

John 19:30 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

John 19:30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [hote oun elaben \(3SAAI\) to oxos \[o\] lesous eipen. \(3SAAI\) Tetelestai; \(3SRPI\) kai klinas \(AAPMSN\) ten kephalen paredoken \(3SAAI\) to pneuma.](#)

Amplified: When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **It is finished!** And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

BBE: So when Jesus had taken the wine he said, "**All is done**". And with his head bent he gave up his spirit.

CEV: After Jesus drank the wine, he said, "**Everything is done!**" He bowed his head and died.

ESV: When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "**It is finished,**" and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

KJV: When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

NET: So when he had received the sour wine, Jesus said, "**It is completed,**" and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

NJB: After Jesus had taken the wine he said, '**It is fulfilled**'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

Wuest: Then when Jesus received the sour wine He said, **It has been finished and stands complete.** And having bowed His head, He delivered up the spirit.

Young's Literal: when, therefore, Jesus received the vinegar, he said, '**It hath been finished;**' and having bowed the head, gave up the spirit.

Latin Vulgate: cum ergo accepisset Iesus acetum dixit **consummatum est (It is consummated!)** et inclinato capite tradidit spiritum

THEREFORE WHEN JESUS HAD RECEIVED THE SOUR WINE, HE SAID 'IT IS FINISHED!': [hote oun elaben \(3SAAI\) to oxos \(o\) lesous eipen \(3SAAI\): tetelestai \(3SRPI\):](#)

- Jn 19:28, 4:34 17:4 Ge 3:15 Ps 22:15 Isa 53:10,12 Da 9:24,26 Zec 13:7 Mt 3:15 Ro 3:25 10:4 1Co 5:7 Col 2:14-17 Heb 9:11, 12, 13,14,22-28 Heb 10:1-14 12:2

[Hark! the Voice of Love and Mercy](#)

[Play Hymn](#))

Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary;
See, it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth, and veils the sky:
"It is finished!" "It is finished!"
"It is finished!" Hear the dying Savior cry;
Hear the dying Savior cry.
--Jonathan Evans

Context:

Jn 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing (He was conscious, fully aware to the end, cp refusal of an "anesthetizing" drink Mt 27:34. Jesus was not seeking to escape but accomplish His Father's will!) that all things **had** already **been accomplished** (teleioo - similar to verb teleo in Jn 19:30 -perfect tense = finished at a point in time and still in effect), to fulfill the Scripture, said, "**I am thirsty.**" 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth.

Comment: Every minute detail of OT prophecy is fulfilled including (Ps 22:15, Ps 69:3, Ps 69:21, cp Acts 13:29). McGee says that there are 28 prophecies alone that were fulfilled while Jesus was hanging on the Cross.

Hyssop (note) was used at the first Passover and after dipping in the blood of the slain lamb was applied to the lintel and the two doorposts (Ex 12:22).

Therefore - A term of conclusion which in this context announces the most profound conclusion ever uttered **It is Finished!**"

John records Jesus' declaration of His goal early in His ministry ...

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to **accomplish** (teleioo) His work. (Jn 4:34)

(Compare Jn 5:36 "But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish [teleioo]—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. [See also Jn 10:25, 37, 38, 14:10, 11, Acts 2:22])

In His high priestly prayer just prior to Calvary Jesus declared...

I glorified Thee on the earth, **having accomplished** (teleioo = brought to an end, to the goal) the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (Jn 17:4)

Jesus' declaration "**It is finished**" is the postscript which sums up the progression from John 4:34 to John 17:4. **Andrew Murray** comments...

With that word (It is finished) to the Father He laid down His life. With that word He was strengthened, after the terrible agony on the cross, in the knowledge that all was now fulfilled. And with that word He uttered the truth of the gospel of our redemption, that all that was needed for man's salvation had been accomplished on the cross. This disposition should characterize every follower of Christ. The mind that was in Him must be in us (Php 2:5-note) -- it must be our meat, the strength of our life,

TO DO THE WILL OF GOD IN ALL THINGS, AND TO FINISH HIS WORK.

There may be small things about which we are not conscientious, and so we bring harm to ourselves and to God's work. Or we draw back before some great thing which demands too much sacrifice. In every case we may find strength to perform our duty in Christ's word "**It is finished.**" His finished work secured the victory over every foe. By faith (2Co 5:7) we may appropriate that dying word of Christ on the cross, and find the power for daily living and dying (1Co 15:31) in the fellowship of the crucified Christ (Gal 2:20-note). Child of God, study the inexhaustible treasure contained in this word: "**It is finished.**" Faith in what Christ accomplished on the cross will enable you to manifest in daily life the spirit of the cross. ([The Secret of the Cross](#))

A T Robertson...

Jesus took the vinegar (a stimulant), though he had refused the drugged vinegar. It is finished (tetelestai). Same for as in John 19:28. A cry of victory in the hour of defeat like *nenikēka* in John 16:33. Jesus knew the relation of his death to redemption for us (Mark 10:45; Matthew 20:28; Matthew 26:28).

JESUS' SEVEN LAST SAYINGS

Regarding "**It is finished**", most agree that this was the 6th of Jesus' seven last words on the Cross -

BEFORE THE DARKNESS...

- (1) Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, **'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.'** And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.
- (2) Luke 23:43 And He said to him, **'Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.'**
- (3) John 19:26-27 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He

said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

DURING THE DARKNESS...

(4) Mt 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, **ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?**" that is, "**MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?**"

Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, **ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?**" which is translated, "**MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?**"

AFTER THE DARKNESS...

(5) John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "**I am thirsty.**"

(6) John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.

(7) Luke 23:46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, **INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.**" And having said this, He breathed His last.

Ray Stedman...

Finally, John records the last word from the cross (Ed: As noted above, not all agree these were the very last words, instead choosing Lk 23:46 as the final surrender of His life to His Father.), a word of triumph and achievement.

When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "**It is Finished**"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. {John 19:30 RSV}

This word, "It is finished," is one word in the Greek. According to the other accounts, Jesus "cried with a loud voice, 'It is finished,'" {cf, Mark 15:37, Luke 23:46}. There is relief in that word. The agony is over, the terrible ordeal is finished. But there is pride in this word as well. The race is run, the work is completed, the enemy is defeated. In those mysterious three hours when the sun hid its face and a strange darkness covered the whole land, Jesus cried out those terrible cries, "**My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?**" {Matt 27:46}. It was then he was involved in a fearful grapple with the power of evil. But now it is over. The way to the heart of God is achieved. The writer of Hebrews describes this in these words, "**Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us, through the curtain, that is through his flesh,**" {Heb 10:19-20 RSV}. This is all completed now. When the work was over, when the foundations of redemption were fully laid our Lord cried with a loud voice, "**It is finished.**" ([He Endured the Cross](#))

Warren Wiersbe...

"**It is finished!**" is one word in the Greek text—tetelestai. The word was a common one and was used by merchants to mean "**The price is all paid!**" Shepherds and priests used it when they found a perfect sheep, ready for sacrifice; and Christ died as the perfect lamb of God. Servants, when their work was completed, would use this word when reporting to their masters. Christ, the obedient Servant, had finished the work the Father gave Him to do. Christ willingly and deliberately gave up His life; He laid down His life for His friends. ([Wiersbe, W. W. Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books](#))

John Wesley...

It is finished - My suffering: the purchase of man's redemption.

It is finished (5055) (tetelestai)

This is a single Greek verb **teleo** (see word study). and means that something is brought to an end, is fully accomplished, has achieved its destined goal or is brought to perfection. Indeed, all of these senses apply to Jesus' death on the Cross, but one sense of **tetelestai** presents a powerful picture of Jesus' finished work on the Cross, the grand work of redemption about which He Himself had "prophesied"...

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
(Mark 10:45)

[Glory Ever Be to Jesus — \(Play Hymn\)](#)

Glory ever be to Jesus,
God's own well belovèd Son;
By His grace He hath redeemed us,
"It is finished," all is done.

Refrain

Saved by grace through faith in Jesus,
Saved by His own precious blood,
May we in His love abiding,
Follow on to know the Lord.

--Fanny Crosby

A W Pink wrote that...

The ancient Greeks boasted of being able to say much in little—to 'give a sea of matter in a drop of language'—(this) was regarded as the perfection of oratory. (**Ed:** How appropriate then for the perfection of Christ's work on the Cross!)

William Kelly...

The Creator but man lifted up from the earth could say, in dying for sin to God's glory, "It is finished." The work, the infinite work, was done for the putting away of sin by His sacrifice. Thereon hangs not only the blessing of every soul that is to be justified by faith, but of new heavens and new earth wherein dwells righteousness. "It is finished," **tetelestai**: one word! yet what word ever contained so much? ([John 18 - 21.](#))

John MacArthur writes that **It is Finished...**

was a shout of triumph; the proclamation of a victor. The work of redemption that the Father had given Him was accomplished: sin was atoned for (He 9:12-note; He 10:12-note), and Satan was defeated and rendered powerless (He 2:14-note; cf. 1Pe 1:18, 19-note, 1Pe 1:20-note; 1Jn 3:8). Every requirement of God's righteous law had been satisfied; God's holy wrath against sin had been appeased (Ro 3:25-note; He 2:17-note; 1Jn 2:2; 4:10); every prophecy had been fulfilled. Christ's completion of the work of redemption means that nothing needs to be nor can be added to it. Salvation is not a joint effort of God and man, but is entirely a work of God's grace, appropriated solely by faith (Eph. 2:8, 9-note). His mission accomplished, the time had come for Christ to surrender His life. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – John 12-21)

Andrew Murray writes that...

every day that our confidence grows fuller in **Christ's finished work** must see our heart more entirely yielding itself like Him, a whole burnt offering in the service of God and His love ([The Secret of the Cross](#))

Tetelestai was used in several ways in Jesus' day. A servant would use **tetelestai** when reporting to his or her master, "I have completed the work assigned to me" (cp Jesus words on His "work" in Jn 4:34,17:4) Jesus had brought to completion all the Father had desired for Him to accomplish as the God Man. When a priest examined an animal sacrifice and found it faultless, it was described as **tetelestai**. Jesus, of course, is the perfect Lamb of God, without spot or blemish (1Pe 1:18, 19note). When an artist completed a picture, or a writer a manuscript, they might say, "**It is finished!**" The death of Jesus on the cross "completes the picture" that God had been painting of "redemption" which God had painted from eternity past (cp 2Ti 1:9NIV-note, Ep 3:11-note, Titus 1:2-note, 1Peter 1:20-note).

[Hallelujah! What a Savior — \(Play Hymn\)](#)

Lifted up was He to die,
"It is finished," was His cry;
Now in heaven exalted high:
Hallelujah, what a Savior!
--Bliss

Perhaps the meaning that Jesus had foremost in His mind when He uttered the word **tetelestai** was related to its secular use in the context of payment of debts. When someone had a debt in ancient times and it was paid off, they would write "**tetelestai**" on the

certificate signifying "Paid in Full". When He gave Himself on the cross, Jesus fully met the righteous demands of a holy law; He paid our debt in full. None of the Old Testament sacrifices could take away sins. Their blood only covered sin. But the Lamb of God shed His blood, (for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, Heb 9:15-note) and that blood (and only that blood) can take away the sins of the world (Jn 1:29; He 9:24-note, He 9:25, 26-note, He 9:27, 28-note).

[**Go to Dark Gethsemane — \(Play Hymn\)**](#)

Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at His feet,
Mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear Him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.
--James Montgomery

FYI - While the following illustration of Tetelestai is "attractive" and sounds Biblically reasonable, I have been unable to document that this description was the actual practice in Roman prisons. Therefore one might want to either ignore this illustration or use it as an illustration but with a qualifying explanation. The esteemed pastor Adrian Rogers used this illustration in at least five messages, but unfortunately he did not reference a specific resource.

There is another sense in which **tetelestai** was used in the ancient world. When a Roman citizen was convicted of a crime, the law of that day slammed him in prison. They prepared a "Certificate of Debt" that listed all the crimes he was convicted of on it, and nailed it to his cell door for all to see. It remained nailed there so all would be assured that he served his full sentence, and "paid in full" the penalty ("debt owed") for his crimes. When Jesus shouted "**Tetelestai**" from the cross, it was a very familiar phrase to those within the sound of His voice. It was the same word that would be stamped across the Certificate of Debt after a criminal completed his prison term. It would literally mean "Paid in Full" for all your crimes. Then the criminal was given the certificate. He would be able to produce it to show that his crimes were "paid in full." He could never become a victim of "double jeopardy" (paying for the same crime twice - cp the result in Ro 8:1-note = No Condemnation and Ro 8:39-note = No Separation). This is a beautiful picture of what Christ did on the Cross, Paul recording (quoting the original version of the NLT) that...

(God the Father) canceled the record (Greek verb **exaleipho** = wiped it away, completely obliterating the evidence) that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross. (Col 2:14-note)

Finally, there is one other truth about **tetelestai** that is notable - it is in the **perfect tense**, a tense which identifies a past completed action (or event) with continuing effects or results. In context the perfect tense clearly speaks of the past, historical reality of the Crucifixion of Christ, and the fact that His death on the Cross has permanent effects which ultimately will last throughout eternity! All that truth with one Greek tense! Beloved our Kinsman-Redeemer's ransom payment is sufficient for this life and the life to come! Let us live in the power of the Cross (1Co 1:18 where "being saved" is in the **present tense** indicating that believers are continually being saved every day of their life (also implying that in one sense we need His saving power to live the "victorious Christian life" day by day, even moment by moment! cp Mt 26:41, Gal 5:16-note, Gal 5:17-note). We have been saved [justification]. We are being saved [sanctification], We will be saved [glorification] - see discussion of **Three Tenses of Salvation**)

Frank Boreham writes that tetelestai

was a farmer's word. When, into his herd, there was born an animal so beautiful and shapely that it seemed absolutely destitute of faults and defects, the farmer gazed upon the creature with proud, delighted eyes. 'Tetelestai!' he said, 'tetelestai!'

Alexander Maclaren...

John's last contribution to our knowledge of our Lord's words on the Cross is that triumphant 'It is finished,' wherein there spoke, not only the common dying consciousness of life being ended, but the certitude, which He alone of all who have died, or will die, had the right to feel and utter, that every task was completed, that all God's will was accomplished, all Messiah's work done, all prophecy fulfilled (Acts 13:29), redemption secured, God and man reconciled. He looked back over all His life and saw no failure, no falling below the demands of the occasion, nothing that could have been bettered, nothing that should not have been there. He looked upwards, and even at that moment He heard in His soul the voice of the Father saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!'

