 2:8,9, where we read, “For by Grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.” This sums up salvation in one sentence! Christ saved this man on the cross in the same manner we are saved, by believing in Christ. He was shown grace by God and is evident that this man was helpless and unable to do any works of his own. Salvation is not of works, nothing we can do will save our own soul. This mans hands and legs were nailed to the cross, he could do nothing except believe. Belief that came from God. If someone asks, what is salvation, re sight this verse! If I may digress for a moment by mentioning that here in Ephesians, is the only time in Paul's letters, with the exception of Titus 2:11, where Grace is associated with salvation and the only time in the Bible where we are told that it's “grace through faith.” Acts 15:11 is the only other place in the Bible where grace is associated with salvation and it reads, “ But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.” The only difference between the two verses is one is through grace, the other is by grace. Titus 2:11 reads, “ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Throughout the Bible grace is referred to as only God given and had the meaning of FAVOR. “But Noah found grace (FAVOR) in the eyes of the Lord.” Gen. 6:8, however, FAVOR is not salvation! So what is favor? (International Standard Biblical Encyclopedia) Generally means good will, acceptance. An example of God's favor is the

acceptance of Abel's sacrifice to God, however, that act was far from saving his soul. Not that Abel was not a saved man, but it wasn't through the act of his sacrifice. God showed favor to Satan before the world began when He appointed him an angel!! It's only in the Pauline letters where we see how the grace of the Old Testament associated with favor, has now in the New, been associated with salvation. In the book of Ephesians, we are informed of the "chronological steps" of salvation in a believer's life. First, we have been CHOSEN in Him before the foundation of the world (1:4) then He PREDESTINATED us (determined our inheritance, whether on the earth or in the heavenlies, 1:5,11), next we have been ACCEPTED in the beloved (:6) by that we have REDEMPTION through his blood, (1:7) and because of that He abounds toward us all WISDOM and PRUDENCE (:8). Paul then further explains in verse 13, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." This is how every believer is saved by God. I remember Brother Rhodes one time saying that we are all saved the same way, but differently! Paul then goes on in the letter to explain in further detail our position before our enlightenment as well as after and our obligations to God because of Christ. He explains how the believer can live a victorious Christian life. If anyone asks you how to be saved, instruct them to read the book of Ephesians! How often do you reflect on your salvation experience? Have you ever written out a creed, what you believe in and why? We should reflect on our conversion experience everyday to remember what God did for us and how He brought us from darkness to light. Remember that salvation is not a past tense event, it's a daily ongoing experience!

The third saying of Christ on the cross is found in John 19:26, 27. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Women, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." Was Christ speaking about John, when He stated, "women behold thy son" or himself? Was Christ wanting Mary to look upon Him on the cross to see her Son and the terrible act of sin or was He wanting Mary to turn her eyes from Him and glance upon John? I believe he was speaking about both, Himself and John. Have you ever realized that from this verse we are led to believe that Christ's mother wasn't there to witness His death! There must be some deeper meaning as to why she wasn't present, but it's beyond my understanding at this point in my life. This saying of Christ is a statement of AFFECTION and has 7 basic truths associated with it. They are:

- 1. The fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy.**
- 2. The perfect man setting example for children to honour their parents.**
- 3. We see that John had returned to the Saviour's side.**
- 4. We discover an illustration of Christ's prudence.**
- 5. We see that spiritual relationships must not ignore the responsibilities of nature.**
- 6. We see a universal need exemplified.**
- 7. We see the marvelous blending of Christ's perfections.**

The word affection as defined in Webster dictionary means: a tender attachment or fondness. This third saying of Christ can be contrasted with the book of Colossians. In

