

Podcast Transcript

4.15.2022 Good Friday Edition - Seven Last Words

<<*Music: “Building Up a New World,” 1st verse, fade out under opening sentence.*>>
<<*“We are building up a new world, builders must be strong.”*>>

Intro:

- Hello everyone, welcome back to “The Word is Resistance,” the podcast where we’re exploring what our Christian sacred texts have to teach us about living, surviving, even thriving in the context of empire, tyranny, violence, and repression – the context that has continued throughout the course of history into today’s world. What do our sacred stories have to teach us, as white people, about our role in resistance, in showing up, in liberation?
- Our theme music, *We are building up a new world* Dr. Vincent Harding’s song for the freedom movement sung by a multi-racial “movement choir practice in Denver CO in December 2014. It was led by Minister Daryl J. Walker. We are deeply grateful to the Freeney-Harding family for letting us use the song for this podcast.
- I’m Rev. Jean Jeffress. I’m a pastor in the United Church of Christ in Northern CA serving in what’s called the South Bay aka Silicon Valley. I live in the city of Oakland in what is called the East Bay – both the South Bay and the East Bay exist on the unseated and ancestral lands of the Ohlone people. This podcast is a project of SURJ-Faith and is particularly designed for white people, white Christians – the idea is that white people will talk to other white people about race and white supremacy. We believe white people like many of you listening now, and like me, have a responsibility to commit ourselves to *resisting* white supremacy, to speaking up and showing up and disrupting white supremacy where we find it, including in our own Christian tradition. We’d love to hear from you and especially from people of color, and from listeners of all faith traditions who might be checking us out. We’d love to hear how you think we’re doing.

This episode of THE WORD IS RESISTANCE a special Good Friday edition - a Seven Last Words service, in podcast form. We will hear from 7 of our TWIR contributors, each offering short reflection on one of the scriptures of Jesus on the cross. What are the 7 last words, some of you may be asking? The tradition, according to Jesuits.org, dates back to the 17th century; it was started by a Peruvian priest. The “words” are scripture verses taken from the 4 gospels - they are the last words Jesus spoke from the cross. Thus, being called the 7 last words. The Jesuit website says the priest, “developed a service of meditations for Good Friday based on the last words of Jesus, and the devotion spread around the world. Jesus’s last words, as recorded in the Gospels, became part of the church’s Lenten

tradition.” These meditation services have evolved over the many years into 7 Last Word services that include not only the preaching of the words, but also music, prayer, poetry, and movement such as liturgical dance.

I first encountered a 7 Last Words service many many years ago at the Pacific School of Religion chapel. Then, as a Seminarian at what was once called American Baptist Seminary of the West, I was invited to preach the 7 Last Words service at 2nd Avenue Baptist Church in Berkeley CA. I’ve preached at many 7 Last Words services over the years. For the most part, my experience of 7 Last Word services has been in Black churches, but I’ve also been to and participated in 7 Last Word services in a variety of church settings. No matter where you encounter the 7 Last Words, it is a moving Good Friday experience, bringing to the fore the suffering of Jesus at hands of corrupt and unjust powers. It’s a service that definitely squashes the temptation to just skip to Easter.

The verses that comprise the 7 Last Words are:

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

Luke 23:34

“Today you shall be with Me in paradise.”

Luke 23:43

“Woman, behold your Son.”

John 19:26

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?”

Mark 15:34

“I thirst.”

John 19:28

“It is finished.”

John 19:30

“Father, into your hands I commend My spirit.”

Luke 23:46

So, in the words of Levar Burton, if you're ready, let's take a deep breath (breathe in, breathe out), and begin.

- The Word is Resistance - Good Friday Edition - Seven Last Words

<<Music interlude, verse 2 of "Building Up a New World.">>
<<"Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don't get weary, though the way be long.">>

1. **Rev. Kelsey Beebe - "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."
Luke 23:34**

I'm Rev. Kelsey Beebe, a United Church of Christ pastor, host of the Lady Preacher Podcast, a minister, dancer, yoga teacher and practitioner, lover of ice cream and cats, believer in God's embodied love through Christ. My pronouns are she/her and I live in Kenosha, WI, which is originally the home to the Potawatomi tribe along Lake Michigan.

The first of Jesus' last words come from the Gospel of Luke chapter 23 verse 34 and I am replacing the word Father with gender inclusive language. I invite you to soften your shoulders, relax your jaw, breathe in, and breathe out, and hear these words from Jesus as he hung on the cross:

My God, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

My God, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

My God, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

I invite you to pray with me.