Christ's work is finished. It needs no supplement. It can never be repeated or imitated while the world lasts, and will not lose its power through the ages. Let us trust to it as complete for all our needs, and not seek to strengthen 'the sure foundation' which it has laid by any shifting, uncertain additions of our own. But we may

remember, too, that while Christ's work is, in one aspect, finished, when He bowed His head, and by His own will 'gave up the ghost,' in another aspect His work is not finished, nor will be, until the whole benefits of His incarnation and death are diffused through, and appropriated by, the world. He is working to-day, and long ages have yet to pass, in all probability, before the voice of Him that sitteth on the throne shall say 'It is done!' (Read the full sermon [An Eyewitness's Account of the Crucifixion - John 19:17-30](#))

J C Ryle on "It is Finished"...

It is surely not too much to say, that of all the seven famous sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more remarkable than this, which John alone has recorded.

The precise meaning of this wondrous expression, "It is finished," is a point which the Holy Spirit has not thought good to reveal to us. There is a depth about it, we must all instinctively feel, which man has probably no line to fathom. Yet there is perhaps no irreverence in conjecturing the thoughts that were in our Lord's mind, when the word was spoken. The finishing of all the known and unknown sufferings which He came to endure, as our Substitute--the finishing of the ceremonial law, which He came to wind up and fulfill, as the true Sacrifice for sin--the finishing of the many prophecies, which He came to accomplish--the finishing of the great work of man's redemption, which was now close at hand--all this, we need not doubt, our Lord had in view when He said, "It is finished." There may have been more behind, for anything we know. But in handling the language of such a Being as our Savior, on such an occasion, and at so mysterious a crisis of His history, it is well to be cautious. "The place whereon we stand is holy ground."

One comfortable thought, at all events, stands out most clearly on the face of this famous expression. We rest our souls on a "finished work," if we rest them on the work of Jesus Christ the Lord. We need not fear that either sin, or Satan, or law shall condemn us at the last day. We may lean back on the thought, that we have a Savior who has done all, paid all, accomplished all, performed all that is necessary for our salvation. We may take up the challenge of the Apostle, "Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died--yes, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also makes intercession for us." (Ro 8:34-note When we look at our own works, we may well be ashamed of their imperfections. But when we look at the finished work of Christ, we may feel peace. We "are complete in Him," if we believe. (Col 2:10-note)

F F Bruce comments on the significance of "It is Finished"...

All scripture that was due to be accomplished in His passion had now been accomplished; the entire purpose for which the Father had sent the Son into the world was now assured of fulfillment, and since that purpose included the salvation of the world and the procuring of eternal life for all believers (John 13:14, 15, 16, 17), salvation and eternal life were henceforth freely available.

Adam Clarke...

As if he had said: "I have executed the great designs of the Almighty—I have satisfied the demands of his justice—I have accomplished all that was written in the prophets, and suffered the utmost malice of my enemies; and now the way to the holy of holies is made manifest through my blood." An awful, yet a glorious finish. Through this tragic death God is reconciled to man (**Ed:** God is the "Initiator"!), and the kingdom of heaven opened to every believing soul. "Shout heaven and earth, this SUM of good to MAN!"

Wycliffe Bible Commentary...

Emphasis here is not on the ending of the sufferings but on the completion of the mission of redemption.

A C Gaebelein...

"It is Finished." In the Greek it is but one word, "tetelestai." Never before and never after was ever spoken one word which contains and means so much. It is the shout of the mighty Victor. And who can measure the depths of this one word! ([Commentary on JOHN - by A C Gaebelein](#))

Leon Morris comments

This is not the moan of the defeated, nor the sigh of patient resignation. It is the triumphant recognition that He has now fully accomplished the work He came to do.

S Lewis Johnson has succinctly said that Christ's resurrection...

"... is God's 'Amen' to Christ's **'It is Finished.'** Looking at the cross we see justification completed; looking at the open tomb we see it accepted."

Scofield...

"**It is finished**" was the shout of victory. See Jn 4:34; 17:4; Ro 10:4; Gal 3:13; Heb 10:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

William Harris... commenting on the completeness of the Cross observes

It really has been completed, hasn't it? Everything for which John has been preparing us in this Gospel has now been accomplished by our Lord. John 1 declares that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, who called the world into being (Jn 1:1, 2, 3). He is the One sent to earth by the Father, in order to reveal Him to men (Jn 6:46, 14:9). He is the One who "came unto His own place and to His own people," and yet those who were "His own"—the Jews—rejected Him (Jn 1:11). He was "lifted up" so that He could draw all men unto Himself (Jn 3:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18). He came to do His Father's will (Jn 4:34) and has now completed it. He came to declare His Father's Word, and He has proclaimed it (Jn 8:26, 27, 28, 38; 12:49, 50; Jn 14:10). He came to glorify the Father, and on the Cross, He has done that (Jn 12:23, 28, 41; Jn 13:32; Jn 17:1, Jn 17:4). It truly is finished; His task has been completed. ([Exegetical Commentary on John 19](#))

Explore the Bible...

This language confirms what Jesus had declared earlier concerning the nature of His death—"The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11). ([Explore the Bible](#))

S Lewis Johnson...

It's possible to understand the subject as the prophecies (Acts 13:29). The finally reached their culmination in the death of our Lord. There is a sense, of course, in which that is involved. Others have suggested that it is the passion, that is his sufferings of the atoning death. And of course, that too is included. Many commentators feel, I rather tend to think that more truth lies with them, that the absence of a definite subject forces the reader to call up all of the aspects of our Lord's work that is now brought to an end. And there are many suggestions that perhaps that is what our Lord has in mind. In other words, the whole of the atoning work, in so far as it has to do with prophecy and so far as it has to do with his sufferings, it has been finished, *consumatum est* the Latin text reads. **It is consummated...**

That (**Ed:** Because "It is finished") is why it is so important in our concept of eternal salvation to be sure that we understand the nature of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has accomplished the saving work by which he has made it possible for men to receive the forgiveness of sins. And the only requirement is to receive the benefits as a free gift. That's faith. That's man's responsibility, and it is a responsibility to believe. But when we believe we discover in the word of God that the capacity to respond is itself also a gift of God. And our salvation is of the Lord.

For example, when we believe that we are saved by grace but we have to keep working in order to stay saved we are in effect saying Jesus did not do it all. He did sufficient to get us started but we must also add our works thereafter in order to stay saved. We are actually taking away from the glory of our Lord to teach that a man may lose his salvation after he has been saved. That is why we are so adamant about the fact that the Scriptures teach that salvation is of the Lord. He says, "It is finished," or literally, "It has been finished." No repetition of it can be allowed at all...

J. Hudson Taylor (Biography) had a very interesting early experience. He was from a Christian home. His mother prayed for him constantly. She prayed that he might come to salvation. For a long time he resisted and finally one day someone put in his hand a little tract and in that tract was the expression, "**It is finished.**" It troubled him a great deal. He didn't understand exactly what that meant. In fact, he went up into a hay loft and there with the tract he meditated upon it. "**It is finished.**" and finally out of that experience came his conviction of his own salvation. And he puts it this way,

Then there dawned upon me the joyous conviction that since the whole work was finished and the whole debt was paid upon the cross there was nothing for me to do but to fall upon my knees, accept the Savior and praise him forevermore.

That's what it is to be saved, to realize that Christ has paid it all.

Upon a life I did not live, upon a death I did not die, another's life, another's death, I stake my whole eternity.

And Hudson Taylor rested himself for time and eternity upon the merits of the blood of Christ and God used him to the salvation of many thousands of people. ([The Messiah Dying](#))

Alan Carr on It is Finished...

I believe that these are the greatest words Jesus Christ ever spoke and I would like to tell you why this morning.

For years, liberals and unbelievers have declared that this cry of Jesus from the cross is a cry of defeat. They say that it is the word of a man who has lost everything. However, they are a million miles from the truth of the matter. This English phrase is from a word that is very expressive and filled with meaning. In fact, it is a word that was used in many areas of society. Some of which were:

1. **A Servant's Word** - Used when a task had been completed.
2. **A Priest's Word** - Used when a sacrificial animal was found to be worthy.
3. **A Farmer's Word** - Used when a perfect specimen had been born into the flock.
4. **An Artist's Word** - Used when the final touches had been applied to a masterpiece.
5. **A Merchant's Word** - Used when a deal had been struck and all the haggling had ended. Its usage meant that both parties were satisfied.

Therefore, it is plain to see that this word is not the cry of a defeated man, but it is instead, the shout of a victor! This is the exultant cry of one who has just won a great victory. We need to understand that when Jesus Christ said these three little words, He was telling the world that something great had been accomplished. In fact, there were three great matters that were forever settled the day Jesus died on the Cross. ([Click to Read the rest of Pastor Carr's discussion of why these are the greatest words ever spoken](#))

John Butler sums up "It is finished"...

- **It speaks of suffering**... Christ's sufferings on earth for sin were finished. "What tongue or pen can describe the sufferings of the Savior?" (Pink).
- **It speaks of salvation**... on the cross. Salvation requires that there be a blood sacrifice for the sinners. The Old Testament had many sacrifices, but they never completed the job... (He 10:11, 12-note, He 11:14-note). Calvary was the sacrifice that finished all sacrifices for sin which made salvation possible.
- **It speaks of success**. ... of the success over Satan. Satan had opposed Christ going to the cross and dying in the way heaven had planned. Satan had tried numerous times to stop Calvary's plan. But he failed and Christ conquered victoriously as "It is finished" signified.
- **It speaks of service**. ... Christ had completed His service, He completed the work assigned to Him (**Ed:** cp Jn 4:34, Jn 5:36, Jn 17:4). It is not how many projects we start that count but how many we finish. Many say "I quit" instead of "It is finished."

Spurgeon comments...

Incarnate love has fulfilled its self-imposed task. Jesus, as the substitute for sinners, was condemned to die, and he died that he might finish the work of our redemption.

"It is Finished.'
Hear the dying Saviour cry."

Your sins have sustained their death-blow, the robe of your righteousness has received its last thread. It is done, complete, perfect. It needs no addition; it can never suffer any diminution.

Oh, Christian, do lay hold of this precious thought. I may not be able to state it except in weak terms, but let not my weakness prevent your apprehending its glory and its preciousness. This thought is enough to make a man leap, though his legs were chained with irons, and to make him sing, though his mouth were gagged. We are perfectly accepted in Christ, and our justification is not partial. It does not go to a limited extent, but goes the whole way. Our unrighteousness is covered. From condemnation we are entirely and irrevocably free.

Consummatum est.

"The work is done, redemption is accomplished; the salvation of my people is for ever secured."

He had endured the utmost of appointed grief and had made full vindication to divine justice. Then, and not until then, He gave up the ghost.

Christ longed for the cross because He looked for it as the goal of all His exertions. He could never say, "It is finished" (John 19:30), on His throne, but on His cross He did cry it. He preferred the sufferings of Calvary to the honors of the multitude who crowded round about Him, for bless and heal them as He might, still His work was undone. "I long for My sufferings, because they will be the completion of My great work of grace." It is the end that brings the honor; it is the victory that crowns the warrior rather than the battle. And so Christ longed for this, His death, that He might see the completion of His labor.

Does the divine law require, in order for us to be accepted, perfect submission to the will of the Lord? He has rendered it. Does it ask for complete obedience to its precepts? He has presented the same. Does the fulfilled will of the Lord call for abject suffering, a sweat of blood, pangs unknown, and death itself? Christ has presented it all, whatever that "all" may be. When God created, His Word carried forth all His will. Likewise, when God redeemed, His blessed and incarnate Word accomplished all His will.

Our Salvation Is Complete - In truth, we have plenty of reason for resting. We can sit at Jesus' feet because our salvation is complete. He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30), and He knew that He had wrought it all. The ransom price has been paid for your soul. Not one drop has been withheld of the blood that is your purchase. The robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10) is woven from top to bottom; there is not one thread for you to add. It is written, "Ye are complete in him" (Col. 2:10-note). However frail we are, we are still "perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28-note), and in spite of all our sin we are still "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6-note).

He bore on the tree the sentence for me,
And now both the Surety and sinner are free.
In the heavenly Lamb thrice happy I am;
And my heart doth rejoice at the sound of His name.

A W Pink...

It is Finished—a single word in the original. It was the briefest and yet the fullest of His seven cross-utterances. Eternity will be needed to make manifest all that it contains. All things had been done which the law of God required; all things established which prophecy predicted; all things brought to pass which the types foreshadowed; all things accomplished which the Father had given Him to do; all things performed which were needed for our redemption. Nothing was left wanting. The costly ransom was given, the great conflict had been endured, sin's wages had been paid, Divine justice satisfied. True, there was the committal of His spirit into the hands of the Father, which immediately followed His word here; there was His resurrection, ascension, and session on high, but these are the fruit and reward of that work which He completed. Nothing more remained for Him to do; nothing more awaited its fulfillment; His work on earth was consummated.

It is Finished—This was not the despairing cry of a helpless martyr. It was not an expression of satisfaction that the end of His sufferings was now reached.

It was not the last gasp of a worn-out life.

No, it was the declaration on the part of the Divine Redeemer that all for which He came from heaven to earth to do, was now done; that all which was needful to reveal the glorious character of God had now been accomplished; that everything necessary for the putting away of the sins of His people, providing for them a perfect standing before God, securing for them an eternal inheritance and fitting them for it, had all been done.

It is Finished—The root Greek word here, "teleo," is variously translated in the New Testament. A reference to some of its alternative renditions in other passages will enable us the better to discern the fullness and finality of the term here used by the Savior. In Mt 11:1 "teleo" is translated as follows,

When Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples.

In Mt 17:24 it is rendered,

They that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute.

In Lk 2:39 it is translated,

And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord.

In Lk 18:31 it is rendered,

All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

Putting these together we learn the scope of Christ's sixth cross-utterance.

It is Finished He cried—it is "made an end of," it is "paid," it is "performed," it is "accomplished."

What was "made an end of"?—our sins, our guilt!

What was "paid"?—the price of our redemption!

What was "performed"?—the utmost requirements of God's law.

What was "accomplished"?—the work which the Father had given Him to do!

What was "finished"?—the making of atonement! ([John 19:25-42 Christ Laying Down His Life](#))

Albert Barnes...