the Colossian letter, we first read of spiritual affection in chapter 1:3, "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and love which ye have unto all saints." and in verse 8, "who also declared unto us your love in the spirit." The people Paul were writing to had a deep love and affection for Christ as well as Paul and is evident by these verses. Would Paul be able to write this letter about us? Have we kept the faith? Is the inward love of the spirit evident in our outward walk? Affection is an outward manifestation of what's inside a person. We don't show affection toward someone we don't know or love. It's only those whom we truly know, love, trust and respect in which we show true affection. Do we show more affection toward our family members than Christ? Is our affection more upon this world and the worldly matters than upon God and His Holiness? Does God's love toward us take a backseat to our personal affections? I'm ashamed to say it, but many times, it does in my life. Continuing on, we see of God's affection toward the believer in chapter 1 verses 21 and 22, "And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight." Without getting too far off the subject, the word reconcile means to change thoroughly and involves 2 distinct characteristics. One at Calvary, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," (2 Cor. 5:19) and the reconciliation wrought by God in the sinner himself, whereby he becomes changed in his rebellious attitude toward God. The reconciliation of God in the believer is only made possible because of God's affection toward his elect. God first showed affection and love toward the believer, before His elect could manifest true spiritual affection. We see the affection of Paul towards the believer in chapter 2:5, "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ." Paul had a special affection towards these people because of their faith in Christ. This same affection should be evident in our lives as believers toward others of like minded faith. In chapter 3 verse 2, we read "Set your affection (mind) on things above and not on things of the earth." and in verse 5, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection (lust)..." however, in this case inordinate affection is one Greek word (PATHOS) referring to lust. So in dealing with the first instance in which we are to set our affection on things above, we see at the cross, that John affectionately cared for Mary, the mother of Christ so much that he removed themselves from the terrible sight of Christ's death, not wanting her to witness it. He was forever indebted to this woman because of his love and affection for the Saviour. Christ gave John a command on the cross and set up the perfect relationship between a son and parent. It was almost as if Christ was telling Mary that since He will die, substitute, John in His place. In other words, care for John, as if he were Him. How is our Godly affection? Do we turn our eyes from sin when it rears its ugly head in our lives, or do we give heed to the situation? By turning our eyes or removing ourselves from sinful situations, we show Godly affection toward Christ. In verse 5, "inordinate affection" means lust and speaks of the type of affection we are not to have in our walk. This is inward affection that affects our thoughts and will affect our outward walk. These lustful thoughts must be put out and not given milk and cookies as Brother Rhodes would say. Let's also look at Colossians 3:20, "children obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." This command given to children parallels Christ's statement on the cross. As mentioned above, Christ is setting in place the perfect mother son

relationship. Since Joseph, his earthly father had died, Mary is the representative of both parents. We can gain a lot from Christ's words and see how they are expounded upon in the Word. I believe that Christ was a man of few words. Every word he spoke as the God man, had a very deep meaning. Every single word He spoke in his life had been ordained. Christ spoke quality words, not quantity! Does this world affect your spiritual affections?

Now let's look at the forth saying of Christ on the cross. "and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt.27:46) Was Christ questioning His Father? Did He not realize He would be forsaken by God? The answer is obvious if you believe in God's omniscience. Christ knew He would be forsaken, however, He had never gone through the experience of being forsaken. It's one thing to know what is going to happen and another to experience it. I knew my wife was going to have a baby, in fact, we both knew the date he would be born. I knew I would be happy and excited the day he finally arrived, however, once he was born and I actually went through the experience, it was much more intense than I had imagined. I was much more excited and happier. This saying of Christ's sums up His cross experience and can be likened to this age of Grace. We are in a period where God is silent, just as God was silent with Christ. Many times I think that God has just left me to drown in my own filthy sins. I doubt at times that God is real in my life. I tend to look at my experiences rather than my position. I find myself thinking, "why hast thou turned thine eyes from me." This saying of Christ manifests ANGUISH is accompanied by 7 more truths and they are:

- 1. The awfulness of sin and the character of its wages.**
- 2. The absolute holiness and in flexible justice of God.**
- 3. The explanation of Gethsemane.**
- 4. The Saviour's unswerving fidelity (faith) to God.**
- 5. The basis of our salvation.**
- 6. The supreme evidence of Christ's love for us.**
- 7. The destruction of the "larger hope".**