My God,
Our God,
Forgive them,
Forgive us,
For they know not what they do.
For we know not what we do.

My God,
Our God,
Forgive them,
Forgive us,

For they know not what they do.
For we know not what we do.

My God,
Our God,
Is this forgiveness?

Does this excuse the brutality?
Can you just forgive - simple as that?
Because they know - or we know - not what they do?

What if they did know?
Or does not knowing excuse them from the harm they have done?

My God,
Our God,
For whom is Jesus asking for forgiveness?
Is it us?
Is it them?

As white Christians, we too have a history of brutality.
Did we not know what we were doing - when we brought people with skin darker than ours
across oceans in ships and chains?
Did we not know what we were doing when we brutalized and dehumanized people who were
different than us?
Did we not know what we were doing when we said that racial slur? Or that hateful thing?

God, forgive them for they know not what they do?

What if they did know who they were hanging on the cross.
What if they did know the violence they were enacting.
What if they knew.
What if we knew?

And even if they didn't - even if we didn't -
That is no excuse.

What is forgiveness, God, if not also a cry for repentance?
What is forgiveness, God, if not also a plea for change?
What is forgiveness, God, without accountability?

God, as Jesus asks for forgiveness on our behalf, may something stir in us.
As Jesus asks for forgiveness for us, may it change us.
May it open us to see what we have done.
To own what we have been complicit to.
To honor the lives that have been lost and torn apart.
May it soften us,
May it soften our hearts,
Open our hearts,
Move our hearts,
And redeem our hearts,
When we hear Jesus say,

“My God, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

My God,
Our God,
Forgive them,
Forgive us,
For they know not what they do.
For we know not what we do.

Amen.

<< *Music interlude, verse 2 of “Building Up a New World.”* >>
<< *“Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don’t get weary, though the way be long.”* >>

2. *Rev. Sarah Howell-Miller “Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”*
Luke 23:43

Hi. I’m Rev. Sarah Howell-Miller and my pronouns are she/her. I’m a Methodist pastor living on the ancestral lands of the Tutelo, Occaneechi, and Keyauwee peoples, in what is currently known as Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

The second word comes from Luke chapter 23, verse 43: “Today you will be with me in paradise.” This word is spoken by Jesus to one of the men being crucified next to him, and to readers of the Gospel, it should not sound like new news—after all, to be with is exactly why Jesus was born, why he lived. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us; theologian Sam Wells points out that while Christians focus a lot on Jesus’ work and teaching, the vast majority of Jesus’ time on

earth was spent simply being with people in Nazareth. Being with us is a defining characteristic of Jesus, of God. In this moment of crucifixion, Jesus reminds us all of that and says to the condemned man beside him that even his crimes, whatever they were, cannot exempt him from that being with, from paradise.

And the man does try to exempt himself. Before we hear Jesus' second word, we hear this man say in verse 41, "We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve." In an extended meditation on Jesus' last words, social psychologist and public theologian Dr. Christena Cleveland remembers teaching a class at a federal prison, how when they began discussing racism and mass incarceration, the men pushed back at first. They insisted that they were imprisoned purely because of their misdeeds or criminal natures, that race had nothing to do with it. As the class went on and they started digging into the reality of internalized oppression, however, some lightbulbs started to go off.

Cleveland's writing on the seven last words is in an essay collection called *Christ Our Black Mother Speaks*. In it, she reimagines and recontextualizes the last words to come from the mouth of a Black mother Christ. "Why have you forsaken me?" becomes "Hands up, don't shoot" as Jesus participates in our most desperate questions and protests. "I thirst" becomes "I can't breathe" as a declaration of Christ our Black Mother's humanity and divinity.

For the second word, Cleveland transposes "Today you will be with me in paradise" into "You're with me now. And I'm handling it." This interpretation takes being with from a potentially passive state to an act of claiming and taking responsibility for another person—even a person who supposedly deserves the tortured death that Jesus and the men crucified beside him are enduring. This matters deeply in the context of state-sponsored violence, and Cleveland connects Jesus' second word to the reality of mass incarceration today. She writes, "As a black mother, She can't look at this 'criminal' without seeing the faces of her black and brown family members...mass incarceration isn't an abstract sociological phenomenon to black women. It's personal." Cleveland imagines our Black mother Christ looking at the man on the cross next to her, writing, "Surely, She sees that he has believed the lie that society has fed him—the lie that he deserves to be up on that cross." When Jesus says, "You're with me now. And I'm handling it."—"Today you will be with me in paradise"—Jesus is countering that lie with radical solidarity and reclamation.