It is finished. The sufferings and agonies in redeeming man are over. The work long contemplated, long promised, long expected by prophets and saints, is done. The toils in the ministry, the persecutions and mockeries, and the pangs of the garden and the cross, are ended, and man is redeemed. What a wonderful declaration was this! How full of consolation to man! And how should this dying declaration of the Saviour reach every heart and affect every soul! Notes on the New Testament Explanatory and Practical.

Rob Salvato...

What does Jesus mean when He says, 'It is finished'?"

- 1) It means that the work of redemption was done.
- 2) All things had been done which the law of God required;
- 3) All things fulfilled which prophecy predicted;
- 4) All things brought to pass which the types foretold;
- 5) All things accomplished which the Father had given Jesus to do;
- 6) All things performed that were necessary for redemption.

Everything was done, nothing was left. COMPLETE. The ransom was paid, the conflict was endured, the wages of sin were paid, and divine justice was satisfied. There was nothing more to do, so He died to rise again. Like when a Painter signs his name. Masterpiece that cannot be added to! Mona Lisa. Not going to get my markers out – Ruin it. Marvel at – Enjoy – don't ruin the work of Christ ([Sermon Notes](#))

Paul Apple on John 19:30...

Final Departure Under God's Sovereign Control

1. Final Act of His Humanity - "When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine,"

2. Final Completion of His Earthly Mission of Atonement - "He said, 'It is finished!'"

3. Final Act of Sacrificial Spiritual Worship - "And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit." ([John](#))

Grover Gunn asks "Was His atoning work sufficient and effective? Was He able to pay for every sin He bore? He had cried out upon the cross, "It is finished! It is paid in full!" Was it indeed? Yes, indeed it was! For if there had been one sin which Jesus had taken upon Himself and for which He had not fully paid, for which He had not made an adequate atonement, that sin would have held Him in the grave. But He is risen! He suffered a human penalty for human sin through His human nature, and His divine nature, distinct but mysteriously united to His humanity in the oneness of His person, ... His divine nature gave those human sufferings an infinite worth which cannot be exhausted. Atonement was paid in full, and He is risen! ([Ref](#))

F B Meyer's devotional on John 19:30...

Comparing the Gospels, we discover that these words were said **"with a loud voice."** (Mt Lk 23:46) It was the shout of a conqueror, who has fought through a long and terrible day, but greets victory as evening closes in.

Finished, the long line of sacrificial rite. — From the gates of Eden the blood of sacrifice had begun to flow, augmented by the confluent streams of the years. From that moment, however, not another drop need be shed. The types were finished now that the Antitype had been realized.

Finished, his fulfilment of prophecy. — How contradictory some had seemed! Ancient of Days, yet a babe; the Mighty God, yet marred of visage, and led to the slaughter; Son of Man, yet scion of David's stock; ruling in

the midst of enemies, yet a bruised and broken Sufferer. But all of them, even to the last pathetic intimation of his dying thirst, fulfilled.

Finished, his mortal life. — Never again to be weary, hungered, tempted, buffeted, or to bear the contradiction of sinners. Never again to sweat the bloody sweat, or bear the accumulated faults of men. Nevermore to die.

Finished, a world's redemption. — He had wrought out and brought in a perfect salvation. The world, so far as God could make it so, was already reconciled. Sin was put away.

Finished, the perfect obedience. — He alone of all born of woman was able to say that there was nothing which the Father had asked that He had not given; nothing that the Father had imposed that He had not gladly borne. He had finished the work given Him to do.

Leonard Ravenhill said of John 19:30

The Greatest Words Ever Uttered - By the Greatest Man That Ever Lived... In these three words I see the consummation of all the Old Testament truth and the germination of all New Testament truth.

The evangelist **Alexander Wooten** was approached by a young man who asked,

What must I do to be saved?

Wooten replied

It's too late!

The young man became alarmed asking.

Do you mean that it's too late for me to be saved? Is there nothing I can do?

Wooten replied

Too late! It's already been done! The only thing you can do is believe.

It Is Finished! — (Play Hymn)

Nothing, either great or small—

Nothing, sinner, no;

Jesus died and paid it all,

Long, long ago.

Refrain

"It is finished!" yes, indeed,

Finished, ev'ry jot;

Sinner, this is all you need,

Tell me, is it not?

--Ira Sankey

Rich Cathers offers the following lesson related to Jesus' cry "**It is Finished**"...

Stop punishing yourself. Sometimes we struggle with guilt, having a hard time accepting that our debt must be already paid. We punish ourselves because we think we must deserve some kind of punishment. It's especially tough when it's concerning a sin that we repeat over and over and over again. When Jesus died on the cross, how many of your sins were still in the future? Did Jesus pay for all of your sins, or just part of them? Did He just pay for sins #1-136? But not for #137? You may say to me, "But I've sinned enough for two people!" Do you somehow think that Jesus can't pay for the both of you? He died an infinite death, paying for an infinite amount of sin! That's enough to even include you!

When we continue to punish ourselves over our sins, or we feel like we just can't accept Jesus' forgiveness because we don't deserve it, we are kind of kicking Him in the face. It's like we are saying to Him, "No, You did not pay enough to cover this one particular sin!" He paid at one time, enough for all of us. (Heb 10:12KJV)

Illustration- Martin Luther was one who struggled with his sins. Before his break with the Catholic church he went to confession every day and was so guilt-ridden by his sins he would almost have gone every hour. On

most nights Luther slept well, but he even felt guilty about that, thinking, "Here am I, sinful as I am, having a good night's sleep." So he would confess that. One day the older priest to whom Luther went for confession said to him, "Martin, either find a new sin and commit it, or quit coming to see me!" ([John 19:28-30 Notes](#))

**Perhaps we need to quit hanging on to our guilt,
and let Jesus cleanse us.**

PAID IN FULL (Colossians 2:14) - The newspaper article reported that a Utah businessman had filed for bankruptcy and declared his debts to be \$613 billion. It seemed ridiculous! What's more, the man claimed assets of only \$7,310. In other words, if all debts were honored, his creditors would receive about one-millionth of a cent on the dollar. There was no way he could begin to pay his debts.

Sometimes I feel that's how I stand with God. Why should I even try to pay the debt of love that I owe Him? The situation seems hopeless. When I consider His demand of perfect righteousness, I feel totally bankrupt and helpless.

But then I remember that my debt has been taken care of. Jesus the Son of God shed His precious blood to pay the infinite price for my countless sins. Now I'm free to pursue a relationship with God that is motivated by gratitude and energized by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is what Colossians 2 is all about (cp Jn 19:30). The law of God has declared us spiritually bankrupt. But our great debt has been completely removed. It has been paid in full by Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. We are free. The only thing we owe now is an eternal debt of thanks and praise to our wonderful Lord. — Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do! --Watts

Some think that they have everything
When riches come their way,
But that they're poor will be revealed
On God's accounting day.
-- Henry G. Bosch

**Our salvation is free
because Christ paid an enormous price.**

Take a Moment to worship Jesus
as you ponder the preciousness of blood
Play Red Mountain Music's beautiful rendition of

[There is a Fountain Filled with Blood — Red Mt Music \(their works are superbly God Glorifying\)](#)

DONE! So many of our hopes and dreams remain unfulfilled. Composer Franz Schubert departed this world leaving behind his "Unfinished Symphony." Similarly, prolific author Charles Dickens was unable to fully develop the plot of his novel The Mystery of Edwin Drood.

We too undoubtedly have aspirations that we will be unable to fulfill. But what a blessing to know that the work of our redemption was totally and perfectly accomplished by Jesus on the cross.

The last words of Jesus, "It is finished," are actually a single word in the original language (John 19:30). But that word holds oceans of meaning. What Jesus gasped was "Completed!" or "Ended!" That cry from the cross announced that not only had His suffering come to an end but also His redemptive work was eternally accomplished. All that He had come to achieve in His human life was finished. Done!

We can do nothing to add to His sacrifice. Christ's self-giving death was all-sufficient. We stretch out the empty hand of faith, and God in grace puts into it the gift of eternal life.

Have you stretched out your hand of faith to receive this gift? — Vernon C. Grounds [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries,](#)

"It is finished," Jesus cried,
Then on Calvary's cross He died;
Christ the Lord atonement made,
And sin's debt was fully paid.

—Hess

**Christ's sacrifice was what God desired
and what our sin required.**

HE IS ENOUGH - Sometimes we are overwhelmed by life. The crushing waves of disappointment, endless debt, debilitating illness, or trouble with people can cause hopelessness, depression, or despair. It happened to Jesus' disciples. And it has happened to me.

Three statements by the Lord beginning with the words "It is ..." offer us comfort, reassurance, and hope that Jesus is enough. The first is in Matthew 4 and is repeated three times: "It is written" (vv.4,7,10). In responding to the three temptations of Satan, Jesus gave us proof enough that the Word of God is true and overcomes the most powerful forms of temptation and pressure.

The second statement, "It is I" (Matt. 14:27), was spoken when Jesus told His terrified disciples that He Himself was presence enough to stop the howling storm and calm the raging seas.

Jesus spoke the third "It is" from the cross: **"It is finished!"** (John 19:30). He assured us that His death was provision enough to pay the debt for our sins and set us free.

Whatever our circumstances, Jesus is present with His love, compassion, and grace. He is proof, presence, and provision enough to carry us safely through. — David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When trials overwhelm our souls
And tempt us to despair,
We need to reach out to the Lord
And trust His tender care. —Sper

**God's love does not keep us from trials;
it helps us get through them.**

FINISHED! - Outside Madrid stands an ancient monastery where the kings of Spain have been buried. The architect designed an elongated arch so flat that the reigning monarch insisted it could not hold the structure above it.

Against the architect's protest, the king ordered that a column be placed underneath the arch as a safety precaution. After the king died, the architect revealed that he had deliberately made the column a quarter of an inch too short--and the arch had never sagged!

Nothing need be, or can be, added to the finished work of Christ on Calvary to sustain the weight of the world's salvation. Our Savior's cry from the cross, "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30), is a translation of a single Greek word which more literally could be rendered as "Ended!" "Completed!" or "Accomplished!"

That one word tells of the greatest miracle our Lord performed, the work of redeeming a lost world. Because our redemption was perfectly finished, it is impossible for us to add even one submicroscopic work of our own to what was already done on the cross.

With utter assurance, then, we can rest our eternal hope on that one all-important word, "Finished!" — Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Once for all, O sinner, receive it!
Once for all, O brother, believe it!
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall.
Christ has redeemed us once for all. --Bliss

**We are saved not by what we do
but by what Christ has done.**

ADDING TO A MASTERPIECE - Could you improve on a masterpiece? Imagine that you are walking through the Louvre museum in Paris. As you approach the Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci, would you think about taking a palette and brushes and touching up the painting? Maybe put some more color in her cheeks? Perhaps change her nose a little?

"That's ridiculous!" you say. For nearly 500 years the Mona Lisa has been considered one of the greatest artistic works of all time. How absurd to think we could add anything to this masterpiece!

Yet that's what many people try to do with Christ's masterpiece—salvation. They think they must improve on it with some work of their own. But that masterpiece was completed when Jesus said, "It is finished," while hanging on the cross (John 19:30). Then He proved that His work of redemption was done when He rose from the dead.

When you hear that Jesus paid the price for your sin and that you don't have to do anything to merit God's grace, do you think it's too good to be true? Do you think there's something you must do to earn it?

You can't add anything! Receive God's gift of salvation. Jesus paid it all. The masterpiece is complete. — Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ's work for my salvation is complete!
No work of mine can add to what He's done;
I bow to worship at the Master's feet,
And honor God the Father's only Son. —Hess

Salvation is a gift to be received—not a goal to be achieved.

Spurgeon commenting on Jn 19:30 said...

There is nothing for God to do. "It is finished." There is nothing for you to do. "It is finished." Christ need not bleed. "It is finished." You need not weep. "It is finished." God the Holy Spirit need not delay because of your unworthiness, nor need you delay because of your helplessness. "It is finished." Every stumbling block is rolled out of the road; every gate is opened. The bars of brass are broken, the gates of iron are burst asunder. "It is finished." Come and welcome; come and welcome!

The general religion of mankind is "Do," but the religion of a true Christian is "Done." "It is finished," is the believer's conquering word.

What "it" was it that was finished? I will not attempt to expound it. It is the biggest "it" that ever was. Turn it over and you will see that it will grow, and grow, and grow, and grow, till it fills the whole earth: "It is finished."

Octavius Winslow devotional...

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit." John 19:30

A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. John 19:29, 30

Believer in Jesus! remember, all your confidence, all your hope, all your comfort flows from the finished work of your Savior. See that you unwittingly add nothing to the perfection of this work. You may be betrayed into this sin and this folly by looking within yourself, rather than to the person of Jesus; by attaching an importance too great to repentance and faith, and your own doings and strivings, rather than ceasing from your own works altogether, and resting for your peace, and joy, and hope; simply, entirely, and exclusively in the work of Jesus. Remember, that whatever we unintentionally add to the finished work of Christ mars the perfection and obscures the beauty of that work. "If you lift up your tool upon it, you have polluted it."

We have nothing to do, but in our moral pollution and nakedness to plunge beneath the fountain, and wrap ourselves within the robe of that Savior's blood and righteousness, who, when He expired on the tree, so completed our redemption, as to leave us nothing to do but to believe and be saved.

"It is finished!" Oh words pregnant of the deepest meaning! Oh words rich in the richest consolation! Salvation

is finished! Look away from your fluctuating frames, and fitful feelings, and changing clouds, to "Jesus only." Look away from sins and guilt, from emptiness and poverty, to "Jesus only." "It is finished!" Let devils hear it, and tremble! Let sinners hear it, and believe! Let saints hear it, and rejoice! All is finished!

"Then, Lord, I flee to You, just as I am! I have stayed away from You too long, and am 'yet instead of getting better, I grew worse.' Too exclusively have I looked at my unworthiness, too absorbed have I been with my impoverishment, too bitterly have I mourned having nothing to pay. Upon Your own finished work I now cast myself. Save, Lord, and I shall be saved!"

Before this stupendous truth, let all creature merit sink, let all human glory pale, let all man's boasting vanish, and let Jesus be all in all. Perish, forms and ceremonies; perish, rites and rituals; perish, creeds and churches; perish, utterly and forever perish, whatever would be a substitute for the finished work of Jesus, whatever would tend to neutralize the finished work of Jesus, whatever would obscure with a cloud, or dim with a vapor; the beauty, the luster, and the glory of the finished work of Jesus!