Anguish according to the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia is defined as extreme distress of body, mind or spirit; excruciating pain or suffering of soul, e.g. excessive grief, remorse, despair. This kind of anguish can be found in the book of Philippians. Throughout this letter, Paul makes many references to his anguish and his desire to die. Let's look at the first instance where we find anguish in Philippians. In chapter 1:21-23 we read, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ: which is far better:" Paul had a desire to die because of his anguish. He had been beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, scourged, mocked, laughed at and much more throughout his Christian walk. He suffered many things for the name of Christ and was ready to meet his maker. This is similar to Christ's anguish on the cross, for He too had been mocked, beaten, scourged, spat upon, laughed at and was ready to die as well to be united with His Father. Chapter 2 verse 20 demonstrates Paul's anguish when he pronounced that he has "no man likeminded who will naturally care for their state." Paul must have been very physically lonely in the world for he never knew who might depart from the faith and his teachings. He was made

the ONLY example for us, no one else had his likeminded faith! In chapter 3:8, we read of more anguish, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as dung, that I may win Christ.” Paul suffered the loss of all worldly things, including friends, family, worldly possessions, however, he counted them as dog food or dung, worthless because Christ was absent from it all. The last mentioning of anguish I want to speak about is in chapter 3:18, “For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.” Paul may have not have had much anguish from the last verse, however, I am sure this statement of his caused much anguish. These are probably the same group of people that he refers to in 2 Timothy 1:15 where he states that “all they in Asia be turned away from me.” This was anguish of his mind and spirit, not physical anguish. This is the same anguish Christ experienced on the cross. Christ had many followers who turned against Him. Even believers turned their back from Christ while He walked the earth, look at Peter and the 3 times he denied Him! Paul had what he thought were fellow believers and probably some that were actual believers, that fell away from his teachings. Some just couldn't grasp or didn't want to grasp his last revelation from God concerning the church and the mystery involved. How is your anguish? Have you ever thought to yourself that God has forsaken you? Ever had the feeling that God is not listening to your prayers? Have you ever meditated on the fact that God forsook His only Begotten Son on the cross, yet will never forsake us?! His eyes will never turn away, they will always be upon us!

The fifth saying I want to talk about is found in John 19:28, were we read, “And Jesus, knowing that all things were accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled saith, I thirst.” The word thirst is the Greek word, DIPSAO and means to thirst for. It also means a strong desire for something or having a craving, appetite or great desire for. Christ thirsted for the oneness with His Father, at this point God had already turned His eyes from Him. Let me digress again for just a minute to look at another passage in John 6:35, “ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” This is the exact same Greek word for thirst as above. Christ not only took on our sin for us, but never wanted us to thirst like He had to on the cross! He thirsted because of our sin and yet wouldn't allow us to ever thirst!! Think about that for a minute! This saying of Christ's parallels the word SUFFERING and have 7 characteristics accompanied by it, they are:

1. **An evidence of Christ's humanity.**
2. **The intensity of Christ's sufferings.**
3. **Our Lord's deep reverence for the scriptures.**
4. **The Saviour's submission to the Father's will.**
5. **How Christ can sympathize with his suffering people.**
6. **The expression of a universal need.**
7. **The enunciation of an abiding principle.**

The word suffering according to Nelson's Bible dictionary means: Agony, affliction, or distress; intense pain or sorrow. Suffering has been part of the human experience since man's fall into sin. Paul, like Christ, suffered many things and is evident in his writings,