The man believes the lie that he deserves to be up on that cross—and even still, he makes a request of Jesus. "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Remember me—say my name, keep me in mind, forget me not, but also re-member me—put me back together, reclaim me from violent systems of oppression and from my own internalized stigma and shame. And Jesus promises that he will be both with him and in paradise. When we imagine paradise, we might think of some distant heaven with streets paved in gold—or we might imagine the

renewal of all things here, the toppling of the racist system of mass incarceration, the subversion of cultures of violence fueled by our shame, the deconstruction of an oppressive order and the laying of the foundation of a new world where no one believes themselves or anyone else deserves to be on a cross.

Jesus, remember us. Help us remember ourselves. Help us believe the promise that we will be with you in paradise, that you are with us as we work to bring heaven to earth even in this suffering and shameful world. Amen.

<< *Music interlude, verse 2 of “Building Up a New World.”* >>
<< *“Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don’t get weary, though the way be long.”* >>

3. Rev. Anne Dunlap “Woman, behold thy Son.”
John 19:26

I’m Rev. Anne Dunlap, Faith Organizing Coordinator for SURJ, pronouns she/her, I live on unceded Haudenosaunee land currently called Buffalo, NY.

I’m reading from John 19: 25b-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Here is your son.
Here is your mother.

These are the first of the 3 sets of last words of Jesus in John’s gospel.

Here is your son.
Here is your mother.

Jesus, bleeding, suffering,
The empire’s cruciform knee
Shutting off his breath,
Is surrounded by his people.
His mother. His aunt.
His friend Mary.
His dearest Mary Magdalene.
And his “beloved disciple.”

They have not left him alone.

Somehow, in his suffering,
In his last moments,
He has the wherewithal to worry about his people.

Jesus knows what trauma can do to a community

Jesus knows – we know – what trauma can do to a community
It can fracture relationship
Unravel trust
Splinter people into isolation
Strain community to such breaking points
That leaders end up betraying their beloved teacher
For a bag of silver

Here is your son.
Here is your mother.

Jesus was not the first
Nor the last of their community
Who would be interrogated, tortured, even executed
By Rome.
They had already lost John.
They would lose Peter within a generation.
They had lost siblings, parents, children
To the violence of Rome
They knew being seen with Jesus
Meant Rome could, and would, come after them next

Jesus knew this. What trauma could do.

And so his final act, his final teaching,
Is to bind his people up tighter.
He reminds his people
To keep building kinship ties
That can withstand the pressure of Rome
To split them apart.
He is not finished until he does this.

Here is your son.
Here is your mother.

Kinship through blood,
Kinship through friendship,
Kinship through belovedness,
Kinship through shared struggle,
All of it is kinship.
Hold on to each other.
Keep each other safe.
Shelter each other.
Love each other.

These are traumatic, fracturing times.
White supremacy thrives on our division.
So how are we building kinship ties
With our communities
That can withstand the pressure
Of racial capitalism to fracture us apart?

Here is your son.
Here is your mother.
Here is your kin
Your child, your friend,
Your nibbling, your cousin,
Your grandparent, your beloved
Human, creature, plant, earth,
Here is your kin.
Here is your kin.
Here is your kin.

As Assata Shakur said,
“It is our duty to fight for our freedom.
It is our duty to win.
We must love each other and support each other.
We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

<< *Music interlude, verse 2 of “Building Up a New World.”* >>
<< *“Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don’t get weary, though the way be long.”* >>

4. *Nichola Torbett “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”*
 Mark 15:34

Mark 15: 34, the fourth word: “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

In 2016, in the wake of yet another extrajudicial execution of a Black man by police, Naomi Washington-Leapheart, a Black queer womanist pastor and public theologian, posted on Facebook this question: “Do Black lives matter to God?”

It was a gut-punch of a question. It was, it is, a question about god-forsakenness—the god-forsakenness of the lynching tree and the death row cell, the psych ward and the border patrol jeep and the city under military siege. My God, my god, why have you forsaken me?

Do Black lives matter to God?

There’s a class now at Villanova University with that name. It’s taught by Naomi Washington-Leapheart, and at the end of the semester, students put God on trial for the reckless endangerment of Black life.

I always wonder: Who would dare to mount a defense?

This is Nichola Torbett, a white settler living in Oakland California.