It was "Jesus only" in the councils of eternity; it was "Jesus only" in the everlasting covenant of grace; it was "Jesus only" in the manger of Bethlehem; it was "Jesus only" in the garden of Gethsemane; it was "Jesus only" upon the cross of Calvary; it was "Jesus only" in the tomb of Joseph; it was "Jesus only" who, "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." And it shall be "Jesus only"; the joy of our hearts, the object of our glory, the theme of our song, the Beloved of our adoration, our service, and our praise, through the endless ages of eternity. Oh, stand fast, in life and in death, by the finished work of Jesus.

John Flavel on John 19:30...

Has Christ perfected and completely finished all His work for us? How sweet a relief is this to against all the defects and imperfections of all the works which are wrought by us. There is nothing finished that we do. All our duties are imperfect duties; they come off lamely and defectively from our hands. O there is much sin and vanity in the best of our duties. But Jesus Christ has finished all His work, though we can finish none of ours. And so, even though we are defective, poor, imperfect creatures in ourselves, yet we are complete in Christ. His complete obedience being imputed to us, makes us complete, and without fault before God. (See the full discourse by Flavel on [The Fountain of Life](#))

AND HE BOWED HIS HEAD AND GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT: kai klinas (AAPMSN) ten kephalen paredoken (3SAAI) to pneuma

■ Jn 10:11,18 Mt 20:28 27:50 Mk 15:37 Lk 23:46 Php 2:8 Heb 2:14,15)

Bernard notes that...

This detail is given only by John, and suggests that the account depends on the testimony of an eye-witness. (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John)

Luke records the purportedly the very last words of Jesus on the Cross...

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT (paratithemi [word study] = a banking term = deposit as a trust or for protection or safe keeping! The = to initiate the action and participate in the carrying out the action. Reflexive sense = "I myself commit... ") MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last. (Lk 23:46)

S Lewis Johnson... comments that...

when Jesus said, "**Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit**," this is only a milestone in his uninterrupted life. It is what someone has called, "The hymn of his continuation." "**Father into Thy hands I commit my spirit**." The activity is primary. The dying is secondary. This, after all, is the one who will say according to the Book of Revelation to the Apostle John, "Fear not, I'm the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead." (Rev 1:17-note, Rev 1:18-note) That is, at a point in time I was dead, yes, but I am alive forevermore. So, "**Father into Thy hands I commit my spirit**." I expect to live through this experience.

When Jesus began his ministry one of the first things he said, the first recorded utterance is, '**I must be about my Father's business.**' (Lk 2:49KJV) Well that is still primary. No wonder the Cross is the converging point of

ancient history and the origin of modern history. Because it has to do with the **foundation upon which all ultimate spiritual life is built**. May God in his marvelous grace illumine our minds to understand what Christ has done. (**AMEN!**) ([The Messiah Dying](#))

Bowed His head - Same Greek words (*klinas ten kephalen*) in a different context in Mt 8:20 (*ten kephalen kline*) and Lk 9:58 (*ten kephalen kline*). No place to lay His head in life, but finally a resting place for His head on the Cross! His word was done.

Vine comments this does not refer to

the helpless dropping of the head after death, but the deliberate putting of His head into a position of rest.

Spurgeon...

It is not that he died, and that then his head fell forward; but while he yet lived, having before maintained an erect, noble bearing even in the pangs of death, he now, to show his perfect resignation to his Father's will bows his head, and yields up that saved spirit of his which dwelt within his body.

He said, **It is finished** - What "it" was it that was finished? I will not attempt to expound it. It is the biggest "it" that ever was. Turn it over and you will see that it will grow, and grow, and grow, and grow, till it fills the whole earth: "It is finished."

And he lowered his head, and gave up the ghost. - He did not give up the ghost, and then bow his head, because he was dead; but he bowed his head as though in the act of worship, or as leaning it down upon his Father's bosom, and then gave up the ghost.

Thus have we had two gospel pictures of our dying Lord. May we remember them, and learn the lessons they are intended to teach.

Bow ([2827](#)) (**klino**) means literally to slant, slope, incline, bend. It was used figuratively of the day "declining" (Lk 9:12, 24:29).

Klino is the root of **ekklino** (*ek* = out + **klino** = to lean) which literally means to lean out and thus to turn aside or deviate from the right (righteous) way (as in Ro 3:12-note). The Greek word for **bed** is **kline** which is derived from **klino** (to recline). **Wavering** (in He 10:23-note) is the Greek **aklines** derived from "a" (when prefixed to a word a makes it mean the opposite to what it meant originally) plus **klino** "to lean towards".

In the OT (**Septuagint**), **klino** is often used of a prayer to God to "Incline His ear". It is used figuratively of inclining one's heart (Ps 119:36, 112 - see below for Spurgeon's exposition) and for God turning the hearts of kings (Pr 21:1).

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon...

1. **transitive,**
 - a. **"to incline, bow"**: of one dying, John 19:30; of the terrified, Luke 24:5.
 - b. **equivalent to "to cause to fall back"**: i.e. to turn to flight, Hebrews 11:34
 - c. "to recline": the head, in a place for repose (AV "lay one's head"), Mt 8:20; Lk 9:58.
2. **intransitive, "to incline oneself"**: of the declining day (AV "wear away, be far spent"), Lk 9:12; 24:29; Jer 6:4

Klino is used 7x in 7v -

Mt 8:20 the Son of Man has nowhere to **lay** His head.

Luke 9:12 And the day began to **decline**,

Luke 9:58 the Son of Man has nowhere to **lay** His head.

Luke 24:5 the women were terrified and **bowed** their faces to the ground,

Luke 24:29 the day is now **nearly over**."

John 19:30 He **bowed** His head,

Heb 11:34 **put** foreign armies to flight

Klino - 45x in the non-apocryphal **Septuagint (LXX)** -

Judg 7:5, 6; 9:3; 19:8; 1 Sam 4:2; 14:32; 2 Sam 19:14; 22:10; 1 Kgs 2:28; 2 Kgs 19:16; 20:10; Ezra 7:28; 9:5,

9; Job 38:37; Ps 17:6; 18:9; 21:11; 31:2; 45:10; 46:6; 49:4; 62:3; 71:2; 75:8; 78:1; 86:1; 88:2; 102:2, 11; 104:5; 116:2; 119:36, 112; 144:5; Prov 21:1; Isa 24:20; 33:23; Jer 6:4; 17:22; 34:14; 35:15; 44:5; 48:12; Zech 14:4.

Here are a few uses of **klino** in the **Septuagint...**

Ps 17:6 I have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God; **Incline** (Imperative. Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) Your ear to me, hear my speech.

Spurgeon: **Incline** thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. Stoop out of heaven and put thine ear to my mouth; give me thine ear all to myself, as men do when they lean over to catch every word from their friend. The Psalmist here comes back to his first prayer, and thus sets us an example of pressing our suit again and again, until we have a full assurance that we have succeeded.

Ps 18:9 He **bowed** (Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) the heavens also, and came down With thick darkness under His feet.

NET Bible Note: The Hebrew verb natah can carry the sense "[cause to] bend, bow down." For example Ge 49:15 pictures Issachar as a donkey that "bends" its shoulder or back under a burden. Here the LORD causes the sky, pictured as a dome or vault, to sink down as He descends in the storm.

Spurgeon: He **bowed** the heavens also, and came down. He came in haste, and spurned everything which impeded His rapidity. The thickest gloom concealed His splendour, and darkness was under His feet; He fought within the dense vapours, as a warrior in clouds of smoke and dust, and found out the hearts of His enemies with the sharp falchion of his vengeance. Darkness is no impediment to God; its densest gloom He makes His tent and secret pavilion. See how prayer moves earth and heaven, and raises storms to overthrow in a moment the foes of God's Israel. Things were bad for David before he prayed, but they were much worse for his foes so soon as the petition had gone up to heaven. A trustful heart, by enlisting the divine aid, turns the tables on its enemies. **If I must have an enemy let him not be a man of prayer, or he will soon get the better of me by calling in his God into the quarrel.**

Psalm 78:1 A Maskil of Asaph. Listen, O My people, to My instruction; **Incline** (Imperative. Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) your ears to the words of My mouth. 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, (Note: A number of the uses of klino in Lxx of the Psalms refer to a call for God to incline His ear. **The repetition suggests that this would be a good prayer for modern saints to utter!** And see especially Ps 119:36 below)

Spurgeon: **Incline** your ears to the words of my mouth. Give earnest attention, bow your stiff necks, lean forward to catch every syllable. We are at this day, as readers of the sacred records, bound to study them deeply, exploring their meaning, and laboring to practice their teaching. As the officer of an army commences his drill by calling for "Attention," even so every trained soldier of Christ is called upon to give ear to His words. Men lend their ears to music, how much more then should they listen to the harmonies of the gospel; they sit enthralled in the presence of an orator, how much rather should they yield to the eloquence of Heaven.

Incline your ears. Lay them close to my lips, that no parcel of this sacred language fall to the ground by your default. John Trapp.

Psalm 86:1 A Prayer of David. **Incline** (Imperative. Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) Your ear, O LORD, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy.

Spurgeon: **Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me.** In condescension to my littleness, and in pity to my weakness, "bow down thine ear, O Lord." When our prayers are lowly by reason of our humility, or feeble by reason of our sickness, or without wing by reason of our despondency, the Lord will bow down to them, the infinitely exalted Jehovah will have respect unto them. Faith, when she has the loftiest name of God on her tongue, and calls him Jehovah, yet dares to ask from him the most tender and condescending acts of love. Great as he is he loves his children to be bold with him.

For I am poor and needy -- doubly a son of poverty, because, first, poor and without supply for my needs, and next needy, and so full of wants, though unable to supply them. Our distress is a forcible reason for our being heard by the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, for misery is ever the master argument with mercy. Such reasoning as this would never be adopted by a proud man, and when we hear it repeated in the public congregation by those great ones of the earth who count the peasantry to be little better than

the earth they tread upon, it sounds like a mockery of the Most High. Of all despicable sinners those are the worst who use the language of spiritual poverty while they think themselves to be rich and increased in goods.

Psalm 119:36 **Incline** (Imperative. Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) my heart to Your testimonies (Hebrew = "turn my heart to your rules.") And not to dishonest gain.

Spurgeon: Incline my heart unto thy testimonies. Does not this prayer appear to be superfluous, since it is evident that the Psalmist's heart was set upon obedience? We are sure that there is never a word to spare in Scripture. After asking for active virtue it was meet that the man of God should beg that his heart might be in all that he did. What would his goings be if his heart did not go? It may be that David felt a wandering desire, an inordinate leaning of his soul to worldly gain (**Ed: Can we not identify dear reader? And do we not oft times need to utter this prayer?**), -- possibly it even intruded into his most devout meditations, and at once he cried out for **more grace**.

**The only way to cure a wrong leaning
is to have the soul bent in the opposite direction.**

Holiness of heart is the cure for covetousness. What a blessing it is that we may ask the Lord even for an inclination. **Our wills are free, and yet without violating their liberty, grace can incline us in the right direction. This can be done by enlightening the understanding as to the excellence of obedience, by strengthening our habits of virtue, by giving us an experience of the sweetness of piety, and by many other ways.**

If any one duty is irksome to us it behoves us to offer this prayer with special reference thereto: we are to love all the Lord's testimonies, and if we fail in any one point we must pay double attention to it.

**The learning of the heart
is the way in which the life will lean:**

hence the force of the petition, "Incline my heart." Happy shall we be when we feel habitually inclined to all that is good. This is not the way in which a carnal heart ever leans; all its inclinations are in opposition to the divine testimonies.

And not to covetousness. This is the inclination of nature, and grace must put a negative upon it. This vice is as injurious as it is common; it is as mean as it is miserable. It is idolatry, and so it dethrones God; it is selfishness, and so it is cruel to all in its power; it is sordid greed, and so it would sell the Lord himself for pieces of silver. It is a degrading, grovelling, hardening, deadening sin, which withers everything around it that is lovely and Christlike. He who is covetous is of the race of Judas, and will in all probability turn out to be himself a son of perdition. The crime of covetousness is common, but very few will confess it; for when a man heaps up gold in his heart, the dust of it blows into his eyes, and he cannot see his own fault. Our hearts must have some object of desire, and the only way to keep out worldly gain is to put in its place the testimonies of the Lord. If we are inclined or bent one way, we shall be turned from the other: the negative virtue is most surely attained by making sure of the positive grace which inevitably produces it.

Psalm 119:112 I have **inclined** my heart to perform Your statutes Forever, even to the end. Samekh.

Spurgeon: I have inclined mine heart to perform Thy statutes alway, even unto the end. He was not half inclined to virtue, but heartily inclined to it. His whole heart was bent on practical, persevering godliness. He was resolved to keep the statutes of the Lord with all his heart, throughout all his time, without erring or ending. He made it his end to keep the law unto the end, and that without end. He had by prayer, and meditation, and resolution made his whole being lean towards God's commands; or as we should say in other words -- the grace of God had inclined him to incline his heart in a sanctified direction. Many are inclined to preach, but the Psalmist was inclined to practise; many are inclined to perform ceremonies, but he was inclined to perform statutes; many are inclined to obey occasionally, but David would obey alway; and, alas, many are inclined for temporary religion, but this godly man was bound for eternity, he would perform the statutes of his Lord and King even unto the end. Lord, send us such a heavenly inclination of heart as this: then shall we show that thou hast quickened and taught us. To this end create in us a clean heart, and daily renew a right spirit within us, for only so shall we incline in the right direction.

Pr 21:1 The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand (speaks of power) of the LORD; **He turns** (Heb = natah; Lxx = klino) it wherever He wishes.

NET Bible Note: The farmer channels irrigation ditches where he wants them, where they will do the most good; so does the LORD with the king. No king is supreme; the LORD rules.

Bowed His head and gave up His Spirit - When? When the work the Father had given Him to accomplish had been accomplished. His life was not taken from Him, but He made a volitional choice to give it up, just as He had predicted (notice the repetition) earlier declaring...

I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I **lay down My life** for the sheep. I have other sheep (Gentiles), which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd (Allusion to the birth of the church in Acts 2, Ep 2:14, 15, 16). For this reason the Father loves Me, because I **lay down My life** so that I **may take it again**. No one has taken it away from Me, but I **lay it down on My own initiative**. I **have authority to lay it down**, and I **have authority to take it up again**. This commandment I received from My Father. (Jn 10:14, 15, 16, 17, 18)

Gave up His spirit - The synoptic gospels say...