however in the book of 2 Timothy, we see the climatic summation of the word. All the suffering by Paul as well as every believer can be summed up by one verse in 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 12, "Yea, and all they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The book of 2 Timothy is associated with the suffering of Christ on the cross. Ask yourself the question, "have I ever really suffered because of my belief in Christ?" Christ did, Paul did, Noah did, David and Job did, I could go on and on...Paul tells us in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." When we think of suffering, don't think of it in the same intensity of Christ's. We must remember that our sufferings here on earth cannot ever be compared to the magnitude of the sufferings of Christ. Sure we will suffer persecutions, heart aches, physically, mentally and spiritually at times, but they will never be to the point of Christ's. Paul's sufferings included! Christ not only died for our sin, but took on the worst amount of suffering, so we would never have to suffer in that same manner or intensity. Let's look at some other examples of suffering, in 2 Timothy. We first read about Paul's sufferings in 1:15, "This thou knowest that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me..." and also in 4:16, "At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me..." Paul was not only in prison, but had been abandoned by most of his friends. What's more is that most of whom turned away were probably saved people! In 1:12-13, we read, "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Here Paul is suffering because of his position in Christ and the work given to him to do by God. Not only did Paul continue to have upset Jews because of his message that the Gentiles can now be saved, but now was receiving it from the Gentiles because of his later revelation from God. The afflictions of the gospel as Paul mentions in verse 8 are attributed to his sufferings. It probably included those who had turned from his teachings on the mystery of Christ that had been revealed to him. In chapter 2:9-12, we read, "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." Paul was treated like a criminal by most because darkness hates light. A true believer cannot love this present world while awaiting their inheritance in heaven. We should love this world by looking at the creations of God and all it's beauty that it possesses, not possessions! And certainly not the trappings of this world that man bring into it. Imagine what Christ had to experience going from an eternal perfection where He and His Father were one in the glory of the heavenlies without any presence of sin or darkness, to this world that opposed everything He was. To experience for the first time, beatings, mocking, scourging, disrespect, hatred, pride, the total depravity of man, vengeance, vileness, friends that were Satan referring to Peter (Matt.16:23) and so many other sinful acts of mankind. This was true suffering! Suffering we will never know anything about, thanks to the death of Christ on our behalf. We all as believers, will suffer, but it's not physical, it's spiritual. So how is your spiritual suffering? Do you thirst? Do you suffer because of your thirst?

The 6th and next to last saying I would like to consider is found in John 19:30, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished.."

Finished is the Greek word, TELEO and means to complete, expire or conclude. "Done!", being sure that the idea of perfection is included. The full meaning of the word is: "It was finished and as a result is forever done." TELEO was the word the farmer used when there was born into his herd an animal so shapely, beautiful, and healthy that it seemed to be without defects and fault. It was the word the sculptor or the painter used when the last finishing touches had been put on the sculptured material or the painting, and it seemed that nothing called for improvement or correction. Tetelestai was the word that the priest used when the devout worshipper brought a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year (according to God's instructions in Exodus 12:5), to be offered as a sacrifice. Tetelestai is the word that takes on its greatest significance when our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, offered Himself as the Lamb of God on the altar of Golgotha and used it to describe His Sacrifice for sins which was complete, stainless, perfect, once for all, eternal, finished, and done forever. Amen and amen!!!!

When Christ spoke this saying, what was IT that was finished? Christ's life, His work, the prophecies? The separation from His Father? This was the end of Christ's story as the man. Christ used this word as an accomplishment. When an artist completes his work, it is finished! This brings a sensation of joy and accomplishment. I believe Christ may have been experiencing joy in this statement for He had finally reached His climax. He was soon to be re-united with His Father. This was the last feeling or experience that Christ endured here on earth. This utterance of Christ on the cross reflects the word of VICTORY in which we find 7 more essential attributes associated with it, they are:

- 1. The accomplished fulfillment of all the prophecies which had been written of him where he should die.**
- 2. The completion of his sufferings.**
- 3. The goal of the Incarnation is reached.**
- 4. The accomplishment of the atonement.**
- 5. The end of our sins.**
- 6. The fulfillment of the law's requirements.**
- 7. The destruction of Satan's power.**

Victory can be defined as the overcoming of an enemy, the achievement of mastery or success in a struggle or endeavor against odds or difficulties. The book of Titus can be associated with the victory in Christ Jesus. This book deals with the condition of the churches and the qualifications of elders. However, we can also see the victory for the life of a true believer as Paul explains the Pastoral work of the elders. Listen to these following verses in Titus and notice the victory, the inheritance that we possess, the battle that has been won over Satan! In chapter 1 verse 2, we read, "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." The eternal life that Paul is speaking of to these believers is the post-acts inheritance that is only made possible by the ascension of Christ after His death on the cross. Here we see the foreordained victory for the believer. God has already promised us victory from the enemy, so why shouldn't we live victoriously? The next reference is in the entire chapter 2, which really

illuminates the victory in the child of God. Just touching on a few verses, look at verse 8, where we read, "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you!" WHAT VICTORY! In 11-14, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath APPEARED TO ALL MEN, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." All men, here meaning all elect and the victory brought about by the grace of God. Without the victory of death in our lives, we could never look for His glorious appearing! And in chapter 3:5-7, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." This is the fruit of the victory! If it wasn't for the victory of Christ on the cross, we would never have these promises associated with the believer. We have overcome the enemy already, the victory is ours to possess. We know the will of God and that we are a part of His inheritance. When your favorite sports team has won the title and claimed the victory over every other team, you too experience the victory and have a sense of satisfaction in your mind for the next year. We know the outcome of God's favorite team (the body of Christ) and it's a satisfaction that should last our entire lives, not just a year! So I ask the question, do you live victoriously? Is it a daily experience, or something you seldom dwell upon? Our victory must be meditated upon daily because if we have already won the battle and have secured that thought in our mind, no enemy can defeat us! Nothing should affect us!