And *I want* to mount a defense. I want to assure Jesus that he has not been forsaken. I want to assert that yes, of course, Black lives matter to God! It was not God who nailed Jesus to the cross, not God who crucifies Black Jesus over and over again, publicly, without consequences, not God but human-dreamt empire. *Rome*, not God. “Law and order,” not God. Colonialism, not God. Human greed and callousness, not God.

But to mount a defense of God is to acknowledge that, if Black lives matter so much to God, perhaps they ought to matter more to us, the so-called people of God. Perhaps we are on the hook, as the hands and feet and mouthpieces of God on earth.

But on the hook is exactly where we are, and when you are on the hook, you can’t move much. It is not easy to get someone down from the cross when you are on the hook, meaning all caught up in white supremacist heteropatriarchal capitalism and the systems, structures, paychecks, habits, and assumptions that sustain it. All caught up in that, there is only so much we can do from here.

Of course, we must do what we can, and every episode of this podcast ends with a call to action—important, righteous steps you can take—and yet I wonder, on this day, on the day when we mourn the ongoing, everyday *murder* of the sacred, in the face of this reminder of Jesus’

god-forsakenness, can we pause, and squirm, and acknowledge how limited our moves are? How insufficient it all is?

There is a god-forsakenness to business as usual in this time and place.

I want to wish for you that you have never felt forsaken by God, but I know that so many of you have. I'm talking, for example, about the child who loved and needed a parent who terrified them because of the ways that parent had been ravaged by intergenerational trauma and shame and defensiveness. I'm talking about the way that that trauma lives on in us. I'm talking about the godforsaken elder in a nursing home with no visitors, and about the godforsaken adult child of that elder, who can't figure out how to visit them AND work full time AND raise children with no help because white supremacy and colonialism have destroyed all vestiges of supportive community. I'm talking about anyone who has been betrayed by a friend or comrade because white supremacy culture has overwritten whatever our ancestors might have known about how to relate to one another as equals and allies. Godforsaken.

It is white supremacy and settler colonialism and global capitalism that are godforsaken. The forces that structure our lives are utterly bankrupt and devoid of love.

And this realization ought to disrupt our business-as-usual. It ought to stop us in our tracks. I have felt for a long time that if we could sit in the awareness of the godforsakenness of our day-to-day, if we could really sit with it, together with others who are also aware, a new way forward would eventually emerge.

We know that this moment on the cross was not the end of the story for Jesus, that God did not forsake him. There are forces at work of which we are unaware, and something else is possible, is coming.

But we're not there yet. It's not Sunday. It's Friday.

So for now we listen to the cry. We hear how it echoes in our own lives. We are pierced by it. We sit in the fertile darkness that has fallen over the land. And we wait.

<< *Music interlude, verse 2 of "Building Up a New World."* >>
<< *"Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don't get weary, though the way be long."* >>

**5. Rev. M Barclay "I thirst."
John 19:28**

I am Rev. M Jade Barclay. My pronouns are they/them. And I am living on land first home to the Ioway, Otoe, Omaha, Pawnee, Sioux, Sauk, and Meskwaki peoples, currently called Iowa City, Iowa.

My reflection comes from John 19:28 which reads: “After this, when Jesus knew that all now was finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I thirst.”

I thirst.

It is an expression of a bodily fact: Jesus craves water.

It is a plea for mercy: Jesus’ desire for a drink can only be fulfilled through another.

It is a reference to the scriptures that shaped him and his life. A way to remember, even in this moment, he is not alone. His spiritual kin have named and known this pain.

Maybe Psalm 69:21:

I looked for pity, but there was none;

and for comforters, I found none.

They gave me poison for food,

and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Or perhaps Psalm 22:

I am poured out like water,

and all my bones are out of joint;

my heart is like wax;

it is melted within my breast.

my mouth[a] is dried up like a potsherd,

and my tongue sticks to my jaws;

you lay me in the dust of death.

I thirst. These two little words, pointing towards an emptiness and yet so very full.

I am not one to find much benefit in lingering too long on the trauma of the crucifixion. Like any of the state’s torturous forms of execution, the gruesome effects are intended to put all of us onlookers in a disregulated state. To make us fearful. To pull the rug out from under our spiritual

feet. To ensure the effects of the violence ripple throughout the community. The alternative is not avoidance. We can learn to bear truthful witness to the traumatic horrors of the world without perpetuating their trauma.

The remembering, the re-telling, the returning to such a site of violence - rather than letting its horror consume us for its own sake, we claim the opportunity to make meaning for the sake of life today and to come. We let memory shape our values, our perceiving, our ways of being. We listen for echoes of the past in the world around us now.

