

Run video - Famous last words

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Who can tell me the **famous last words** of Mel Blanc?

“That’s all Folks!”

Mel Blanc was the voice of many Warner Bros cartoon characters when many of us were growing up. Every Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck cartoon ended with him as Porky Pig saying ...

When we started this sermon series a couple weeks ago, someone told me “That’s All Folks!” is on Blanc’s tombstone.

**Epitaphs, or sayings on tombstones, are a kind of famous last words.**

Sometimes people write them for themselves.

-Famous mobster **Al Capone’s** tombstone says: "My Jesus, mercy."

-**Frank Sinatra** had written on his: "The best is yet to come."

-**Winston Churchill’s** tombstone says: "I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter."

-Can anyone guess what **Martin Luther King, Jr.’s** says?

"Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty I'm Free At Last."

**Here are a couple that aren’t quite as profound.**

-It seems there is a tombstone **in Uniontown, Pa** with the epitaph:

“Here lies the body of Jonathan Blake.  
Stepped on the gas instead of the brake.”

-A stone in a **Ribbesford, England**, cemetery says:

“The children of Israel wanted bread and the Lord sent them manna,  
Old clerk Wallace wanted a wife, and the Devil sent him Anna.”

Now it seems who got the last word there  
depends a little on whose tomb that is written upon: Wallace or Anna?

-In a cemetery **in Georgia**, one says:

"I told you . I was sick!"

Wasn’t that nice of the family to let the deceased have the last word like that?

-Finally, the gravestone of one **Ezekial Aikle** reportedly says:

“Here lies Ezekial Aikle. Age 102. The Good Die Young.”

Get it? ... It seems like someone else was getting the last word there.

**We don’t have a tombstone for Jesus, because he did not stay dead.**

But Jesus was allowed by those who crucified him to have a few last words

His are the Famous Last Words we are talking about in this sermon series.

The writers of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record

7 things Jesus said, 7 sayings, while he was hanging on the cross.

Luke records 3 things.

John records 3 other things.

Today, join me in looking at the only words of Jesus on the cross that

Matthew and Mark record.

In Matthew 27 Jesus has been nailed to the cross and we find:

<sup>45</sup> From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. <sup>46</sup> About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

<sup>47</sup> When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” <sup>48</sup> Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. <sup>49</sup> The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

Matthew tell us what Jesus said in his language, because without it, it doesn’t make sense that some thought he was crying for Elijah.

Elijah was an OT prophet.

Eli, could have been a short for Elijah

But, in the language Jesus used, Eli meant “My God”

So we are told how it sounded when Jesus originally said it, to explain why some people think he’s calling Elijah.

But that is not what he is doing.

He is crying out to God “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me.

**This is easily the most heart breaking thing Jesus says while on the cross.**

It is dark; a darkness has covered the earth for 3 hours.

Jesus has been hanging on the cross, suffering horribly, in agony.

And He feels completely and utterly forsaken God his Father.

For those who aren’t quite sure, Webster’s dictionary defines forsaken as

*To renounce or turn away from entirely.*

*To abandon, desert, leave, maroon, or quit.*

Forsaken is when a person turns their back & leaves another utterly alone

This week in Pittsburgh a young mother took her 8 month old baby into the woods and covered her with mud and left her there to die in the cold.

Someone saw the young woman go in with and come out without her baby

And went and saved the baby.

**... That baby was forsaken by her mother.**

On NPR last week I heard a story about Baby Boxes in Europe.

It is a door in a hospital where a mother can bring a baby and leave it anonymously. They are equipped with motion detectors that alert the nurses 2 minutes after the baby is put in so that the mother can leave.

There are over 200 in 11 European countries.

The United Nation is pressuring the Europeans to ban the practice.

But advocates say it saves the lives of unwanted babies who might otherwise be killed.

**... Babies left in baby boxes are forsaken.**

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On the cross, Jesus cried “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

And we have to ask why?

What is happening?

What does it mean?

How could it happen?

Is this a feeling or a fact?

Why does Jesus call it out loud so everyone can hear it?

Why doesn’t he just keep it to himself?

