



Oh, Father, [how deep Your love for us. How vast beyond all measure that You should give Your only Son to make a wretch like me Your treasure.](#) Lord, we confess that [it was our sin that held Him there on that cross until it was accomplished.](#) Lord, we hear with shame [our mocking voices call out amongst the scoffers](#) and we thank You for your great mercy, Your compassion, Your love that You continue to give Your Son for people such as us. And Jesus, we thank You for Your obedience and submission and great love to the point of death. We pray that You'd open our eyes, Holy Spirit, to see something of the greatness of our Savior's love as we look to Your Word and come to Your communion table tonight.

The Scripture reading is found in Luke 23:44-46:

*"It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last."*

You've probably had the embarrassing experience of having someone entrust something precious to you, asking you to guard it carefully, only to drop it and let it break, or neglect it or forget about it. And you've probably also had the experience of entrusting something precious of yours to someone, only to find out they were not trustworthy. How many investors have been defrauded by entrusting their finances into reckless or selfish hands? How many children have been harmed by the hands of those who are supposed to care and protect? How many women have been battered by the hand of those who claimed to love them? How many fathers have given their daughter's hand in marriage, later to lament that the hands into which they committed their precious daughter were not hands of protection and compassion and kindness?

There is a hand of darkness that has reached across this world, seeking to hold this world in its cruel and cold grip and we've all felt the cold touch of that

hand of darkness. There is a thief, an illegitimate tyrant, tormenting the world today. His name is the devil and in his hands he holds the most pernicious weapon: the destroyer that we call death. And Jesus, in these hours leading up to His crucifixion, has voluntarily submitted Himself into the hands of darkness, the hands of cruel men, the hand of the destroyer.

For thousands of years, this gloomy and dreadful tyrant has been in the world, carrying on his campaign of mass destruction. People live their entire lives in silent fear that one day this tyrant's wicked hand will reach down and pluck them up forever. Death drops its poison into every cup of joy and its sinister shadow lurks behind every pleasure we have. We cannot escape the grip of this hand of darkness unless there is a hand more powerful than death.

Praise God these dying words of Jesus from the cross, the last prayer that He uttered before His death, point us to the hands that are more powerful than death. These hands have strangled death. These hands stop death in its track. They crush its tyranny so that everyone who lives and dies in these hands can sing forever:

“Death is crushed to death,  
Life is mine to live,  
Won through Your selfless love.”

[The Power Of The Cross](#)  
by Stewart Townend and Keith Getty

Jesus in His final moments is showing us not only how to live but how to die: contentedly, submissively and full of hope. Let us listen to His closing prayer from the cross and let us join Him in prayer as we follow His example, quoting from [Psalm 31:5](#), showing that He is meditating on God's Word, He prays Father, “...*Into your hand I commit my spirit.*”

And as we meditate on this brief but poignant prayer, we will ask two questions simultaneously: First, into Whose Hands did Jesus commit His Spirit and second, have I committed my spirit into those same hands?



## 1. Jesus Committed His Spirit Into the Hands of the One Who Had Power to Shut Out the Light of the Sun

First, we see that Jesus committed His spirit into the hands of the One who had the power to shut out the light of the sun. Verse 44: *“It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed.”* This darkness was a sovereign sign of sorrow and judgment. God prophesies this in [Amos 8:9-10](#). Just listen to how specific this prophecy applies here to our Savior's death on the cross. It says:

*“And on that day,’ declares the Lord God,  
‘I will make the sun go down at noon  
and darken the earth in broad daylight.  
I will turn your feasts into mourning  
and all your songs into lamentation;  
I will bring sackcloth on every waist  
and baldness on every head;  
I will make it like the mourning for an only son  
and the end of it like a bitter day.”*

And look at what Luke says in verse 48: *“And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle [thinking this was going to be entertaining and they were going home to their Passover feast], when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts.”*

God had caused darkness to come over the face of the whole earth as if to say, “No one will look upon My Son in His cruel agony as He becomes sin and bears that awful weight of sin. I will show my power; I will show my judgment; I will show My Son's obedience by hiding this act of obedience in the darkness.” Who has that power to shut out the sun?

I remember when I was a child, sometimes I'd be reading a book at night with a flashlight and maybe my parents didn't want me up that late. If they peeked in the room, I could just cover the flashlight with my hand and put out that light. But not for a moment could one of us get our hand even a million miles closer to

the sun without being burned. But the sovereign God of the universe just takes His sovereign hand and covers the sun and says, "There will be darkness over the earth in the middle of the day." A sovereign act of God and Jesus says, "It's in Your hands, sovereign God Who has the power to shut out the sun and Almighty Ruler of the universe, that I commit My Spirit."

And I ask you, dear friends, have you committed your spirit into the hands of this sovereign, almighty, powerful God of the universe? The God Who has the power to shut out the sun this very moment. Have you put yourself in His hands?