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (Mt 27:50)

And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last. (Mk 15:37)

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last. (Lk 23:46)

Warren Wiersbe emphasizes the point that...

His death was voluntary: He willingly dismissed His spirit (John 19:30; and Jn 10:17, 18). He "gave Himself" (Gal 2:20). He offered Himself as a ransom (Mk 10:45), as a sacrifice to God (Ep 5:2), and as a propitiation for sin (1Jn 2:2). In Lk 9:31, His death is called a "decease," which in the Greek is "exodus," suggesting the Passover lamb and the deliverance from bondage. **It will take eternity to reveal all that happened when Jesus Christ died on the cross.** ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

Henry Morris has an interesting comment on "**bowed his head**" observing that

The first of the eighty times Jesus called Himself '**the Son of man**' was when He said,

The Son of man has no where to **lay (klino)** his head (Mt 8:20).

In the Old Testament (but see also Lk 24:5), the term '**bow the head**' is equivalent to "worship," that is, to "bow down to the will of God" (see Ge 22:5). During His earthly ministry, we never read of Jesus worshipping God, though He taught others to do so. He had nowhere to "bow[ed] his head," to "worship." He had come to do the will of God and to finish His work and that was still unfinished until He went to the cross. But now the work was accomplished; He had perfectly finished the will of God so at last He could "bow(ed) his head;" He finally had a place to worship the Father. ([Morris, Henry: Defenders Study Bible. World Publishing](#))

William MacDonald...

That He gave up His spirit emphasizes the fact that His death was voluntary. He determined the time of His death. In full control of His faculties, He dismissed His spirit—an act no mere man could accomplish.

Gave up (Delivered, committed, entrusted, handed over) ([3860](#))**paradidomi** from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone or something, especially to give over to the power of another.

Constable notes that normally

victims of crucifixion experienced the gradual ebbing away of life, and then their heads would slump forward. All the evangelists presented Jesus as laying down His life of His own accord. ([John](#))

Paul uses **paradidomi** in describing Jesus' sacrificial death in his place...

Galatians 2:20 (note) "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and **delivered (paradidomi in the active voice** = His choice) Himself up (into the power of the Romans) for me. (Compare Ro 4:25-note, Ro 8:32-note, Eph 5:2-note, Ep 5:25-note)

William Harris has a somewhat unusual interpretation commenting that **Gave up His spirit...**

suggests also the giving of the Holy Spirit [cf. Jn 7:39], although it does not take place at this very moment. The reference is proleptic, looking ahead to Jn 20:22, which in turn looks ahead to Pentecost. ([Exegetical Commentary on John 19](#)) (For a more expanded explanation of this view see **R A Culpepper's** note below)

Ray Stedman...

Then, as John records, "He dismissed his spirit." Jesus once said that it was not required that he die. "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again" {John 10:18 RSV}, he declared. Paul tells us he "became obedient unto death," {Phil 2:8}. That could never be said of any of us as we have no choice in the matter. When our time comes we have to die. But Jesus did not. He became obedient unto death and surrendered his spirit, "dismissed it," and fell into death. ([He Endured the Cross](#))

A W Pink...

And he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit The order of these two actions strikingly evidences the Savior's uniqueness: with us the spirit departs, and then the head is bowed; with Him it was the opposite! So, too, each of these actions manifested His Deity. First, He "bowed his head"; the plain intimation is that, up to this point, His head had been held erect. It was no impotent sufferer who hung there in a swoon. Had that been the case, His head had lolled helplessly on His chest, and He would have had no occasion to "bow" it. Weigh well the verb here: it is not that His head "fell forward," but He consciously, calmly, reverently, bowed His head. How sublime was His carriage even on the "tree!" What superb composure did He evidence! Was it not His majestic bearing on the cross that, among other things, caused the centurion to cry,

"Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54)!

And gave up (delivered up) the spirit - None else ever did this or died thus. How remarkably do these words exemplify His own declaration in Jn 10:17, 18:

I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again!

The uniqueness of Christ's action here may also be seen by comparing His words with those of Stephen's. As the first Christian martyr was dying, he prayed,

Lord Jesus receive my spirit (Acts 7:59).

In sharp contrast from Stephen, Christ "gave up the spirit"; Stephen's was taken from him, not so the Savior's. ([John 19:25-42 Christ Laying Down His Life](#))

R A Culpepper (in Faith and Mission, Spring, 1988 - [The Death Of Jesus: An Exegesis of Jn 19:28-37](#) [\$ but this gives access to 1000's of conservative journal articles online]) explains John's words "gave up His spirit" this way...

After Jesus had tasted the vinegar, he said, "**It is finished.**" Then he "gave up his spirit" (Jn 19:30). This may well be a simple statement regarding how Jesus died, but some interpreters see in the reference to "handing over" the spirit the suggestion that Jesus' death was essential for the fulfillment of his promise to send the Holy Spirit to his followers. That is more than John 19:30 affirms, but the Gospel of John often implies more than it says.

Remember that in the passage in John 7, the evangelist explained that "the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn 7:39). Only through his death could Jesus bring the final revelation of the Father and thereby redeem his own for full fellowship with God through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit had descended on Jesus at his baptism, fulfilling the promise to John the Baptist: "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (Jn 1:33NIV). Others, like Nicodemus, would be able to enter the kingdom of God only if they too were born of "water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:3), for "the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (Jn 3:6). "God gives the Spirit without limit" (Jn 3:34), and as with the wind "you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going" (Jn 3:8). Who would guess that the Spirit would lead Jesus to the cross? Nevertheless, because God is Spirit, God seeks true worshipers who will "worship in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:23, 24).

Jesus' words are "spirit and life" (Jn 6:63), and the Spirit gives life. But the Spirit could only be given when Jesus had been glorified (Jn 7:39). Those who denied that Jesus' death had any saving significance failed to

see that his death was a vital part of his revelatory and redemptive mission. The ultimate irony of the gospel is that the giving of life came only through the apparent triumph of death.

Jesus' death released the power of the Spirit in a new way. The world would neither see him nor know him, but the Spirit lives in Jesus' disciples (14:17). The Holy Spirit is experienced as a Comforter or a Counselor who teaches us and reminds us of all that Jesus said (Jn 14:26). The Spirit testifies about Jesus (15:26) and guides us into all truth (Jn 16:13). God communicates with us by means of the Spirit, for he speaks "only what he hears" (Jn 16:13, 15).

When the risen Lord appeared to the disciples, his first act was to comfort them with the words "Peace be with you"; consecrate them by the giving of the Holy Spirit; and commission them: "So send I you" (Jn 20:21, 22). The conferring of the Spirit--one might even say the "Johannine Pentecost"--is reminiscent of the creation of man and woman.

"Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and he became a living being" (Ge. 2:7).

"And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:22).

God had formed a new creature with life "from above," eternal life. The mission of the Logos was complete. Through His death on the Cross Jesus had been glorified. He had revealed the suffering Father, the Giver of all life. The Logos had effected a new creation (**Ed:** Do not misunderstand - He is not speaking of Jesus but of men who partake of the New Covenant and become "new creations" in Christ - see 2Co 5:17-**note** Jesus was not a created being as taught by some cults - see Col 1:15-**Discussion**). The last breath, whispering behind the Word, blowing where God willed, marked a new beginning. And even greater things lay ahead. The response to such a gift can only be renewed commitment:

Breath on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldest do.

Matthew Henry's Unabridged Commentary on John 19:30...

1. What he said, and we may suppose him to say it with triumph and exultation, Tetelestai- It is finished, a comprehensive word, and a comfortable one.

(1.) **It is finished**, that is, the malice and enmity of his persecutors had now done their worst; when he had received that last indignity in the vinegar they gave him, he said, "This is the last; I am now going out of their reach, where the wicked cease from troubling."

(2.) **It is finished**, that is, the counsel and commandment of his Father concerning his sufferings were now fulfilled; it was a determinate counsel, and he took care to see every iota and tittle of it exactly answered, Acts 2:23. He had said, when he entered upon his sufferings, Father, thy will be done; and now he saith with pleasure, It is done. It was his meat and drink to finish his work (Jn 4:34), and the meat and drink refreshed him, when they gave him gall and vinegar.

(3.) **It is finished**, that is, all the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, which pointed at the sufferings of the Messiah, were accomplished and answered. He speaks as if, now that they had given him the vinegar, he could not bethink himself of any word in the Old Testament that was to be fulfilled between him and his death but it had its accomplishment; such as, his being sold for thirty pieces of silver, his hands and feet being pierced, his garments divided, etc.; and now that this is done. It is finished.

(4.) **It is finished**, that is, the ceremonial law is abolished, and a period put to the obligation of it. The substance is now come, and all the shadows are done away. Just now the veil is rent, the wall of partition is taken down, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, Ep 2:14, 15. The Mosaic economy is dissolved, to make way for a better hope.

(5.) **It is finished**, that is, sin is finished, and an end made of transgression, by the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness. It seems to refer to Daniel 9:24. The Lamb of God was sacrificed to take away the sin of the world, and it is done, Hebrews 9:26.

(6.) **It is finished**, that is, his sufferings were now finished, both those of his soul and those of his body. The storm is over, the worst is past; all his pains and agonies are at an end, and he is just going to paradise,

entering upon the joy set before him. Let all that suffer for Christ, and with Christ, comfort themselves with this, that yet a little while and they also shall say, It is finished.

(7.) **It is finished**, that is, his life was now finished, he was just ready to breathe his last, and now he is no more in this world, Jn 17:11. This is like that of blessed Paul (2Ti 4:7), I have finished my course, my race is run, my glass is out, mene, mene-numbered and finished. This we must all come to shortly.

(8.) **It is finished**, that is, the work of man's redemption and salvation is now completed, at least the hardest part of the undertaking is over; a full satisfaction is made to the justice of God, a fatal blow given to the power of Satan, a fountain of grace opened that shall ever flow, a foundation of peace and happiness laid that shall never fail. Christ had now gone through with his work, and finished it, Jn 17:4. For, as for God, his work is perfect; when I begin, saith he, I will also make an end. And, as in the purchase, so in the application of the redemption, he that has begun a good work will perform it; the mystery of God shall be finished.

2. What he did: He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. He was voluntary in dying; for he was not only the sacrifice, but the priest and the offerer; and the animus offerentis-the mind of the offerer, was all in all in the sacrifice. Christ showed his will in his sufferings, by which will we are sanctified.

(1.) **He gave up the ghost** His life was not forcibly extorted from him, but freely resigned. He had said, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit, thereby expressing the intention of this act. I give up myself as a ransom for many; and, accordingly, he did give up his spirit, paid down the price of pardon and life at his Father's hands. Father, glorify thy name.

(2.) **He bowed his head.** Those that were crucified, in dying stretched up their heads to gasp for breath, and did not drop their heads till they had breathed their last; but Christ, to show himself active in dying, bowed his head first, composing himself, as it were, to fall asleep. God had laid upon him the iniquity of us all, putting it upon the head of this great sacrifice; and some think that by this bowing of his head he would intimate his sense of the weight upon him. See Ps. 38:4; Ps 40:12. The bowing of his head shows his submission to his Father's will, and his obedience to death. He accommodated himself to his dying work, as Jacob, who gathered up his feet into the bed, and then yielded up the ghost. - Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible.

CHRIST'S WORK FINISHED

John 19:30. It is finished.

Charles Simeon

Charles Simeon ([See fascinating Dr John Piper's biography of this great saint](#))

THESE, with the exception of the words with which our blessed Lord commended his spirit into his Father's hands, were the last words which he spake, previous to his dissolution. In the original, they are comprehended in one word (**tetelestai**): and since the foundation of the world there never was a single word uttered, in which such diversified and important matter was contained. Every word indeed that proceeded from our Saviour's lips deserves the most attentive consideration: but this eclipses all. To do justice to it, is beyond the ability of men or angels: its height, and depth, and length, and breadth, are absolutely unsearchable. But that its import may be somewhat more clearly seen, we propose to shew,

I. The truths contained in it—

Our blessed Lord not having expressly stated what he alluded to as finished, we are left to gather his meaning from a general view of that work which he came to accomplish. We understand then, that when he uttered this word, the following things were finished:

1. The fulfilment of prophecy—

[Prophecy was of two kinds, one consisting of typical institutions, the other of positive declarations. Now both these kinds of prophecy received their accomplishment in the death of Christ.

The brazen serpent, the daily sacrifice, the burning of the flesh of the sin-offerings without the camp, with various other ordinances, shadowed forth the death of Christ by crucifixion without the walls of Jerusalem; and at that moment, when our Lord was about to resign his spirit, were all fulfilled: for he was then "suffering without the gate;" (Heb. 13:11, 12) and was "lifted up, that all who believed in him might be healed" (John 3:14, 15) of their wounds; and was "the Lamb of God taking away the sin of

the world." (John 1:29)

The declarations of the prophets were so numerous and minute, that a history of our Lord might be compiled from them, fuller, in many respects, than is contained in any one of the Evangelists. The person that betrayed him, the manner in which his trial should be conducted, the sufferings he should undergo previous to the final execution of his sentence, the death to which he should be doomed, the persons in whose company he should suffer, the manner in which his clothes should be disposed of, the very taunts with which he should be insulted in his dying hour, were all fulfilled as exactly, as if the agents in this bloody tragedy had designed to accomplish the predictions concerning him. There remained only one single prophecy to be fulfilled: and who would have conceived that ever that should be fulfilled? It was customary for the friends of the persons who were executed to give them "wine mingled with myrrh," in order to blunt the edge of their sufferings: and the friends of our Lord had offered him such a potion; but he would not drink of it, because he would do nothing that should have a tendency to diminish his sufferings (Mark 15:23): but when, in his last moments, he said, "I thirst," the cruel soldiers, wishing only to mock him, and augment his anguish (Luke 23:36), dipped a sponge in vinegar, and gave him that to drink; and thus fulfilled that prophecy of David, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (Ps. 69:21). This done, no other prophecy remained to be fulfilled; and therefore our Lord instantly said, "It is finished."]

