

# John 19:30

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[ 0 : 00 ] The Stephen God's head was turned to John chapter 19, and we'll take this over text, words defined in verse 30. Verse 30, so when Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, it is finished.

And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit. It is finished. As I'm sure we all know, Jesus spoke seven times from the cross.

The first two words are what we might call words of affection. Father, he says, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing.

And then he turns to the penitent thief, and he says to him, Truly I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise.

And the third word from the cross is also a word of affection. He speaks to his mother, and he says, woman, behold your son. And he speaks to his beloved disciple, and he says, son, behold your mother.

[ 1 : 12 ] The affection, the love, the care, the concern, the compassion, comes across in all these statements from the cross. The next two are words of affliction.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? I thirst. Words that speak to us deeply of the sufferings that he's going through, both in his body and in his soul.

And then the last two words of the cross are words of accomplishment. Words that point to him having fulfilled the work that he had been given to do.

It is finished. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. This morning I'd like to look with you at the words, it is finished.

Really one word in the original. The word is tetelestai. What I would like to look at with you is this.

[ 2 : 31 ] I want to see, first of all, how these words tell us that God's saving purposes, that God's plan, has now been fulfilled as Christ has come and as Christ has fulfilled all that the Old Testament scriptures spoke of in relation to his sufferings as our great sin bearer.

And then I want to see just again how in Christ's death, payment is made for our sins. And finally just a word of how the power of the devil is destroyed as our self to Christ's finished work.

Here on the cross, Jesus is clearly in complete control of all that is going on. He himself has said prior to this, that he's going to lay down his life.

No man, he says, will take it from me. I, he says, am going to lay it down of myself. And here, Jesus is demonstrated that he is in complete control of all that is happening.

Because from the narratives that we have, it is evident that even as he speaks the last word from the cross, that he is crying out with a loud voice.

[ 4 : 10 ] It is finished. In one sense, it wasn't all finished. Because the death of Jesus was not going to be the end of the story.

And how thankful we ought to be today that death was not the end for Jesus. Jesus rose again from the dead. Jesus ascended into heaven.

Today we have an advocate with the Father who is Jesus Christ the right. He lives forever to intercede for us.

And he's going to return to receive his people to be with himself. So in that sense, it's not all finished. But in another sense, it is.

Because all that the law and the prophets have been speaking of in relation to what our Saviour must do in order to procure our salvation, is now being fulfilled.

[ 5 : 14 ] And I believe that he's thinking here of psalms such as the psalms that we've been singing this morning. And Old Testament prophecies such as Isaiah 53.

And now he knows that having been led by a lamb to the slaughter, and you could quote numerous other scriptures that may very well have been before his mind at this point, he knows that everything has come to pass.

And he's speaking as if all that is yet to be is sure and certain as well. Earlier on, Jesus said that he had completed the work that had been given him to do.

It was as sure and certain as if it was already complete. And here he's saying in this word, Tetelestai, that God's salvation plan has now been fulfilled in him.

God's purposes have come to pass. God used the hands of wicked men for the fulfilment of his own purposes. As we read in the Pentecostal sermon in Acts 2.

[ 6 : 40 ] He was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain. But behind it all lay the purposes of God, has pleased the Lord to bruise him.

He has put him to clean. And Jesus is here saying that nothing more needs to be added to what he has done.

Jesus is here saying that it is all accomplished, that everything is now ready for his people to experience and indeed enjoy his salvation.

Jesus is here making clear to all of us today that there is nothing that we can add to, and that there is nothing that we dare subtract from whose finished work.

In his book, the seven saints of the Saviour on the Cross, A.W. Pente uses an illustration that I think really gets across powerfully the significance of these words for ourselves.

[ 7 : 56 ] Pente tells the story of a Christian farmer who was friendly with a joiner who was not a believer. And they used to have lots of discussions about the Christian faith.

The joiner always insisted that he himself had to contribute something to his salvation. He wasn't prepared to accept that Christ's finished work was all that was required.

And one day, having failed over a period of time to convince the joiner by argument, the Christian farmer asked him if he would make a gate for him for one of his fences.

And both of them went down and very carefully took the measurements required, and the joiner went away and worked for a period of time preparing this gate, making sure that he had it exactly right in terms of its dimensions and everything else.

And then when it was finished, he went up to the fence, didn't tell the farmer, and he put the gate in place. And then he went and spoke to the farmer and said, see that gate that you asked me to prepare for your fence?

[ 9 : 21 ] Well, he says, I've done it. It's complete. It's finished. Do you want to see it? And the farmer said, yes, I would love to see it. And the farmer came out of the house and, instead of going down with the joiner to see the finished article, he went into his shed.