Who thirsts today? And what powers and principalities are behind all that keeps them thirsty?

I think about all the species losing access to their natural sources of water through climate crises and commercial destruction. Thirsting. Dying.

I think about the 2 billion people globally who live in water stressed environments - a problem expected to exacerbate in coming years.

I think about commercial agriculture - 70% of where our fresh water resources go.

I think about all the waters being poisoned by slaughter houses, pipelines, and fracking wastewater. All the ways a select and small number of people are profiting while entire communities - especially Black, Indigenous, poor, rural, and wild communities - are stripped of basic resources.

This is the kind of evil we remember on this day. Letting the truth of its existence call us into our own power - to stay with each other, in solidarity, to trouble empire's efforts to scatter us.

In so many ways, the flesh of God - in humans, in animals, in dry earth - cries out, "I thirst."

It is an expression of bodily fact - the flesh of God incarnate among us craves clean water.

It is a plea for mercy - action is needed.

It is a reference to the ancient truths of our scriptures - a witness from those who came before us, showing us the way through struggle and injustice. Reminding us, in the power of God, we have agency, we have choices, we have ways of caring for one another, even under forces of empire.

Capitalism, colonization, consumption, and the climate crises they induce. These are the powers and principalities lurking behind the thirsts before us. These are the roots of all that is privatizing and polluting water sources, poisoning communities, and leaving species without a thing to drink. These are the forces from which we are called to divest - in daily practice and in collective organizing.

As our Indigenous siblings have reminded us, "water is life." To undo the crucifying powers of our time, we are called to healing our own relationship with this sacred source of life, undoing

our internalized practices of exploitation of water sources, and gathering in solidarity with every thirsting body.

<< *Music interlude, verse 2 of “Building Up a New World.”* >>
<< *“Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don’t get weary, though the way be long.”* >>

6. Dr. Sharon Fennema “It is finished.”
John 19:30

My name is Sharon Fennema and I use she and her pronouns. I speak these words to you from the unceded territory of the Ohlone people whose ongoing stewardship of this land and rematriation efforts I support in what is now known as Oakland, California. I offer this reflection with homage to the poem [Imagine the Angels of Bread](#) by Martín Espada

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.”
Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

When Jesus said
it is finished
what if he was saying
we know what it means to be done
there will be a time when this will no longer be the case
this work will be complete

When Jesus said
it is finished
what if he was saying
there will be an end
to the powers and principalities
that steal our very breath

there will be an end
to the violence that the state can meet out
to blood soaked ground
and non-indictments
to the handwashing complicity of the powerful
and the handwringing guilt of the bystander

there will be an end

to the culture of fear
to all the ways we die to ourselves and each other

When Jesus said
it is finished
what if he was saying
if abolition begins
when we can no longer abide people in chains
in cages
on crosses
and we stop believing that punishment is justice
that vengeance will heal us
then
it is finished

if restoration begins
when we stop believing we can own the land
 erase the people
and the bones of the ancestors escape from museums
to dance in the grasses that know their names
and no one will accept that invading armies come as gods
with a divine right
 a sacred mandate
then
it is finished

if freedom begins
when we can no longer stand the taste of supremacy in our mouths
and the myth of superiority turns to dust in our hands
when we unlearn the color of good and evil
and how skin is somehow
is the measure of a man
then
it is finished

if repair begins
when the apology comes with keys
and redlines are knit together into welcome mats
when closed doors fall from their hinges
because disuse has rusted the metal locks from the inside out

and the attic smells like trees and moss
instead of the cold ice of glass ceilings
and equity is the song the children sing
as they jump rope in the driveway
then
it is finished

if community begins
when the illusion of our separateness washes away
like so much haze in the storm
leaving the sky clear and sparkling behind it
and we cannot help but know ourselves connected
sinew to sinew
 heart to heart
 breath to breath
filling our lungs with the knowledge that we belong to each other
and in our we and us, there is home
then
it is finished

if resurrection begins
when we are no longer invested in the power of death
begins with the women who will not let him die alone
who will not let the murder be unseen
who will remain close by his wounds
and say his name
until the sky is torn in two
then
it is finished

<<Music interlude, verse 2 of “Building Up a New World.”>>
<<“Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don’t get weary, though the way be long.”>>

7. *Rev. Jean Jeffress “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”*
Luke 23:46

Hello again. I'm Rev. Jean Jeffress and my passage is from Luke 23:46: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." The text in this section of the gospel of Luke tells us that "It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's

light failed and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last."