2. The work of Redemption—

[Two things were undertaken by our Lord, and were to be done by him in order to man's redemption; the penalties of the law were to be endured by him, in order that Divine justice might be satisfied for our sins; and the demands of the law mere to be obeyed by him, in order that sinners, who could have no righteousness of their own, might be made righteous in him. Both these things were now completed. Our blessed Lord had obeyed the law in its fullest extent: not the smallest defect could be found in him: man could find none; Satan could find none; God himself could find none: for "he did always the things that pleased the Father;" and "in him was no sin." By his obedience, the law, which we had violated, was "magnified and made honourable;" and "a righteousness was brought in," a righteousness which shall be unto all and upon all them that believe, and which is amply sufficient for the justification of all who trust in it. Moreover all was now endured that was necessary to make an atonement for our sins. Did we deserve shame, and condemnation, and misery? did we deserve to have the face of God hid from us, and the vials of his wrath poured out upon us, and to be consigned over to everlasting death? All this he suffered, as far as was compatible with his nature, and as far as was necessary for the satisfaction of Divine justice. He was not indeed actually dead; but the moment was arrived for his surrendering up his life; and therefore he could properly say, "It is finished."]

3. The salvation of man—

[All that was necessary for man's salvation was now effected. Nothing remained to be done, in order to the perfecting of his work on earth, or to the forming of a perfect ground for man's acceptance with God. It is true, that man must repent: but he need not to repent in order to make satisfaction for his sins: no repentance of man can add to the value of Christ's sacrifice. Men must repent, in order to justify God in the denunciations of his wrath, and to evince their abhorrence of their past ways, and to bring their souls to a fit state for the enjoyment of God's mercy: but to atone for sin, he needs not to repent: the offering of the body of Jesus Christ upon the cross is a sufficient propitiation for the sins of the whole world. It is true also, that man must obey: but he need not to obey in order to form for himself a justifying righteousness before God: he can never add to the perfection of Christ's righteousness; and any attempt to add to it will defeat, instead of furthering, his acceptance through it. Whatever obedience men may render for the honouring of God, and the adorning of their profession, they must renounce it utterly in point of dependence, and must look for salvation solely through the righteousness of Christ (Php 3:9). Nothing remains for man but to accept the salvation which Christ has purchased: and if he be enabled in his last hour (like the dying thief) to rely on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus, he shall as assuredly be saved, as if he had repented and obeyed a thousand years. We do not say this to lessen the importance of repentance and obedience (for in their proper place they are of infinite importance); but only to explain and vindicate our Lord's assertion in the text.]

The meaning of our Lord's declaration being ascertained, let us bring forth,

II. The truths to be deduced from it—

Selecting such inferences only as are most prominent, we observe,

1. That there is a sure ground of hope for all who feel their need of mercy—

[If persons of a desponding frame would state what they could wish God to do for them, in order to remove their fears; we are well persuaded, not only that every thing they can desire has been already done, but that infinitely more has been done for them than they could even ask or think. Would they have an atonement made for their sins, even such an atonement as shall perfectly satisfy Divine justice, and discharge the utmost farthing of their debt? We must say to them, 'It is done; "It is finished." Would they have a perfect righteousness wrought out for them? Would they be invited and commanded by God himself to clothe themselves with it as a robe, so that not even the piercing eye of God should be able to behold a spot or blemish in them? "It is finished."

Would they have the gift of the Holy Spirit purchased for them, so that they may be assured of almighty aid in all their difficulties and conflicts! "It is finished." Let them state what they will, (provided it be really calculated to inspire confidence, and suited to the condition of the Church militant,) and we do not hesitate to say respecting it, "It is finished." Why then should any despond, as though their guilt were too great to be forgiven, or their corruptions too strong to be subdued? Let the humble and contrite only reflect on this dying declaration of our Lord, and they can never want encouragement to trust in him.]

2. That they in whom a good work is begun, have reason to hope that it shall be carried on and perfected to the day of Christ—

[The work of bringing sinners to repentance, and of renewing them after the Divine image, is committed to Christ. "He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins." In him, according to the Father's appointment, all fulness dwells; and out of his fulness all his people are to receive the grace that shall be needful and sufficient for them. Now if in the arduous work which Christ undertook to do for men, he persisted till he could say, "It is finished;" why should he not do the same in the work that he has engaged to accomplish in them? If he stop short in this, it must be either from a want of power, or a want of inclination, to persist in it. But it cannot be from want of power; since it is surely an easier thing to preserve life than to give it; and therefore if he have given it, he cannot want power to maintain it. Nor can it be from a want of inclination; for, if he had not been carried on by an irresistible inclination to save us, he would not have persisted in his former work; he would have put away the bitter cup from his lips, instead of drinking it, as he did, to the very dregs. If therefore he drew not back in the former case, we may be sure he will not in this case: he will never cease from working effectually in us, till he can say, "It is finished." That this deduction is clear and scriptural, we have very abundant evidence. The prophet declares, that "He who has laid the foundation of the spiritual temple, will also finish it;" and that he will bring forth the top-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace, unto it." On this account the Apostle also calls him, "The Author and Finisher of our faith;" and declares himself "confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun the good work, will perform it till the day of Christ." (Phil. 1:6) Let believers then "cast their care on Him who careth for them," and know assuredly, that "he will keep the feet of his saints, and "perfect that which concerneth them."]

3. That those who have obtained mercy have the strongest possible incentive to maintain good works—

[We have before stated, that Christ has done every thing that was necessary for man's salvation; and that nothing remains for man to add to the finished work of Christ. But we also noticed, that, though man has nothing to do for the purpose of meriting salvation, or for laying a foundation of his acceptance with God, yet in other points of view he has abundant occasion to work; yea, he is commanded to "work out his salvation with fear and trembling." We have no other way of proving the truth of our faith, or the sincerity of our love, than by bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. Shall this then be thought a wearisome task by any of us? Shall we wish to intermit our labours, or to stop short of the highest attainments? Surely not: for if Christ finished the work assigned him, because of his love to us, we can do no less than persist in our work, whereby we are to evidence our love to him. Let us then "go on towards perfection:" let us "forget what is behind, and press forward towards that which is before:" let us "work while our day lasts;" that in the evening of our life we may be able to say with Christ, "Father, I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do." Then, while hypocrites and apostates shall take up this expression in reference to their hopes, of salvation, and say, "My day of grace is finished, and all possibility of obtaining mercy is finished;" we shall shout in heaven, "It is finished, it is finished!" "fears, temptations, conflicts, are all finished!" "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and nothing now remains to me but an eternity of uninterrupted happiness and glory.] ([Simeon, C. 1832-63. Horae Homileticae Vol. 14: John XIII to Acts](#))

PRIVATE MEDITATIONS AFTER COMMUNION

"It is finished!"

John 19:30

"It is finished!" (John 19:30). I have listened today in thought, at the Holy Table of Communion, to this victorious cry. Glorious is the fulfillment of the prophetic words—"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." A FINISHED work—and so finished and completed, that, in the retrospect, the divine-human lips could say with complacency, yes proclaim with unhesitating triumph, "I am satisfied!" Satisfied!—It was the very dignity and divinity of the majestic Speaker, which gave such singular meaning and emphasis to the assertion. The higher our aim, the more refined and elevated our views and attainments—the less are we satisfied with our own ideals. A little thing will satisfy a little mind. It requires a great thing to satisfy a great mind. The child is satisfied with a toy or bauble; the savage with the trinket—the gaudy bead, or piece of painted glass—while the civilized and educated art, in very proportion to their culture, fastidious—swift to detect the literary blemish, or the faulty note in music; or the crude touch of color on the picture—the flaw in the otherwise breathing marble. What pleases the unlettered villager will look poor in the eyes of the man of

science.

And so, the higher we ascend in the ranks of being. What must it require to satisfy the mind of an angel—what must it be to satisfy the mind of God? Him whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom—whose glory is set above the heavens—whose power is boundless, His wisdom infinite; His life-time eternity! Oh, what a work that must be, over which this all-wise and all-perfect Deity, in contemplating it, can say—"It is enough; I have reached my own divine Ideal. I am satisfied." "Father, I have glorified You on the earth, I have finished the work You gave me to do!" In that moment of all moments, when His eyes were about to close in the sleep of death—a gleam of radiance breaks from His eclipsed soul. He could wish no more—the world's battle is won. With the smile of ineffable love and satisfaction on His lips, He cried, and cried "with a loud voice," as if He would wake the echo of all the ages, in order to proclaim the completion and the completeness of His victory—IT IS FINISHED!

"Satisfied"—"Finished"—blessed pillow for me to repose on in the retrospect of today! He has done all, and suffered all, and procured all for me. I see every attribute of the divine nature magnified. Justice exulting in the sublime vindication. Truth hastening to meet Mercy and Mercy meeting Righteousness. Let the rich man glory in his riches—let the strong man glory in his strength—let the wise man glory in his wisdom—but God forbid that I should glory, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!

One other thought occurs in my contemplation of that mystery of darkness—that superhuman soul-struggle; ending though it did in so triumphant a victory. Yet vain, surely, is the question that has been asked, 'Could not less have satisfied? Could not anguish less dreadful in its accompaniments have sufficed? Could none of the ignominy and agony of that bitter path and that bitter cross have been dispensed with?' The analogy of nature would seem to tell that there is no useless nor unnecessary expenditure of agency even in the smallest of the works of God. If it be so with the lowlier divine operations, much more may we conclude that there will be no superfluous or unnecessary agency demanded in 'the work of works,'—the work of Redemption. From the first pang of Bethlehem's Babe in the cradle, until the Great Surety trampled Satan under His bleeding feet on Calvary, all was necessary. There was not an unnecessary leaf in that chaplet of sorrow which the Man of Sorrows wore!

I have been testifying today, through these significant memorials, to the sufferings of Christ; let me connect them with the glory which is to follow—anticipating that everlasting communion Sabbath, when the sufferings and the glory shall be sung in one blended strain by the ransomed. I have heard the sound of the Bridegroom's feet today; I have listened to His festal summons to the Feast on earth; let me be so living, and walking, and watching, and working, that the great final cry and summons to the Festal Hall of heaven may be met with the glad response—"Lo, this is our God—we have waited for Him!" ([PRIVATE MEDITATIONS AFTER COMMUNION](#))

J. C. Hare writes...

I. These words, as uttered by our Saviour on the cross, have a wide and deep meaning. For as His life was totally unlike that of all other men, so was His death. He did not live for Himself, or to Himself, nor as one of many; nor did He die so. He died, as He had lived, wholly for mankind, according to the determinate counsel and ordinance of God. Therefore, that which He declared to be finished when He was about to give up the ghost, must have been the great work for which He came into the world, and which was wrought by Him and in Him for all mankind. His warfare, the whole of that warfare which He came to wage for mankind, was accomplished; the iniquity of mankind was pardoned—or, at least, the gate of pardon had been set open for penitent faith. As God's work was the work of creating the world, and His rest was the rest of governing and guarding and upholding the world which He had created, so our Saviour's work was that of renewing man's nature, and of laying the foundations of His Church—of laying down Himself, His own Incarnate Deity and Divine humanity, to be its chief corner-stone; and His rest was that of watching over and directing and strengthening and sanctifying His Church, and all its members.

II. Although the great work which Christ came to do was finished once for all on this day, it was not finished as when we finish a work, and leave it to itself and turn to something else. It was wrought, even as the work of the creation was, in order that it might be the teeming parent of countless works of the same kind—the first in an endless chain, that should girdle the earth and stretch through all ages. While in one sense it was an end, in another it was a beginning—an end of the warfare and struggle, which had been desolating the earth hopelessly ever since the Fall, and a beginning of the peace, in which the victory won on that day was to receive its everlasting consummation. He conquered sin and Satan for us, in order that He might conquer them in us; and that we might conquer them for Him, through His love constraining and His strength enabling us. (Sermons in Herstmonceux Church, p. 361.)

I. If we look at the world, without the knowledge of Christ, without the hope of a Saviour and deliverer, the whole race of man seems to be dashed about helplessly, in a rushing whirlpool of sin, or to lie like the host of the Egyptians, at the bottom and on the shore of the sea. The whole race of man, without Christ, seems to be under a heavy yoke of sin, against which they can hardly so much as struggle; and, consequently, to be under a sweeping sentence of condemnation. If one were to look abroad over the earth, and to behold what is going on wherever men are gathered together, and what is lurking and brooding in their hearts—if one were to behold all this, with a knowledge of sin, of its hatefulness and deadliness, yet without any knowledge of Christ, and of the redemption which He has wrought from sin, it could hardly seem but as though Satan had gained a great victory over God, as though he must have outwitted God or overpowered Him, as though he had stolen the earth out of God's keeping, and brought it over to the side of hell.

II. In the death of Christ was made manifest how God could be holy, could have a holy hatred of sin, and yet could have compassion upon sinners; how He could be just, and yet the Justifier of those who believe in Jesus. The Son of God became the Son of Man, and took our nature upon Him, and thereby lifted that nature out of its sinful pollutions into the light of perfect purity, and bore our sins upon the cross. As sin must needs die, He too, in that He bore our sins, submitted to death; He bore them for us, and for us He died; He died that we might live, purged from our sins in His blood. And thus, as in Adam we had all died, even so in Christ we were all made alive.

III. This, then, is the great choice which is set before you in this life. Sin would murder you; Christ would save you. You are not to fear your sins, as though they were too mighty for you, seeing that Christ has conquered them on your behalf. But having such a Leader, such a Captain, such a Bulwark and Tower of Strength, you are to fight against them boldly and undauntedly. He who died on the Cross to take away your sins, will strengthen you to fight against sin, and in His strength you shall overcome it. (J. C. Hare, Sermons in Herstmonceux Church, p. 151)

C. S. Robinson, Preacher's Monthly, vol. iv., p. 204.

- I. The personal suffering of Christ was finished.
- II. The earthly errand was finished.
- III. The human biography was finished.
- IV. The official conflict was finished.
- V. The Gospel message was finished.

The Pulpit Commentary...

THE FINISHED WORK

From the nature of the case this could not be more than a mere ejaculation; but the meaning is plain enough to those who will put their minds into a state to perceive it. Suppose you have a friend who is building a house. You had been present when the foundation was laid, and from time to time you had watched the progress of the building. At last your friend breaks in on you some morning with the cry, "It is finished!" You would know at once what he meant — that the house was finished. And your friend would presume on your part a real and lively interest in hearing the news. So too we must know a good deal of what Jesus said and did during life, or we shall fail in understanding what he said and did in the hour of death. He who said, "It is finished!" must also have had seasons in which he could say, "It is begun," "It is going on."