The final saying I would like to speak on is found in Luke 23:46, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up his spirit." The Word says that as He uttered these words He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Doctors and nurses tell us that when people are dying, they try to raise their heads for one more breath. He bowed His head. You see the sufferings did not take His life, ferocious though they were; He laid it down of Himself!

The Greek word for COMMEND in this saying is "parathithemia" (PARA-THIT-HEMIA) and means to deposit as a trust (a reliant for future payment) for protection. When someone makes a deposit of cash into a bank's fund or trust, it's normally for retirement or in the hopes of one day being a much larger sum from when they first put it in. It's earnest money that is guaranteed to grow as long as it is in the bank. They have a sense of security that their deposit will be safe and secure until the time comes to withdraw it. Once fully matured, the money is taken out and enables the person to live in accordance to the value of the bond. In doing so, they have protected their financial future. Here, Christ is our deposit for protection! He deposited Himself on our behalf so that Satan would not get an advantage over us. Once our deposit (Christ) is fully obtainable (upon our resurrection) we will be able to continue our spiritual lives in accordance to the deposit (Christ). Christ is our protection from any wiles of the devil. There are many times in my life when I don't fully rely on Christ. I tend to try and solve my problems myself and not live by faith alone. However, the time will come (after death) when I will solely live by my deposit! This saying reflects the word of CONTENTMENT and has 7 attributes associated with it.

1. Here we see the Saviour back again in communion with the Father.

- 2. We see a designed contrast.**
- 3. We see Christ's perfect yieldedness to God.**
- 4. We see the absolute uniqueness of the Saviour.**
- 5. We see the place of eternal security.**
- 6. We see the blessedness of communion with God.**
- 7. We see the heart's true haven.**

Contentment is a word according to Nelson's Bible Dictionary which means: Freedom from anxiety or worry. The idea of contentment comes from a Greek word that means "independence" or "self-sufficiency." But the apostle Paul used the word in a Christian sense to show that real satisfaction or sufficiency comes from God:

Contentment can be found in the book of 1 Timothy. This letter is a pastoral letter in which Paul touches on church order, soundness of faith and discipline within the believer. There is also much contentment found in the letter. I'm not going to go through every instance, so I will just pick out a few. In chapter 2:9, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair or gold, or pearls, or costly array." how much worldly emphasis is put on how women look these days? what they wear, perfume they put on, how young they need to look. Plastic surgeons are making a lot of money! None of this would be relevant, if we would be content! Just a couple verses down in verses 11 and 12, "Let the women learn as the Lord commands, to be subject to the Lord, as to the Lord, which is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the saviour, himself the church, which he has cleansed by the word of water with the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Women are to be content with their position regarding the man. This doesn't make the women less important, there are many things the man shouldn't do that the women should. Everything and everyone needs to have balance in this life. Paul is setting up the balance in accordance to God's Word. Paul speaks of widows having contentment in chapter 5, but in chapter 6, we see the true purpose for contentment. Chapter 6:6-8, "But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment (clothing) let us therewith be content." These verses are telling the believer that they are to be godly in their spiritual walk and content in their physical walk. All we need in this world is food and clothing. Everything else God will provide for us if we just have the faith to believe that He will. I believe that worldly contentment is a must in the life of a believer, however, spiritual knowledge and wisdom should never be contented. We should always strive for more Godly wisdom and never be content. Had Paul been content after his inner-acts revelation, we never would have known the full power of Christ's resurrection! We would have never realized the depths of God's love toward us. If death was upon our door, would we be contented as Christ was? Would we say this world has nothing to offer us and look forward to eternity, or would we try holding on to this life because of our family, friends and worldly possessions? We are obligated by God to be content in whatsoever state we are in! (Phil. 4:11)

