

# 'FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT.' LENT 2021

St T's Weekly Devotional || Wednesday 31st March 2021



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COMMEND MY SPIRIT.'

## David Owens

When you take a look at Jesus' life you cannot fail but to be impressed. It's not just practicing Christians who have spotted this. I come across people on a regular basis who are not followers but yet talk well of Jesus. 'He was a good man' they might say, or 'a moral teacher'. Even today people are still interested and surprised by him. But what is easy to miss, however, is that the entirety of his incredible life was underpinned by one important factor. Something so straight forward, yet for many it proves a stumbling block to faith too great to overcome - total surrender to God the Father. It is extraordinary to hear the final words of Jesus at the hour when he is at his most frail and distraught. It is here at the point of death, at the end of his grueling ordeal on the cross, that he prays a prayer of surrender:

'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.'

I sometimes wonder about these words of Jesus, was this the first time he had uttered them, was he saving them up for his last breath? After all they sound like a good ending; the coda that finishes the symphony. No, I don't believe he did. Jesus didn't leave his surrender until the end, his entire life and being was one of abandon to the Father, his ways and his will. As we read the gospels we see regular times that Jesus spent getting away to quiet places, spending time with his Heavenly Father. It doesn't take much to imagine him using these words in his regular rhythms of prayer:

'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.'

Here is the life of discipleship distilled into one short sentence. Jesus once said: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.' Surrender to God is what he was talking about. This is a daily process. A daily choice. And when we chose to live a life of abandon to the Father each day our life will, bit by bit, become more and more shaped by him. And when the 'crosses' of life come our way, which they will, we will then be more ready and willing to pray the same prayer of Jesus, even in the direst of circumstances, even at the point of death:

'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.'