I. We must illustrate how JESUS LOOKED FORWARD TO A TIME FOR UTTERING THIS WORD. Recollect what he said to the disciples by the well: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Recollect also his word to the Jews after he had healed the impotent man on the sabbath day. He speaks there concerning the works which the Father had given him to finish. Here are specimens of the peculiar and testifying works of Jesus. Here are declarations by Jesus himself of the uniting and definite purpose with which his life was bound up. What he talked of now and then he must have thought of continually. To the superficial eye, indeed, the life of Jesus did not look as if it had any definite purpose. How would he have been put down in the "occupation" column in a census record? Yet the life of Jesus was full of purpose — purpose never absent, never forgotten. The parable of the man who went away from home, leaving his money as a trust in the hands of his servants, is surely a parable out of the very depths of the Savior's own experience. To him there was given a stewardship of inestimable value. How the servant with the five talents would look forward to the surrender and accomplishment of his trust! And just in this spirit Jesus must have looked

forward to the hour when he should be able to say, "It is finished!"

II. **THUS IN THE INCARNATE LIFE OF JESUS WE HAVE SOMETHING COMPLETE FOR US TO PROFIT BY.** Something complete! The life of Jesus was complete, just as the life of a seed becomes complete when it has gone through all the cycle of its changes — germination, budding, blossoming, formation of fruit, ripening of fruit. The very life of Jesus was a finished work. It was like a book on the last page of which "Finis" could be truly written. Here is the book of a really complete human life. What a difference between Jesus and many authors and makers of finished things! Many complete things, things that the world is agreed in calling complete and precious in their own order, were achieved by very incomplete men. Read the words of Gibbon the historian, in which he records his emotions on completing his monumental work. He has succeeded, and yet in the bottom of his heart he has somehow failed. Thousands are finishing many things, but never touching the one thing needful. We, from our life's incompleteness, should look on the completeness of the life of Jesus, and, while we look, rise into that hope and confidence which his manifested completeness is meant to give. Here is One who lived out the life of humanity according to the ideal of him who made humanity. He never needed to pray, "Forgive me my debts;" for he never owed a debt he did not pay, never closed a day of life which was not as full of service as of opportunities of service. And he finished that we might begin and also (The Pulpit Commentary – Volume 17: John)

"Tetelestai! It is Finished"

Related Spurgeon Quotes

"IT IS FINISHED!" hear the dying Savior cry. Your sins have sustained their death-blow, the robe of your righteousness has received its last thread; it is done complete, perfect. It needs no addition; it can never suffer any diminution. Oh, Christian, do lay hold of this precious thought; I may not be able to state it except in weak terms, but let not my weakness prevent your apprehending its glory and its preciousness. It is enough to make a man leap, though his legs were loaded with irons, and to make him sing though his mouth were gagged, to think that we are perfectly accepted in Christ, that our justification is impartial, it does not go to a limited extent, but goes the whole way. Our unrighteousness is covered; from condemnation we are entirely and irrevocably free once more. The non-condemnation is effectual. The royal privilege of justification shall never miscarry. It shall be brought home to every believer. (Sermon 362)

Christ has said, **"IT IS FINISHED!"** and we must cease to work too, not only with our hands but with our souls — working no more for life, for that is given; working no more for justification, for that is concluded; but today resting in Christ, for **"IT IS FINISHED!"** and finding peace in him, for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" — leaving all our cares with him, for nothing can separate us from the love of Christ," and then giving up our souls to a glorious and Voracious holy day, which shall be a preparation for the eternal enjoyment of the perpetual feast of the glorified at the table of God in heaven. (Sermon 420)

"IT IS FINISHED."—John 19:30. - IN the original Greek of John's Gospel, there is only one word for this utterance of our Lord. To translate it into English, we have to use three words; but when it was spoken, it was only one,—an ocean of meaning in a drop of language, a mere drop, for that is all that we can call one word. **"IT IS FINISHED."** Yet it would need all the other words that ever were spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether immeasurable. It is high; I cannot attain to it. It is deep; I cannot fathom it. **"Finished."** I can half imagine the tone in which our Lord uttered this word, with a holy glorying, a sense of relief, the bursting out of a heart that had long been shut up within walls of anguish. **"Finished."** It was a Conqueror's cry; it was uttered with a loud voice. There is nothing of anguish about it, there is no wailing in it. It is the cry of One who has completed a tremendous labour, and is about to die; and ere he utters his death-prayer, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," he shouts his life's last hymn in that one word, **"Finished."** (Sermon 2344)

The Christian is also saved as to the price that has been paid for him, for this is done, not in part, but in whole. The substitutionary work that Christ has offered is not a certain proportion of the work to be done. **"IT IS FINISHED"** (John 19:30) was the cry of the Savior before He died, and so it is complete.

O my dear souls, have you seen our Lord stripped for sin amid the tempest of divine wrath? Have you heard Him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Matthew 27:46)? If so, you have seen how out of the old covenant the new was born, like life from between the jaws of death. Our souls have stood in the midst of the horrible tempest, half-blinded by the lightning and deafened by the thunder. At last there has been a rent in the black mantle; a shower of wondrous love has followed the black tempest; and a voice has been heard, sweeter than the harps of angels, crying, **"IT IS FINISHED"** (John 19:30).

In truth, we have plenty of reason for resting. We can sit at Jesus' feet because our salvation is complete. He said, **"IT IS FINISHED"** (John 19:30), and He knew that He had wrought it all. The ransom price has been paid for your soul. Not one drop has been

withheld of the blood that is your purchase. The robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10) is woven from top to bottom; there is not one thread for you to add. It is written, "Ye are complete in him" (Col. 2:10). However frail we are, we are still "perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28), and in spite of all our sin we are still "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). (The Limitless Love of Christ)

"**IT IS FINISHED**" (John 19:30) is the most charming note in all of Calvary's music. "It is finished." The fire has passed upon the Lamb. He has borne the whole of the wrath that was due to His people. This is the royal dish of the feast of love. (Power in the Blood)

There was an apparent *if* in this covenant (referring to the OT prophecy of the New Covenant) at first. That *if* hinged upon the question of whether Jesus would obey the law and pay the ransom, a question that His faithfulness placed beyond doubt. There is no *if* in it now. When Jesus bowed His head and said, "**IT IS FINISHED**" (John 19:30), there remained no *if* in the covenant.

IT IS FINISHED - What "it" was it that was finished? I will not attempt to expound it. It is the biggest "it" that ever was! Turn it over and you will see that it will grow, and grow, and grow, and grow, till it fills the whole earth: "**IT IS FINISHED**." "And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." He did not give up the ghost and then bow his head because he was dead; but he bowed his head as though in the act of worship or as leaning it down on his Father's bosom and then gave up the ghost. Thus have we had two gospel pictures of our dying Lord. May we remember them and learn the lessons they are intended to teach!

Just as God looked on each day's work and said, "It is good" (Ge 1:4), so, as He looks upon each part of the work of His dear Son, He can say of it, "It is good." The Father joins in the verdict of His Son, that **IT IS FINISHED** (John 19:30): all the will of God for the sanctification of His people is accomplished. Dear Christian, this work must be applied to us by the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who brings us to know that Jesus Christ has sanctified us, or set us apart, and made us acceptable with God. It is the Holy Spirit who has given us the New Testament, and shed a light upon the Old. It is the Holy Spirit who speaks to us through the ministers of Christ when He blesses them to help us to our conversion. It is especially the Holy Spirit who takes away from us all hope of being sanctified before God by any means of our own, brings us to see our need of cleansing and reconciliation, and then takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to us. Not without the going forth of His sacred power are we made to take the place of separation and dedication, to which the Lord ordained us from eternity. Thus it is by the will of the Father, carried out by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit, that the church of God is regarded as sanctified before God, and is acceptable to Him. I will not dwell any longer on this point, because these great things are best written of with few words: they are subjects that are better to be meditated upon by quiet thought than exhibited in writing. (The Key to Holiness)

He stands beneath it (SIN), and bows under it, until the bloody sweat springs from every pore, and yet He does not yield to its weight in order to get away from the burden. It presses more heavily; it bows Him to the dust; it touches His very soul; it makes Him cry in anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46); and yet, at the last, He lifts Himself up and flings it all away and cries, "**IT IS FINISHED**" (John 19:30), and it is gone. There is not a wreck of it left; no, not an atom of it left. It is all gone at once, and once for all. He has borne the immeasurable weight and cast it off from His shoulders forever; and as it lies no more on Him, so also it lies no more on His people. Sin will never be mentioned against them anymore, forever. Oh, wondrous deed of Deity! Oh, mighty feat of love accomplished once for all! The Redeemer never offered Himself to death before. He never will do it again. (The Key to Holiness)

Our words fail and our ideas falter at the thought of the great Substitute, with all the sins of His people condensed into one black liquid and set before Him, for Him to drink. Can we think of Him as putting that cup to His lips, and drinking, drinking, drinking all the wrath, until He had drained the cup to the bottom and filled Himself with horror? Yet, He has finished the death-drink and turned the cup upside down, crying, "**IT IS FINISHED**" (John 19:30). In one tremendous drink, the loving Lord has drained destruction dry for all His people, and there is no dreg nor drop left for any one of them, for now is the will of God accomplished. (The Key to Holiness)

You know, beloved, that the Jew in his ceremonial purification, never had his conscience free from sin. After one sacrifice, he needed still another, for these offerings could never make those who came there perfect. The next day's sins needed a new lamb, and the next year's iniquity needed a new victim for an atonement. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:12). No more burnt offerings are needed, no more washing, no more blood, no more atonement, no more sacrifice. Hear the dying Savior cry "It is finished!" (John 19:30). Your sins have sustained their death-blow, the robe of your righteousness has received its last thread. It is done, complete, perfect. It needs no addition; it can never suffer any diminution. (Strong Faith)

Jesus Christ exclaimed, "**IT IS FINISHED**" (John 19:30). This concerned Christ's own labor, but the Holy Spirit cannot say that. The Holy Spirit still has more to do, and until the consummation of all things, when the Son Himself becomes subject to the Father, "It is finished" will not be said by the Holy Spirit. (Holy Spirit Power)

When Christ said **IT IS FINISHED**, the words had effect on heaven. Before, the saints had been saved as it were on credit. They had entered heaven, God having faith in his Son Jesus. Had not Christ finished his work, surely they must have left their shining spheres, and suffered in their own persons for their own sins. I might represent heaven, if my imagination might be allowed a moment, as being ready to totter if Christ had not finished his work; its stones would have been unloosed; massive and stupendous though its bastions are, yet had they fallen as earthly cities reel under the throes of earthquakes. But Christ said, '**IT IS FINISHED**', and oath, and covenant, and blood set fast the dwelling-place of the redeemed, made their mansions safely and eternally their own, and bade their feet stand immovably upon the rock. Moreover, that word '**IT IS FINISHED!**' took effect in the gloomy caverns and depths of hell. Then Satan bit his iron bands in rage, howling, 'I am defeated by the very man whom I thought to overcome; my hopes are blasted; never shall an elect one come into my prison house, never a blood-bought one be found in my abode.' Lost souls mourned that day, for they said, '**IT IS FINISHED!**' and if Christ himself, the substitute, could not be permitted to go free till he had finished all his punishment, then we shall never be free.' It was their double death-knell, for they said, 'Alas for us! Justice, which would not allow the Saviour to escape, will never allow us to be at liberty. **IT IS FINISHED** with him, and therefore it shall never be finished for us.' (365 Days with Spurgeon Volume 2)

MEDITATION ON "IT IS FINISHED" (John 19:30-note) which can also be translated "PAID IN FULL!" THREE words in English, ONE word in Greek – TETELESTAI! The GREATEST WORD from the GREATEST MAN on the GREATEST DAY in all eternity! One word, but no word ever uttered has so changed the history and destiny of mankind. In Latin tetelestai is rendered with two words "Consummatum est" (It is consummated!) Jesus spoke 7 times on the Cross (Lk 23:34-note; Jn 19:36-note; Lk 23:42-note; Mt 27:46-note; Jn 19:28,30-note, Lk 23:46-note). TETELESTAI was Jesus' next to last word and was followed by "Father, INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." (Lk 23:46-note). "**IT IS FINISHED!**" "Yes, indeed/Finished, ev'ry jot/Sinner, this is all you need/Tell me, is it not?" (Ira Sankey)

As Spurgeon says TETELESTAI conveys "an ocean of meaning in a drop of language, a mere drop. It would need all the other words that ever were spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether immeasurable. It is high; I cannot attain to it. It is deep; I cannot fathom it. **IT IS FINISHED** is the most charming note in all of Calvary's music. The fire has passed upon the Lamb. He has borne the whole of the wrath that was due to His people. This is the royal dish of the feast of love." J C Ryle wrote that "It is surely not too much to say, that of all the seven famous sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more remarkable than TETELESTAI." A C Gaebelein adds "Never before and never after was ever spoken ONE WORD which contains and means so much. It is the shout of the mighty Victor. And who can measure the depths of this ONE WORD!" A W Pink writes that "Eternity will be needed to make manifest all that TETELESTAI contains." Matthew Henry described TETELESTAI as a "comprehensive word and a comfortable one." Charles Simeon adds that 'since the foundation of the world there never was a single word uttered, in which such diversified and important matter was contained. Every word indeed that proceeded from our Saviour's lips deserves the most attentive consideration: but TETELESTAI eclipses all. To do justice to it, is beyond the ability of men or angels: its height, and depth, and length, and breadth, are absolutely unsearchable."

Clearly to contemplate TETELESTAI is to come to the realization that "the place whereon we stand is holy ground." May the Holy Spirit help us to comprehend and to handle rightly "this text which is at once so small and yet so great!"

It has been well said that Christ's RESURRECTION is the Father's "AMEN" to His Son's declaration "**IT IS FINISHED**." Looking at the Cross we see the work of redemption completed. Looking at the open tomb we see Jesus' finished work fully accepted by the Father. The payment required for sin is death (cf Ge 2:17-note, Ro 5:12-note, Ro 6:23-note) and when Christ said TETELESTAI, He was saying that the sin debt was "PAID IN FULL!" If you believe that dear reader, His righteousness has been credited to your account (Ro 4:3-note, Ro 4:24-note, Gal 3:6-7-note). We owed a debt we could never pay. Jesus paid a debt He did not owe! Tony Evans says "All the funds necessary to pay for our total redemption were put up by Jesus Christ on the Cross." Or as Warren Wiersbe put it "He took my bankruptcy and covered it with His solvency." He didn't just make a down payment and then expect me to keep up the installments. "But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26-note). His empty tomb and His resurrection are indisputable testimony to the fact that the Father accepted His Son's payment for sin on our behalf, as our Substitute. Thus TETELESTAI is not a cry of defeat of a dying Man, but a cry of triumph of a Living, Life Giving Redeemer, a divine proclamation that the WORK OF REDEMPTION had been fully, finally and forever accomplished (cf Jn 4:34-note, Jn 17:4-note).

