

# Seven Words

By Doug Irving & Gary Randolph



## Theme and Purpose

This is an Easter responsive reading that relates Christ's seven words from the cross to our lives today. For centuries Christians have meditated on these words, finding in them a Savior who both understands our human experience and opens a door to heaven. This reading attempts to draw us into a deeper understanding of the passion and of God's love for us. It also attempts to help us see the fully-human Jesus as present in our daily experiences.

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**Approximate Running Time** 2 1/2 minutes

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## Production Notes

This responsive reading is written with the congregation voicing the seven words from the cross and the reader elaborating on them in response. With a good dramatic reader, this can be very powerful.

An alternative would be to reverse the parts, giving the opening statement and the words from the cross to the reader and the response to the congregation. If, as the congregation voices the responses, they really enter into the meaning of the words, this could be very meaningful.

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## Related Scriptures

Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34; Luke 23:43; Luke 23:46;  
John 19:26-27; John 19:28; John 19:30

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## Song Suggestions

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross; Here I am to Worship;  
Jesus Paid it All (O Praise the One Who Paid my Debt)

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READER

Hear our Lord's words from the cross.

CONGREGATION

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.

READER

How can you forgive us? We stumble through life, blindly trampling on each other and on your plan for our lives, oblivious to the hope and peace you offer. We clutch at the rags of this life we know rather than take hold of the glory you offer.

CONGREGATION

Today you will be with me in Paradise.

READER

Lord, to be with you is Paradise. To know our Maker. To find our place of meaning. To find that with you there is always hope, always acceptance, always life.

CONGREGATION

Woman, this is your son. Son, this is your mother.

READER

Mother, son, father, brother, sister. It is you who make us family. It is you who make us one.

CONGREGATION

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

READER

We, too, feel forsaken - by friends and family - sometimes even by You. Lord Almighty, we call out to you in the darkness and hurt of our lives. Will you hear our cry?

CONGREGATION

I am thirsty.

READER

You were flesh and blood - fully human and yet fully divine. We, too, thirst. We grow hungry and weary and sick. You shared our lives, and laid down your life to make us like you.

CONGREGATION

It is finished.

READER

You saw through to completion our deliverance. You won our freedom despite the cost. We are bought with a price.

CONGREGATION

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

READER

Jesus, because of what you did, you set our spirits free. Free from bondage. Free to new life. We commit them back into your hands. Out of love. Out of gratitude. Worthy is the Lamb.

*Fade to black*

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