I want to suggest 3 reasons why Jesus says this from the cross.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> is that Jesus** wants people to know this was planned. (2x)

This saying is taken directly from Psalm 22.

Psalm 22 was written 1000 years earlier by King David,  
who was Jesus' great, great, great, many times over, grandfather.

And listen to what David wrote 1000 before.

Psalm 22

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from my cries of anguish? ...

<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me;  
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

<sup>8</sup> "He trusts in the Lord," they say,  
"let the Lord rescue him.

Let him deliver him, since he delights in him." ...

<sup>16</sup> Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me;  
they pierce my hands and my feet.

<sup>17</sup> All my bones are on display;  
people stare and gloat over me.

<sup>18</sup> They divide my clothes among them  
and cast lots for my garment.

If you read the accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus in the gospels  
they contain all these details.

They all come true in the cross of Jesus.

Especially, verse 16: They pierced my hands and feet!

Jesus calling out "My God, My God why have you forsaken me"

is intended by Jesus to be a message to all who knew or could know  
about this Psalm 22.

And the message could be something like this:

This was foretold!

This is not a surprise to God!

This is not me losing, this is God's plan!

I am surrounded by villains.

They divide and cast lots for my clothes.

They hurl insults at me and mock me.

They have pierced my hands and feet!

And I am forsaken!

The scripture is fulfilled! It is okay!

**Here's another one of those "Wow the Bible is true!" moments.**

Jesus was **pierced in his hands and feet** and all these other details.

And it was foretold 1000 years before it happened, by his ancestor!

The rest of Psalm 22 talks about hope and the resurrection

and the new life and praise and salvation that God would accomplish.

Look it up and read it this week.

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**The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason Jesus says this**

has to do with what he was doing for us and our salvation on the cross.

A couple weeks ago, as I was studying and preparing for this series,

I was inspired with an idea. –

It occurred to me that the 7 sayings are not just the things Jesus said while on the cross.

It occurred to me that all 7 sayings are connected.

All 7 sayings are part of one big picture – one theme – one idea.

And it's this: **Each saying on the cross points to some truth about what the cross means to us in our salvation with God.**

Jesus is being crucified, and in the process, all of his words point to some aspect of what it means and why he is doing it.

**As in, the 1<sup>st</sup> week, what did we say Jesus said on the cross?**

**“Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.”**

Jesus was able to forgive the people who were crucifying him even as it happened!

He did it for several reasons.

And one of those reasons was

that it pointed to what Jesus was doing for us on the cross.

By dying on the cross, Jesus was making a way for us to be forgiven by God.

Our salvation is rooted in ... forgiveness.

**The message of the cross is forgiveness,  
So the message from the cross was one of forgiveness.**

**Last week Pastor Keith did a great job with the 2<sup>nd</sup> saying which was?**

**“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”**

Jesus is crucified between two criminals.

In Luke's account one mocks Jesus, and the other repents of his sin and expresses belief that Jesus is a righteous Son of God who is coming into a kingdom.

In that scene we see our salvation – we are one or the other criminal.

Like them, we must repent, admit we are guilty & deserve punishment, but if we trust in Jesus we can be with him in paradise one day.

That 2<sup>nd</sup> saying is all about what Jesus does on the cross!!

He makes a way for us to be with Him in heaven, if we will repent and trust him.

**The message of the cross is repent & believe & go to heaven,  
So the message from the cross was repent & believe & go to heaven.**

In the upcoming weeks we will show how each saying from the cross reveals something about what Jesus was doing for us on the cross.

**Today, our 3<sup>rd</sup> saying is right on point.**

**“My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me”** is about our salvation.

Why? Because in order for us

1. to be forgiven
2. and for us to be able to repent of our sins and believe in Jesus so we can go to heaven,
3. someone has to bear the punishment for our sins.

The most likely explanation for why Jesus feels forsaken by God the Father is that **He has taken the guilt of our sins upon himself and the guilt of our sins are separating Him from God.**

Later in the NT, God tells us this

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Jesus, who had no sin, was made a sin offering for us on the cross.

He took our sins upon himself on the cross.

Add to that how in the OT

**Habakkuk 1:13** says

**Your eyes are too pure to look on evil.**

The prophet tells us that God is too holy to look on evil.