I imagine a deep loneliness spreading over Jesus as darkness moved across the sky. In Luke, Jesus on the cross is surrounded by soldiers and strangers while the text tells us that his friends "stood at a distance."

"Into your hands I commend my spirit." And he breathed his last. He was a son, a brother, a teacher, a preacher, an organizer, an activist, a healer, a seeker of souls, a teller of truth, a prophet and a prophecy, a cosmic being and a cosmology - he was, he is the heart of God who lived into the brokenness of humanity.

He breathed his last. He suffered. He bled. He groaned. He cried out....then he surrendered to a God he was not even sure was there.

Into your hands I commend my spirit.

As a longtime sober alcoholic I have an elementary grasp on the concept of surrender, of dying to an old life so that a new life will emerge and flourish. I have a sense of admitting defeat - of turning my will and life over to a power greater than myself. And I love how the gospels inform and influence a life in pursuit of surrender to God. While I don't agree with all of the various theologies and Christologies that crop up on Good Friday, I'm ready to wrestle with them every year - to learn from those with whom I agree and disagree. It's a time for thick Jesusy reflections. A time to tap in a try to feel with Jesus and his friends might have felt. It's a Holy time.

But theology and Christology aside, these meditations and this day means very little to me outside of the context of justice, outside of the naming injustice, the injustice of Good Friday then and the injustice of Good Friday now, outside of naming the injustice of surrendering to power that doesn't love, the power of this world.

To surrender to this world this that is so addicted to war, to this world this is seeking to erase our trans siblings, to this world that is killing so many Black and Brown bodies, to this world that is seeking to control women's bodies, to this world that cages people seeking refuge, to this world that poisons the water, to his world that destroys the forests, to this world that scatters people from their homes and then punishes them for being homeless, to this world that devours the poor... To surrender to this world is...tragic and common and, it is, perhaps the human condition. It is hard to resist the powers that be all the time.

Jesus didn't surrender to this world, he surrendered from this world - commended his spirit to the Holy One. Each of us will have to commend our spirit to the Holy One, to surrender, maybe all the way at the end of our lives, or maybe in the midst of a deep spiritual crisis or revelation. For those of us who, like Jesus, experience the sting of rejection because of who we are or who we

love or who we stand by, our spirits will find refuge in the sweet, beautiful and lonely space in between the two pieces of God's broken heart. God's hands will hold us there.

Into your hands I commend my spirit. Then he breathed his last. Amen

<<Music interlude, verse 2 of "Building Up a New World.">>
<<"Courage, sisters, brothers, people: don't get weary, though the way be long.">>

Our call to action this week is...to wait, to stay and be still and present to whatever feelings and reflections arise from these Last Words of Jesus. To be still and present to his outcries. To be still and present to the witness of his people who stayed till the end. Find some of your people, your kin, and Wait. Stay. Be still. Be present.

Thank you so much for joining us from wherever you are in this world today. Let us know how your action goes – we'd love to hear from you all – by commenting on our Soundcloud, Twitter or Facebook pages. Tune in next for an Easter resistance word from Blyth Barnow and Chanelle Gallant, who will be having an amazing conversation about Mary Magdalene.

You can find out more about SURJ at surj.org, and our podcast lives at Soundcloud; search on "The Word Is Resistance." We're also on Spotify. Give us a "like" or rate us on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you listen to your podcasts. Transcripts are available as well on our website, which include references, resources, and action links. Finally, a huge thanks as always to our sound editor this week, Claire Hitchins! Thank you, Claire!!

(Words of blessing/encouragement)

- Blessings to you in all that you do.
- Love and Liberation to you all.
- Until next time. We at THE WORD IS RESISTANCE podcast wish you a blessed Good Friday and a Holy resurrection.

<<Verse 3 of "Building Up A New World, Verse 1 repeated.>>
<<"Rise, Shine, Give God glory, Children of the Light"
We are building up a new world, builders must be strong.>>

~ ~ ~

RESOURCES

REFERENCES

Assata: An Autobiography. By Assata Shakur.

<https://www.jesuits.org/stories/on-good-friday-reflections-on-jesus-seven-last-words/>

~ ~ ~

PERMISSIONS AND COPYRIGHT:

**"We Are Building Up a New Word," tune public domain, lyrics by Dr. Vincent Harding, used with permission of the Freeney-Harding family. Sung at NoEnemies movement choir practice, Denver, CO, December 7, 2014.*

**Unless otherwise stated, scripture quotations for the Christian podcast are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.*

**Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Used by permission.*