In this study, I have tried to show the identification of the believer in Christ's DEATH experience. When we think about death, do we think about it being a 1 time experience in our life? An event that will happen in the future? We must remember that from the moment we were born, we start to die! We are instructed to identify ourselves in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Part of our obligation to this is to

identify our walk with the gospel of Christ. These 7 sayings on the cross make up the Death of Christ that we must see ourselves partakers of. You can form your own list of verses corresponding to the death of Christ in fact, it would make for a very good study! I have just touched the tip of the iceberg with this study. There are many many more instances of these 7 sayings throughout Paul's letters, throughout the entire Bible for that matter. Here is something I thought was very interesting about Christ's death, in the Scofield Study Bible, it brings to light 7 illegal particulars for the condemning of Christ in the Jewish legal system.

1. The judge was not impartial and did not protect the accused. There is no evidence that the quorum of 23 judges was present; the judges took part in the arrest and were hostile.
2. The arrest was unlawful because it was carried out under no formal accusation.
3. In criminal trials all sessions had to be started and carried on only during the day. Night sessions were illegal.
4. A verdict of guilty could not be rendered on the same day as the conclusion of the trial. It had to be given the next day.
5. The search for hostile testimony was illegal.
6. No accused could be convicted of his own evidence, yet they sought replies and admissions from Christ to condemn him.
7. No valid legal evidence was presented against Him. After Pilate declared Christ innocent, his subsequent acts were all contrary to the letter and spirit of Roman law.

But I must not conclude this study with just the death of Christ. The wonderful, magnificent truth is that after His Death, after His burial, Christ was risen! "He is not here, He IS risen." (Matt.28:6) Christ defeated death for all His children and therefore death has no more dominion over us! He was raised from the dead! Unlike Lazareth, who's body stunk after being dead for four days (John 11), Christ's Body was preserved and had the sweet smell of victory! When we die, our bodies will be left here to rot, Christ's body would have never decayed. 3 days in the earth could not contain Christ or His earthly body! Have you ever wondered besides fulfilling prophesy, why Christ had to suffer for 6 hours on the cross, instead of immediately dying? Why Christ continued to be separated from His Father after He died, instead of immediately being ushered into the presence of God? Or why Christ's physical body had to leave the tomb? (Interesting point) ...Have you ever wondered what happened to His physical body? If you ever go back and look into the events that took place after Christ's resurrection, you will find that He appeared in different forms, not in His earthly body that was familiar to those whom He walked with. This is another study in itself, so I will be brief in explaining: After Christ's resurrection, no one recognized Him! He must have been in another form! John 20:14 reads about Mary Magdalene, the first person to see Christ after His resurrection, "And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus."

Thomas wouldn't believe it was Christ until he put his fingers into the nail prints. (John 20:25-27)

Peter, who walked with Christ for years, didn't recognize him in John 21:4.

The eleven apostles didn't acknowledge Him in Mark 16:14.

Mark 16:12, mentions His earthly appearance after the resurrection by stating, "After that he appeared in another form..."

Here are some other verses you can read and study for yourself. Luke 24:16,18 and 37 and John 20:20.

Whatever His appearance after His death may have been, this earth couldn't constrain any remnant of Christ! Only the linen clothing was left behind, which was made of this world and useless. Just as Christ was hid from those He walked with after His resurrection, until He revealed Himself again to them, Christ is hid today from the world as well. It's our obligation as believers to search for Christ everyday and try to learn something new about Him every time we read His Word! The sweetness and the victory of the gospel is in His resurrection! But we, His present day believers cannot just stop at His resurrection for His resurrection was upon earth. Our present day hope is because of His ascension. His ascension into heaven is attributed to the present day church and our hope of the heavenlies is manifested. Had Christ not ascended into heaven, our hope would be here on the earth. Time will not permit me to go into His ascension so I will end my study by asking some questions....In your walk, is the death of Christ just a sad event that took place, or is it events that take place? How is your death experience? Is it a practice or position in your life? Have you died lately? Are you dying daily? Are you dead and is your life hid with Christ? The more we die daily, the more prepared we will be for eternity.