

# The First Word

by W.R. Inge

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*The sermon emphasizes the significance of the Cross in Christianity, the benefits of Christ's love and sacrifice, and the importance of responding with gratitude and devotion.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 103:2, Isaiah 53:5, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 2:24

**Topics:** "The Cross", "Redemption"

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## Description

W.R. Inge preaches a powerful sermon on the significance of the Cross of Christ, calling believers to reflect on the immense sacrifice made for their redemption. He urges listeners to approach the Cross with compassion and devotion, recognizing it as the source of salvation, health, life, and glory. Inge emphasizes the need for gratitude and praises God for His marvelous works, inviting all creation to join in worship. The sermon delves into the deep sorrow and suffering of Jesus on the Cross, highlighting the profound love and mercy displayed through His sacrifice.

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## Transcript

NOW, O my soul, and all ye who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, come, and let us go with inward compassion and fervent devotion to the blessed palm-tree of the Cross, which is laden with the fairest fruit. Let us pass like the bee from flower to flower, for all are full of honey. Let us consider and ponder with the greatest care the sacred words of Christ, which He spoke upon the Cross; for everything that comes From this blessed Tree is wholesome and good.

In the Cross of our Lord and Saviour are centred all our salvation, all our health, all our life, all our glory; and, "if we suffer with Him," saith the Apostle, "we shall also reign with Him." That we may not be found ungrateful for these inestimable benefits, let us call upon heaven and earth, and all that in them is, to join us in praising and blessing and giving thanks to God. Let us invite them to come and look upon this wondrous sight, and say: "Magnify the Lord with me, for He hath done marvellous things.

O praise and bless the Lord with me, for great is His mercy toward us." Come up with me, I pray you, ye angelic spirits, to Mount Calvary, and see your King Solomon on His throne, wearing the diadem wherewith His mother has crowned Him. Let us weep in the presence of the Lord who made us, the Lord our God. O all mankind, and all ye who are members of Christ, behold your Redeemer as He hangs on high; behold and weep. See if any sorrow is like unto His sorrow. Acknowledge the heinousness of your sins, which needed such satisfaction.

Go to every part of His body; you will find only wounds and blood. Cry to Him with lamentations and say, "O Jesus, our redemption, our love, our desire, what mercy has overcome Thee, that Thou shouldest bear our sins, and endure a cruel death, to rescue us from everlasting death?" And Thou, O God, the almighty Father of heaven, look down from Thy sanctuary upon Thine innocent Son Joseph, sold and given over unjustly to the hands of bloody men, to suffer a shameful death. See whether this be Thy Son's coat or not.

Of a truth an evil beast hath devoured Him. The blood of our sins is sprinkled over His garments, and all the coverings of His good name are defiled by it. See how Thy holy Child has been condemned with the wicked, how Thy royal Son has been crowned with thorns. Behold His innocent hands, which have known no sin, dripping with blood; behold His sacred feet, which have never turned aside from the path of justice, pierced through by a cruel nail; behold His defenceless side smitten with a sharp spear; behold His fair face, which the angels desire to look upon, marred and shorn of all its beauty; behold His blessed heart, which no impure thought ever stained, weighed down with inward sorrow.

Behold, O loving Father, Thy sweet Son, stretched out upon the harp of the Cross, and harping blessings on Thee with all His members. Wherefore, O my God, I pray Thee to forgive me, for the sake of Thy Son's Passion, all the sins that I have committed in my members. O merciful Father, look on Thy only-begotten Son, that Thou mayst have compassion on Thy servant. Whenever that red blood of Thy Son speaks in Thy sight, do Thou wash me from every stain of sin. Whenever Thou beholdest the wounds of this Thy Son, open to me the bosom of Thy fatherly compassion.

Behold, O tender Father, how Thy obedient Son does not cry, "Bind my hands and my feet, that I may not rebel against Thee," but how of His own will He extends His hands and feet, and gladly allows them to be pierced with nails. Look down, I pray Thee, not on the brazen serpent hanging on a pole for the salvation of Israel, but on Thine only Son hanging on the Cross for the salvation of all men. It is not Moses who now stretches out his hand to heaven, that the thunder and lightning and the other plagues may cease, but it is Thy beloved Son, who lovingly stretches out His bleeding arms to Thee, that Thy wrath may depart from the human race.

Aaron and Hur are not now holding up the hands of Moses that he may pray more unweariedly for Israel; but hard and cruel nails have fastened the hands of Thy only Son to the Cross, that He may wait with long-suffering for our repentance, and receive us back into His grace, and that He may not turn away in wrath from our prayers. This is that faithful David, who now strings tight the harp-strings of His body, and makes sweet melody before Thee, singing to Thee the sweetest song that has been ever sung to Thee: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This is that High Priest, who by His own blood has entered into the Holy of Holies, to offer Himself as a peace-offering for the sins of the whole world. This is that innocent Lamb, who has washed us in His own precious blood, who, Himself without spot of sin, has taken away the sins of the world. Therefore from the storehouse of His Passion I borrow the price of my debt, and I count out before Thee all its merits, to pay what I owe Thee. For He has done all in my nature, and for my sake.

O merciful Father, if Thou weighest all my sins on one side of the balance, and in the other scale the Passion of Thy Son, the last will outweigh the first. For what sin can be so great, that the innocent blood of Thy Son has not washed it out? What pride, or disobedience, or lust, is so unchecked or so rebellious, that such lowliness, obedience, and poverty cannot abolish it? O merciful Father, accept the deeds of Thy

beloved Son, and forgive the errors of Thy wicked servant. For the innocent blood of our brother Abel crieth to Thee from the Cross, not for vengeance, but for grace and mercy, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

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