Spurgeon adds "What a grand utterance (is "Tetelestai")! Now are we safe, for salvation is complete. The (sin) debt was now, to the last farthing, all discharged. The atonement and propitiation were made once and for all and forever, by the one offering made in

Jesus' body on the Tree. There was the cup; Hell was in it; the Savior drank it—not a sip and then a pause—not a draught (a single act of drinking) and then a ceasing. He drained it till there is not a drop left for any of His people. The great ten-thronged whip of the Law was worn out upon His back. There is no lash left with which to smite one for whom Jesus died. The great cannonade ("continuous heavy gunfire") of God's justice has exhausted all its ammunition—there is nothing left to be hurled against a child of God (Beloved, do you believe these great benefits are yours in Christ?). Sheathed is thy sword, O Justice! Silenced is thy thunder, O Law! There remains nothing now of all the griefs and pains and agonies which chosen sinners ought to have suffered for their sins, for Christ has endured all for His own beloved (1Th 1:4-note) and IT IS FINISHED. Christ has paid the debt which all the torments of eternity could not have paid. Once again—when He said, "IT IS FINISHED," Jesus had totally destroyed the power of Satan, of sin and of death. The Champion accepted the challenge to do battle for our soul's redemption against all our foes. He met Sin. Horrible, terrible, all-but omnipotent Sin nailed Him to the Cross. But in that deed, Christ nailed Sin also to the tree. There they both did hang together—Sin and Sin's Destroyer. Sin destroyed Christ and by that destruction Christ destroyed Sin."

TETELESTAI is the perfect tense (see below) of the verb *teleo* which is derived from *telos* (a goal achieved, a consummation, a result attained) and means to bring something to a successful end to or to its intended or destined goal. It does not mean just to complete a task but to carry it out fully, to bring it to the finish or to perfection. It follows that Jesus' cry of TETELESTAI is a word of finality. The idea is "It is finished, it stands finished, and it always will be finished!" His work of redemption is complete and nothing needs to be or can be added to it. Sin is atoned for (Heb 9:12-note, Heb 10:12-note), Satan is defeated and rendered powerless (Heb 2:14-15-note, 1Jn 3:8), every requirement of the Law has been satisfied and God's holy wrath against sin has been satisfied (or propitiated) (Ro 3:25-note, Heb 2:17-note, 1Jn 2:2, 4:10). Redemption is eternally secured. We are reconciled in Christ's "fleshly body through death" that we might be presented before God "holy and blameless and beyond reproach." (Col 1:22-note). Speaking of Christ's cry of TETELESTAI, Frank Boreham makes the interesting observation that "This divine self-satisfaction appears only twice, once in each Testament. When He completed the work of Creation, He looked upon it and said that it was "very good," (Ge 1:31-note) when He completed the Work of Redemption, He cried with a loud voice TETELESTAI! (Jn 19:30) It means (in essence) the same thing."

THE PERFECT TENSE: TETELESTAI is in the perfect tense which describes a PAST completed act with PRESENT effect, emphasizing that the past completed event of Christ's death on the Cross has ongoing, even permanent effects. Jesus' sacrifice may have occurred in time and space, but its results will last for eternity! In other words, when Jesus declared "IT IS FINISHED", He was saying that His mission to redeem sinners had reached its intended goal and that the benefits to the redeemed would last throughout eternity. Erwin Lutzer adds that "This means that my sins are on Jesus, not on me. Yes, there is sin within me but not on me. My sinful nature keeps luring me toward sin, and even in my best moments my works are tainted with selfish motives. But legally, I am accepted on the basis of the merit of Jesus. Figuratively speaking, I have a new set of clothes and a clear record in heaven. The righteousness of Jesus has been (forever) credited to my account." All that truth in one Greek tense! Beloved our Redeemer's ransom payment is sufficient for this life and the life to come! May God enable us by His Spirit, to live victoriously in light of the truth of this "Word of the Cross" (especially the great word "tetelestai") which is the "power of God" to us "who are being saved (daily by the Spirit)" (1Cor 1:18-note).

Observe how the word TETELESTAI was commonly used in the ancient world:

(1) SERVANTS: Servant used TETELESTAI when reporting to their master, "I have COMPLETED (TETELESTAI) the work assigned to me". In another ancient secular Greek text we read of the example of a father sending his son on a mission. The son was not to return until he had performed the last act of the mission. When he did return from a successful mission, he used the word TETELESTAI to report to his father that he had accomplished the goal. As Jesus Himself testified "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to ACCOMPLISH (*teleioo* - also derived from *telos* = goal) His work. I glorified Thee on the earth, having ACCOMPLISHED (*teleioo*) the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (And so He laid down His life for His friends." (Jn 6:38-note, Mk 10:45, Jn 4:34-note, Jn 17:4-note, Jn 15:13-note)

(2) PRIESTS: Priests would examine animals for blemishes before they were sacrificed. If the lamb was faultless, perfect, and acceptable, the priest would say, "TETELESTAI!" Jesus is the Lamb of God Who alone was "without sin" (Heb 4:15-note, cf Jn 1:29-note, 1Cor 5:7-note). As Peter testifies we "were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." (1Pe 1:18-19-note)

(3) ARTISTS: Frank Boreham writes that "When the painter or the sculptor had put the last finishing touches to the vivid landscape or the marble bust, he would stand back a few feet to admire his masterpiece, and, seeing in it nothing that called for correction or improvement, would murmur fondly, 'Tetelestai!' 'Tetelestai!' IT IS FINISHED!" All the Old Testament "pictures" (types) of Messiah were fulfilled in Christ and were only a "shadow of what is to come; but the substance (reality) belongs to Christ." (Col 2:17-note). The death of Jesus on the Cross "finished the picture" of redemption, a masterpiece which had been in the Father's heart "from

before the foundation of the world" (1Pe 1:20-note, 2Ti 1:9-note).

(4) MERCHANTS: In ancient times when a promissory note was paid, the one holding the note wrote "TETELESTAI" across it. A deed to property was not in effect until it was dated and signed, and when this was accomplished, the clerk wrote "TETELESTAI" across the deed. When someone had a debt and it was paid off, the creditor would write "TETELESTAI" on the certificate of debt signifying that it was "PAID IN FULL". Several years ago, archaeologists digging in Egypt uncovered the "office" of an ancient "CPA." In this office they found a stack of bills, with the Greek word "tetelestai" inscribed across each bill - "Paid in full!" When Christ gave Himself on the Cross, He fulfilled all the righteous demands of the law and our "sin debt" was PAID IN FULL. The OT sacrifices covered sin but could never take sin away. Jesus accomplished what all of the old covenant sacrifices could not do. "In eternity the Son gave the Father a "promissory note" that He would pay the price for humanity's redemption (see Heb 10:5-7-note). On Calvary the note was PAID IN FULL. TETELESTAI!" (H H Hobbs) As Spurgeon said "There is no mortgage on the saints." Wayne Grudem adds that "If Christ had not paid the full penalty, there would still be condemnation left for us. But since he has paid the full penalty that is due to us, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Ro 8:1-note).

(5) PRISONERS: FYI - While the following illustration of Tetelestai is "attractive" and sounds Biblically reasonable, I have been unable to document that this description was the actual practice in Roman prisons. Therefore one might want to either ignore this illustration or use it as an illustration but with a qualifying explanation. The esteemed pastor Adrian Rogers used this illustration in at least five messages, but unfortunately he did not reference a specific resource.

When a Roman citizen was convicted of a crime, he was thrown into prison. A "Certificate of Debt" listing all his crimes was nailed to his cell door so that anyone passing by could know what he had been accused of and the penalty assessed. When the prisoner had served his sentence and was released from bondage, the indictment was taken down from the door and the judge who had put him in prison would sign the indictment and write across it the word TETELESTAI. The freed prisoner was then given this document and if questioned as to why he was out of jail, he could point to the indictment across which the judge had written TETELESTAI. He could rest in safety and security because the word TETELESTAI guaranteed his deliverance and his liberty. The charges for those crimes could never again be brought against him. He would never be a victim of "double jeopardy" (having to pay for the same crime twice). When Jesus cried "TETELESTAI" on the cross, He was saying that anyone who places his trust in His sacrificial death on their behalf, receives in essence a "certificate of debt" with the inscription of "tetelestai", indicating that all their "crimes" (past, present and future) against God have been PAID FOR IN FULL! In light of this truth, Paul could write that because our debt was PAID IN FULL by Jesus, God "has forgiven you all your sins: Christ has utterly wiped out (Greek = completely obliterated) the condemning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over His own head on the Cross. And then having drawn the sting of all the powers ranged against us, He exposed them, shattered, empty and defeated, in His final glorious triumphant act!" (Col 2:14-15 Phillips-note) Erwin Lutzer adds that "On the cross, the justice of God was fully satisfied when our heavenly Substitute paid the great price of ransom. As Spurgeon put it, we can stand with confidence despite the thunder of the law and the lightening flash of justice, "for we are safe beneath the cross." He paid the very last cent of the wages of our sin."

Beloved, Satan may accuse us of "high treason" against God (read Rev 12:10-note), but now and forever "we have an Advocate (paraclete) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous" (1Jn 2:1-2-note) Who cries "I object" to every accusation of the Adversary, to which the Father says "Objection Sustained!" Yes, when we sin, we need to confess and repent in order to enjoy fellowship with God (1Jn 1:9-note), but our our eternal salvation is never in doubt or subject to "double jeopardy" because Christ has once and for all time cried "TETELESTAI!" Beloved child of God, if you have a sin regarding which you find it difficult to accept the Father's full forgiveness, let your mind dwell on the truth of "TETELESTAI," and then put that sin on God's ledger and write "Paid in Full" next to it! The truth inherent in the word TETELESTAI should give every believer great assurance, comfort and peace that all of our sin debt, past, present and future, is PAID IN FULL and there remains no sacrifice to be paid! There is nothing we must or even could contribute to the remission of our debt, except receive the "free gift of eternal life" by faith (Ro 6:23b-note). Jesus "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God." (Heb 10:12-note). As the hymn writer E M Hall put it "Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow."

Andrew Murray writes that "every day that our confidence grows fuller in Christ's FINISHED WORK must see our heart more entirely yielding itself like Him, a whole burnt offering in the service of God and His love."

Spurgeon says that "The general religion of mankind is "DO," but the religion of a true Christian is "DONE." IT IS FINISHED is the believer's conquering word. INCARNATE LOVE has fulfilled His self-imposed task. Jesus, as the Substitute for sinners, was condemned to die, and He died that He might finish the work of our redemption. Your sins have sustained their death-blow, the robe of your righteousness has received its last thread (cf 1Cor 1:30-note, 2Cor 5:21-note). It is done, complete, perfect. It needs no

addition; it can NEVER suffer any diminution. Oh, Christian, do lay hold of this precious thought. I may not be able to state it except in weak terms, but let not my weakness prevent your apprehending its glory and its preciousness. This thought is enough to make a man leap, though his legs were chained with irons, and to make him sing, though his mouth were gagged. We are PERFECTLY ACCEPTED in Christ, and our justification is not partial (cf Ro 5:1-note, Ro 5:9-note, Ro 8:30-note). It does not go to a limited extent, but goes the whole way. Our unrighteousness is covered. From condemnation we are entirely and irrevocably free. 'Consummatum est. The work is done, redemption is accomplished; the salvation of My people is forever secured. Sin will never be mentioned against them anymore, forever. Oh, wondrous deed of Deity! Oh, mighty feat of love accomplished once for all!"

J C Ryle encourages us to REST our souls on the finished work of Christ (Heb 4:10-11-note) noting that "We need not fear that either sin or Satan or law shall condemn us at the last day. We may lean back on the thought, that we have a Savior Who has done all, paid all, accomplished all, performed all that is necessary for our salvation. We may take up the challenge of the Apostle, "Who is the one who condemns? (cf Ro 8:1-note) Christ Jesus is He Who died, yes, rather Who was raised, Who is at the right hand of God; Who also (continually) intercedes for us." (Ro 8:34-note). When we look at our own works, we may well feel ashamed of their imperfections. But when we look at the FINISHED WORK of Christ, we may feel peace (cf Heb 12:2-note)." Hallelujah!

Spurgeon "Christ has said, "IT IS FINISHED!" and we must cease to work too (Ro 4:3-note), not only with our hands but with our souls—working no more for life, for that is given; working no more for justification, for that is concluded; but to-day RESTING in Christ (cp Ro 4:5-6-note, Mt 11:28-30-note) for "It is finished!" There is nothing for God to do. "IT IS FINISHED." There is nothing for you to do. "IT IS FINISHED." Christ need not bleed. "IT IS FINISHED." You need not weep. "IT IS FINISHED." God the Holy Spirit need not delay because of your unworthiness, nor need you delay because of your helplessness. "IT IS FINISHED." Every stumbling block is rolled out of the road; every gate is opened. The bars of brass are broken, the gates of iron are burst asunder. "IT IS FINISHED." Come and welcome; come and welcome!" This is exactly what the great missionary **Hudson Taylor**, founder of China Inland Mission, did as he meditated on "IT IS FINISHED" writing that "There dawned upon me the joyous conviction that since the whole work was finished and the whole debt was paid upon the Cross there was nothing for me to do but to fall upon my knees, accept the Savior and praise Him forevermore." Amen!

The evangelist **Alexander Wooten** was approached by a young man who asked, "What must I DO to be saved?" Wooten replied "It's too late!" The young man became alarmed asking "Do you mean that it's too late for me to be saved? Is there nothing I can DO?" Wooten replied "Too late! It's already been DONE! (IT IS FINISHED!) The only thing you can DO is BELIEVE."

It is done. Tetelestai. Finished!

"Jesus Paid It All" from Passion 2006...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brVlXIJRkQ>

Lifted up was He to die,

"It is finished," was His cry;

Now in heaven exalted high;

Hallelujah! what a Saviour.

-Phillip Bliss

[Hallelujah, What a Savior - Shelly Moore Band](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2j0rYJI37yg)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2j0rYJI37yg>