And he gathered some boots of wood and some tools. And the joiner wondered what on earth the farmer was doing. But he said nothing.

And they walked together down to the fence. And there the joiner proudly showed the farmer his gate. And he said to him, isn't it perfect?

Made to measure everything exactly as you required it to be. The farmer stepped forward with his tools and with his boots and bobs of wood.

And he started adding little boots to it. And then he started knocking little boots off it. By which time the joiner was furious. He said, what do you think you're doing?

[ 10 : 33 ] Ruining my perfect gate? This gate that I finished for you, and that is fit for purpose, that is perfect in every way.

What are you doing? Why are you knocking boots off? Why are you adding boots to it? And the farmer said, well, seeing my verbal arguments did not convince you, I'm now showing to you, in this way, exactly what you're doing with Jesus.

What I'm doing with this state is what you're doing with Jesus. Talk about an action sermon. Talk about a visual aid. And he showed the joiner exactly what he was doing, in not accepting that Christ's finished work was all that was required for him to enter in through the gate and know the salvation of God.

And the farmer said, And the farmer said, you're angry with me for what I'm doing to your perfect gate. How do you think God is towards you if you will not accept the provision that he has made in Jesus, who says, I am the gate, or I am the door.

And the joiner saw it and came to realise, for himself, the significance of these words of Jesus. It is finished.

[12:10] I have completed. I have done it all. And I believe today that as we've gathered here and as we're at the Lord's table, all who are purely the Lord's know that we're here not because of anything we've done or not done, but because of what Jesus has done in our room and in our place.

Before I move on, let me tell you another story about a rather eccentric evangelist. Some evangelists have been known for their eccentricities.

And this particular evangelist was one day approached by someone who had heard him preach.

And this person said to him, what must I do to be saved?

What must I do to be saved? The evangelist knew the man. And he responded and he said to him, it's too late. You can't do anything.

And the man said, oh no, what must I do? The evangelist said, it's too late. It's already been done. You're not to add to it.

[13:32] You're not to take away from it. He's done it all. He has finished the work. He does. Jesus doesn't say, I am finished. But Jesus says, it is finished.

Today, it's on that basis and on that basis alone that his people are here at his table and that the offer has been extended to any who may not as yet have come to the place where they've accepted him as saviour or not yet been brought to the place where they're assured of God accepting and because of Jesus' finished work.

It is on this basis and on this basis alone that we have a gospel to proclaim that Jesus said, it is finished. The purposes of God have been fulfilled.

Lifted up was he to die. It is finished was his cry. Now in heaven exalted high, hallelujah, for the saviour.

But what was it that Jesus was doing as these prophecies were being fulfilled, as the purposes of God were coming to pass. Well, Jesus was there to pay the penalty due to us for sin.

[14:59] Jesus was there to pay the price that his people deserved to pay. As you read the gospels you, you read up what Osevier was prepared to go through for us.

I mentioned earlier that he spoke seven times from the cross and two of these statements were statements that spoke of great suffering, great affliction, both physical and mental and one might say spiritual as well.

I thirst. Oh yes, that's a profound statement. But perhaps, arguably, the most profound statement of all, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? You could preach forever on that text and go nowhere near exploring its height and length and depth and within its feet peace in a way that no man on earth has ever grasped of the enormity of what Jesus was doing and of the reason for it. What's the answer to the question? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Well, we could attempt various answers, but ultimately it amounts to this.

[16:38] He was forsaken so that his people will never be forsaken. And it's only because he was forsaken that we know, from what scripture tells us, that we will never, no, never, ever, ever be forsaken.

I've told you, some of you, the story before, of an old elder in Helmsdale who was quite cootty in his own typically sutherland way. And one night, just before going in to preach, he turned to me and he said, do you know what version of the Bible reads the same backwards as he reads forwards?

He was talking about English Bible. He had no knowledge of Greek or Hebrew or anything like that. And I said, no, you'd better tell me before I go in or else it'd be on my mind all night and I wouldn't even be able to focus on seven.

So he put me out of my and he said, it's this, I will never leave you forsake nor you leave never will I.

And he said, it doesn't matter which way you look at it, it's true. It doesn't matter which way you approach it from, it's true. I will never leave nor forsake you. You forsake nor you leave never will I.

[17:50] Why? Because he was forsaken for us. And all that your Savior is going through, is going through on our behalf.

He spoke on the Mount of Transfiguration of his death, which had to be accomplished at Jerusalem. And here he has made it clear that that death is now being accomplished and that what he's going

through is in order that we might be saved.

Bearing shame and scoffed rope in our place condemned he stood by consiring man to God. Hallelujah. What a Savior.

Jesus is there as a substitute. He's there as a representative. He's there for us. I once remembered hearing Don McLeod preach on Christ's died for us.

