

## WORDS OF DESTINY: “YOU SHALL BE WITH ME”

Luke 23:43

As he neared the end of his life, Michelangelo, the famous Italian artist, wrote a reflective poem that opened with the following stanza: “The voyage of my life at last has reached, / across a stormy sea, in a fragile boat, / the common port all must pass through, to give / an accounting for every evil and pious deed.” With typical profundity and skill, Michelangelo captured the adventure of living, the delicacy of life, and the inescapability of the grave. The fact is, unless the Lord Jesus returns, death is “the common port” at which each of us will one day dock our “fragile boats.” We are all *en route*, not knowing how far from the eternal marina we currently sit. While that *can* be a depressing thought, for those in Christ it doesn’t have to be. In fact, the reality of our mortality can push aside triviality and frivolity, inspiring honesty, sincerity, and urgency. This is particularly true when, listen to Jesus, we know what comes next.

A Last-Minute Request

23:39–42

Clarity

Humility

A Life-Giving Response

23:43

Immediacy: “*Today ...*”

2:11; 19:5; 22:34  
2 Cor. 5:6–8; Phil. 1:23–24

Certainty: “*Truly ... you shall be*”

1:31; 4:24; 5:10; 18:17  
John 5:24; 10:27–28

Intimacy: “*... with me in Paradise.*”

23:45  
John 14:1–3; Acts 7:59

## WORDS AROUND THE CROSS

February–April 2025

February 23	“Words of Mercy: ‘Father, Forgive Them’”	Luke 23:34
March 9	“Words of Destiny: ‘You Shall Be With Me’”	Luke 23:43
March 16	“Words of Sympathy: ‘Behold, Your Son’”	John 19:26–27
March 23	“Words of Misery: ‘Why Have You Forsaken Me?’”	Matthew 27:46
March 30	“Words of Frailty: ‘I Am Thirsty’”	John 19:28
April 6	“Words of Tranquility: ‘I Commit My Spirit’”	Luke 23:46
April 11*	“Words of Prophecy: ‘Hosanna in the Highest!’”	Mark 11:1–11
April 18†	“Words of Certainty: ‘It is Finished!’”	John 19:30
April 20‡	“Words of Victory: ‘He has Risen!’”	Luke 24:1–12

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\* Palm Sunday

† Good Friday

‡ Easter Sunday