## **2. Jesus Committed His Spirit Into the Hands of the One Who Severed the Curtain of the Temple**

Secondly, Jesus submitted His Spirit into the hands of the One Who severed the curtain of the temple. Look at verse 45. As the sun's light fails, we read that "*the curtain of the temple was torn in two.*" Now that curtain was there in the temple for man's protection. It was there so as to say to sinful man, "You may go this far and no farther." Beyond that curtain was the Holy of Holies. Beyond that curtain was the Ark of the Covenant. Beyond that curtain was the one place in the universe where God's holy awesome presence dwelt in its most concentrated form. For a sinful human being to step beyond that curtain would be to invite immediate destruction in the presence of a Holy God. That curtain was only open for the high priest once a year and then only after making purification for his own sins and the sins of the people and only at the risk of his own life. Not every priest who entered there came out alive. That curtain, Matthew says, was torn in two from top to bottom.

Just a few things about that [curtain](#): It was about thirty feet wide, thirty feet high, a hundred square yards of heavy material. It was thick, the thickness of a man's hand, almost an inch thick. It was carefully embroidered with multiple layers of [red and blue and purple thread](#). [Philip Ryken](#) says, "The only way a human being

could have torn that curtain in two from top to bottom was by getting a 25-foot ladder and hacking away with a broad sword.” With priests serving there night and day, do you think they would have allowed any human being to get into that temple and get out a ladder and start cutting away at that curtain?

This was a miraculous work of God. This was the hand of God the Father saying to the eyes of a watching world, saying to the eyes of the priests, that the offering of Jesus on the cross for the sins of His people is the last sacrifice that anyone will ever need for sins. This is the hand of God saying, “There will be no more lambs killed at Passover. There will be no more goats killed on the Day of Atonement. There will be no more blood sprinkled on the cover of that ark.”

Imagine those priests in that temple, the terror that would have filled their hearts as total darkness envelopes the world outside and then total trembling on the inside as God’s Holy of Holies stands exposed to the eyes of sinful man. They’ve never seen anything like this before. But what God is saying is that there is a work going on outside this temple that makes what makes what happens inside this temple obsolete -- it is no longer necessary because there is a [Lamb of God dying on that cross Who will take away the sins of the world](#). Now that that sacrifice has been made, [these sacrifices need to stop](#). They are finished. They are done with. And because of that sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God on the cross Who appeared once for all to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, [we have confidence now to enter into the holy places through the blood of Jesus](#). We have 24-hour, immediate access into the [throne room of Almighty God](#). There’s no request too great or too small, there’s nothing we have done that can disqualify our admission into God’s presence, **if** we put our [faith and trust in the Lord Jesus](#). We are welcome there in the presence of the Holy God. God invites those who trust in Jesus; He urges us; He joyfully commands us to [draw near to Him with a true heart](#), in full assurance of faith. The God Who for thousands of years had said, “Do not come any closer” now

says, “Come near. I want you to know Me. I want you to see My glory -- the glory that I’ve had from all eternity. Draw near.”

This is the God in Whose hands Jesus committed His spirit. A God Who loves us with the same love with which He loved His Son before the foundation of the world. A God Who desires that we be with Him to see His glory. Have you, friend, committed your life into the hands of this God? This God who desires for you to be close to Him. This God who desires that you would know Him. That you would draw near to Him. Have you given your life into His hands?

### **3. Jesus Committed His Spirit Into The Hands Of The One Who Crushed Him**

Thirdly, Jesus committed His Spirit into the hands that crushed Him. And He says, *“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!”* The hands that crushed Him. In order for the curtain to be torn in two, a high priest had entered into the Holy of Holies. This High Priest, Jesus, entered in as our bearer. As we read in [Isaiah 53:5](#), *“...he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.”*

And later on Isaiah says (in [53:10](#)), “Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him.” The Father has put Him, Jesus, to grief. Jesus experienced that crushing. We heard this past Sunday, how under the darkness of God’s dreadful wrath, Jesus cried out those most agonizing words ever spoken: [“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”](#) He became a curse for us but now [Jesus drank the bitter cup of God’s wrath](#) bone dry and He reaffirms His faith and His confidence in God’s steadfast love for Him. And Jesus doesn’t say “My God” again but says, *“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!* – into the very hands that crushed Me.”

And in doing so, He reminds me of Job – Jesus is a greater Job. He reminds me of Job who said, [“Though He slay me yet will I hope in Him.”](#) Jesus



commits Himself into those hands. Into the hands of the God Who crushes in order to heal. Into the hands of the God Who punished His Son in order to bring us peace.

