

## **Luke 23:46 ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’**

Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ When he had said this, he breathed his last.

Once more Jesus quotes Scripture, this time Psalm 31:5. He dies with Scripture on his lips, just as he had lived with Scripture. Once more he addresses God the Father – still as Father! This means that Jesus does not surrender to his murderers but to God. The Psalm is a prayer for liberation from enemies and I suggest you read all of it.

Let us do the same: commit our spirit, our life, our happiness, into God’s loving hands. We can even commit each other into God’s hands.

This saying is an example to us, like the word of Jesus from the cross on forgiveness for enemies and the one to his friend and his mother on forming a family.

It’s the evening prayer in monasteries: ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ We can pray it like them. The day is ended, the task is done. God will take care of us until the new dawn. Like Jesus, we know that death does not have the final say – God has. He protects our lives. We are safe in his caring, loving hands.

This certainty applies to our final moments, but just as much to our day-to-day life. We can pray this prayer every day, thanks to Jesus’ completed work on the cross. We can especially pray it when we too know that our life’s work is completed, but it is also a prayer for young persons. A well-known song says: ‘No guilt in life, no fear in death’. It is thanks to Jesus that we can die in quiet confidence. Not because of our achievements. Not because ‘I did it my way’. (That’s one of the worst songs ever.) But because of Jesus’ *finished* work.

### **Psalm 31 (selected verses)**

*For the director of music. A psalm of David.*

In you, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.

Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue;  
be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge.

Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, LORD, my faithful God. ...

You have not given me into the hands of the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place.

Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow,  
my soul and body with grief. ...

My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies,  
from those who pursue me. ...

In my alarm I said, ‘I am cut off from your sight!’

Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help.

Love the LORD, all his faithful people!

The LORD preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full.  
Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.