God does not look on evil things.

He turns away for them.

At the moment all the sin guilt of the world is laid upon the lamb of God

God the Father turns away.

The Father abandons the Son to bear the full weight of sin.

The prophet Isaiah confirms this explanation when he said,

**Isaiah 59:2**

**Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.**

Iniquities is another word for sin.

God does not look on sin, he hides his face from it.

Sin separates from God.

Jesus was made sin for us on the cross.

And because God cannot look on evil

And because sin separates us from a holy God

Jesus experienced separation from God the Father.

**Jesus was forsaken because of our sin.**

The Garden of Eden also confirms this.

Adam and Eve sin against God. How?

What happens immediately after when God comes looking for them?

They hide. It separates them.

Just like our little kids do when they do something they know is wrong.

What do they do? They hide.

America's Funniest Home Video has thousands of videos of moms or dads coming up on a little 3 year old **hiding** down beside the bed or the table, with candy, or cake, or ice cream all over their face.

And the mom says, "Did you eat the cake?"

And the little girl shakes her head, "No."

And it's all over her face.

**And they hide.**

God discovers Adam & Eve and pronounces judgment on their sin and ...  
expels them from the garden.

**They withdraw from God.**

**And God must withdraw from them.**

That story of the 1<sup>st</sup> sin is meant to show us  
that sin separates us from God.

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**So, this 3<sup>rd</sup> saying is about the problem the cross addresses.**

That problem is our sin.

That sin separates us from a holy God.

But on the cross Jesus takes our sin and bears that separation,  
so that we can be reconciled with God.

He dies in our place, takes our punishment,  
so that we don't have to be separated anymore.

So, for us in this saying is a warning,  
Sin separates us from God.

Just like Adam and Eve, when we sin against God it causes us to withdraw from Him.  
Even though Adam and Eve didn't stop being God's children,  
it broke their close fellowship with God.

The same is true for Jesus.

When he takes on the sin of the world, does he cease to be God's Son?

No! his relationship remains,  
but his close communion is mysteriously broken.

With us, if we put our faith in Jesus Christ and what he does here  
He becomes our sin offering and we become his righteousness.  
We are forever covered by his righteousness before God.

But that doesn't mean that if we continue to disobediently sin against God  
that our sin will not damage our fellowship with God.

Our sin will affect our closeness with God.

It will NOT diminish God's love for us,  
but it will hurt our fellowship.

1 John 1:5-9

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.  
If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if  
we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son,  
purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is  
faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God wants to have close fellowship with us.

If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with him.

If we claim to have fellowship, but walk in darkness, we do not do the truth

But, even then, if we do sin, here is what we do,  
We confess our sins to him  
and He will forgive us and purify us from all unrighteousness.

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**Last thing I think this, "My God why have you forsaken me" says to us.**

I think Jesus tells us that He is forsaken, that he feels forsaken, because of his care for us.

Even in that last moment of agony, he is thinking of how this world is full of people who have been or feel  
forsaken & abandoned. Who are alone and unconnected.

And he wants us to know he is one of us.

The older I get, the more I see & experience the forsakenness of this world.

Our loved ones leave us.

Divorce.

Death. Friends die. Family dies.

Our children grow up and move on to lives of their own.

Friends betray you.

Employers lay you off and abandon you.

People forget and fail and leave.

Here's good news for us ...

God will never forsake you.

God will never leave or forsake us.

Jesus was separated so you don't have to be.

Jesus was separated so we don't have to be.

And so if you are feeling forsaken, I would encourage to hold on

And note this one last thing.

**When Jesus cried out Why have you forsaken me,**

**Who did he cry to?**

**When Jesus cried out being and feeling forsaken**

**Who did he cry to?**

He said, **My God, My God**, why have you forsaken me.

He still trusts God.

He knows there is a reason.

He knows God is still there.

He knows he still has a God who He can cry out to.

And He still trusts that God is his God.

I encourage you to take comfort and courage in his example and in his faith

Because God did not leave Him to the grave.

God did soon come to his rescue and he will for you too.

Please stand and sing a short closing song and then I'll close in prayer.