

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit

The final words of the dying can be very revealing. Like an X-ray, they tend to expose the heart and mind of the dying person and enable us to see their true nature. Dying words carry great power. Just think of your own loved ones, those you've lost. If you were present at the time of their passing, don't you remember their last words? I would bet that you strained to hear whatever they had to say in their final moments, you hold them close, you treasure them, you never forget.

Jesus' final words were both of faith and comfort. In a very real sense the last words of our Lord and Savior are windows that enable us to look into eternity and see the heart of the Savior as well as the heart of the gospel.

Let us look at the words in question:

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 the ghost.

We have to remember that Jesus uttered those words not from the comfort of his death bed, or in a hospital attended by medical staff and visited by family and friends. He was hanging from a cross. And if you've seen the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, you can begin to imagine it. He was suffering and he was tired. But even then, on the threshold of death, a death he neither deserved nor earned, Jesus held steady to his mission.

Jesus neither lived nor did he die for himself. He did both for a fallen world that we might be saved. Therefore, it's logical to deduce that with his final words Jesus remained true to his purpose.

It was not only his spirit that he was commending into the hands of God the Father, but the spirits of us all. His mission, his purpose...the prophecies were filled. With his miraculous birth, his sinless life, his world changing ministry, his crucifixion,

and within moments, his necessary death; Jesus did what he came here to do. He saved our souls and earned, on our behalf, our right to the tree of life.

So with his last breath, would our Savior and Lord become suddenly selfish, forgetting us? No. With his last breath Jesus committed our spirits along with his own into the loving hands of the God of the universe.

NOTE: And by this time, Jesus was tired. He had been beaten and abused and he was slowly dying. His physical strength was waning. But with his, he remembered a prayer of his youth. All Jewish parents taught their child this prayer [reference David and Stephen], and Jesus was no different. During his time of need he reached for what he knew, which was prayer. In his distress and pain, Jesus was propped by his foundation – prayer. And in the simplest and most honest of all prayers, that of a child turning to his heavenly father for comfort, Jesus prayed. [mention the prayer we as ‘modern’ christens teach our own children. “Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake. I pray the Lord my soul to take.”]

It is my belief that when Jesus commended his own spirit into the hands of God, he was saying to the Father, “Paid in Full”, accept this my sacrifice and accept these Your people, they couldn’t do it, so I have done it for them.

Father into thy hands I commend my spirits.