I ask you, friends, have you committed yourself into those hands? Those hands that crushed [His only Son to make a wretch His treasure](#)? Have you put yourself into those hands that disciplined and chastised His Son so you could be healed. If you submit yourself into those hands, there will be times when those hands lovingly discipline you. But never as payment for your sins because [Jesus paid it all](#). Those hands will discipline you but never out of condemning anger because there is "[now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus](#)." But [those hands will discipline you in love](#) in order that you may be like Him, in order that you may share in His holiness. It will not always be pleasant to commit your life into the hands of this God. There will be trials, there will be hardships, but there will be through it all this peace knowing that nothing has entered my life apart from His sovereign good pleasure. And whatever trials I endure and difficulties I go through, [He is working it all together for good in love for my good](#) and for His glory.

Have you committed yourself to the hands of this perfect Father? This Father who lovingly disciplines, trains, perfects His children so we might share in His glory? Have you put yourself in His hands?

#### **4. Jesus Committed His Spirit Into the Hands of the One Who Raised Him from the Dead**

Fourthly, Jesus committed His Spirit into the hands that raised Him from the dead. We can't wait for Easter! We look ahead because the hand of death could not keep its grip on Jesus because stronger hands laid hold on Him. [Acts 2:24](#) says: "*God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.*" The hand of death lost its grip on Jesus because the hands of God are stronger than the hand of death. And God has now handed over the keys of death to Jesus. And Jesus says to us in [Revelation 1:17:18](#), "*Fear not, I am the first and*



*the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”* And because of that, we read in [2 Corinthians 4:14](#) for those who trust in Jesus, “...*he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.*” The hands that crushed His Son also raised His Son and those same hands will raise from the dead all who put their trust in Him.

### **5. Jesus Committed His Spirit Into The Hands Of The One Who Has Now Highly Exalted Him to Glory**

Lastly, Jesus committed His Spirit into the hands of the One Who has now highly exalted Him in glory. Listen to [Philippians 2:8-11](#): “*And being found in human form, he [Jesus] humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*”

How rightly does the [hymn](#) say,

The head that once was crowned with thorns  
Is crowned with glory now;  
A royal diadem adorns  
The mighty victor’s brow.  
The highest place that Heav’n affords  
Belongs to Him by right;  
The King of kings and Lord of lords,  
And Heaven’s eternal Light.

The hand that crushed His Son raised His Son and exalted His Son and seated His Son at His right hand and He shall reign forever and ever. And in view of that great triumph, Jesus said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit. The hand of darkness will hold me no longer. I place Myself into Your hands, Father.”



And I ask you, have you committed yourself into those hands? Have you obeyed the Word of God that says, [“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you.”](#) Have you committed yourselves into the hands of the Only One Who has the power to raise you up and exalt you in His presence? Sometimes we think if we can just hold life in our hands, we’ll be able to make things turn out the way we want. But we can never do it. But humble yourself under God’s hand, place yourself in His hands and in due time He will exalt you.

No one can die quite like Jesus did. He was fully in control of His death. No one took His life from Him. Luke is clear that Jesus [“cried out with a loud voice.”](#) He was in full control of this event. He submitted Himself to death. He laid down His life on His Own accord. But as He died, so He lived. This wasn’t a new thing for Jesus: *“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!”* This was the story of His life. [Every day of His life He was giving Himself over to His God in obedience.](#) And likewise as we live, so we will likely die.

Are you living your life right now the way Jesus died? Committing yourself in every joy, in every trial, in every danger, in every delight, into the strong, merciful, loving hands of your heavenly Father? Are you saying, “Father, my life is in Your hands to do with as You please.”

[Vance Havner](#) told a [story](#) about an elderly lady who was greatly disturbed by her many trials, both real and imaginary. Finally someone in her family tactfully told her, “Grandma, we’ve done all we can do for you; you’ll just have to trust God for the rest.” A look of absolute despair spread over her face as she replied, “Oh dear, has it come to that?” Vance Havner said, “It always comes to that so we might as well begin with that.”

We end up in God’s hands one way or another. We might as well begin there. The Scriptures say in [Hebrews 10:31](#): *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* But Jesus shows us from His cross it is a delightful thing

to commit yourself into the hands of a living God. [No one can snatch](#) those who place themselves in the Father's hands, out of those hands. Those hands are stronger than death itself. Those hands have strangled death and crushed it and destroyed the devil who holds the power of death so that those who place themselves there in the Father's hands may live their lives free from the fear of death and darkness. May we all join our Lord Jesus in His prayer from the cross. May we all say this very night, "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!*"

God, I pray with thanksgiving that we would be led by Your Spirit to entrust ourselves into Your firm, faithful, gracious, wise and strong hands. As we come to this communion table, Father, we thank You for the hands that were wounded to save us. We thank You for the hand that is mighty to keep us. And we gladly place ourselves before You and offer ourselves to You as a living sacrifice. [Take our lives, let them be consecrated Lord to Thee](#). Jesus, thank You for making that possible through the new and living way that You've opened for us into the Holy of Holies. Amen.

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*All Scriptures quoted directly from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.*