And I remember hearing him didn't rather carried away in his sermon as was known to happen. And he said, that word for is the greatest word in the gospel.

[ 19 : 15 ] And then he went on to explain. That word for is the greatest word in the gospel. He says it's because it brings Christ and the sinner together.

He's there in our place and he's there for our spiritual benefit for all eternity. And Jesus Christ, as he uttered this word, tetelestai, it is finished, is without doubt referring to what the Old Testament scriptures were speaking about in terms of him being the Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world.

You go right back to the very beginning in Genesis 3 and there you have the prophecy that one was going to come from the seed of the woman who would crush the serpent.

You go to Abraham and Isaac, God will provide himself a lamb for a burned dog flame. You go to Isaiah 53 years, he said earlier and again you see there all those hundreds of years before the prophet speaking so graphically of the one who was going to finish the work that was necessary for our salvation.

You have all the references in books such as Leviticus to the various offerings, to the scapegoat and the people can read all these accounts that may appear in and of themselves to be somewhat far removed from anything that we are familiar with and yet they were all pointing forward as they put it to the Hebrews so clear to what Jesus Christ was going to do as he was going to offer himself up as that one sacrifice that alone could satisfy divine justice and by which we would be reconciled to God and all these types are now fulfilled in them none of these Old Testament offerings in and of themselves could procure anyone's salvation but the one to whom they pointed was the one whose offering has procured that salvation for all his people not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altar slain could give this guilty conscience peace or wash away the sin but Christ the heavenly lamb takes all our sin away a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than me and that's what Christ is telling us here that what he's doing he's doing in order that he might put an end to sin in order that we might have a place to go to that our sins might be forgiven he has appeared says the writer to the Hebrews once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself what does he do he endures the cross despises the shame now he's saying

[ 23 : 17 ] I've done it I've done it all ten less time just finished I don't know who wrote these words but they explain what this is all about just finished the Messiah dies cut off Boston but not his own accomplished is the sacrifice the great redeeming work is done it is finished all the debt is paid justice divine is satisfied the grand and full atonement made God for a guilty world has died behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world one could spend hours and hours showing from so many passages of scripture right through the

Old Testament and into the New what these words really are all about of what that word is telling us and how we should rejoice today at the table and home should rejoice behind the table as well but in the gospel we're told of what our saviour has done and that nothing yet is required at our hands because he's done it all I think I'm right to say that in the conversion story of Douglas Macmillan he relates how himself and my predecessor David Paterson were together one day and David Paterson was trying to just trying to make Douglas see it and they were together for considerable amount of time and

David was trying one way or another just to get Douglas to see that Christ had done it all and during the course of time I think I'm right to say this that David said to Douglas now we're going to pray and David prayed and in his prayer he just happened to quote John 3 16 for God so loved the world that he gave his only God and son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life he quoted that as part of his prayer and then when he finished his prayer he turned to Douglas and said now you pray Douglas said I don't have a prayer but he said see that thing you said in your prayer David said what thing did I say in my prayer that thing about that thing about

God doing his son and all that does that mean I don't have to do anything because God did everything David you've got it that's exactly it he's done everything you need to do nothing but simply accept that salvation can be used on the basis of what Christ has done and not on the basis

of anything that you have ever done or will ever do and he saw it that day there in our home on the west coast of Scotland and I'm sure that everyone sitting at the table today can testify to the fact that they too have seen it that they too have grasped that it is because he finished the work that salvation is our wish to us when he has received gave him the life to be children of God payment is made a price has been paid he endured the hell that we deserve to endure expressed so marvellously and yet in a sense mysteriously in the words my God my God why have you forsaken that forsaken is there paid the price so if we could say with another he loved me and he gave himself for me so when Christ says it is finished he is telling us that all that the Old Testament scriptures have pointed to is now fulfilled he's telling us that he's there for us and he's telling us that the power of the devil is destroyed his foe is vanquished the devil has done his wish his hand has bled the

[ 29 : 14 ] Bible tells us that by Christ's death he has destroyed that that destroyed him who holds the power of death that is the devil and not only so but he has set free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death he has defeated the devil he has destroyed the devil and he has set his people free in Colossians we read these wonderful words having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphed over them by the cross the devil is defeated Christ is victor someone said himself victor himself victor too here he is for us going through all of this and at the same time demonstrating that death is conquered that he is doing and has done all that's necessary for the devil to be destroyed and because of this although

God's people fear before the devil Jesus wants us to know that in the highest sense of the word we have nothing to be afraid of because he's dead with it yes the devil is like a roaring lion prowling around seeing whom he may devour yes God's people know the devil as those who are not God's people don't know the devil even though they belong to him it was said of a certain evangelist of the past that he was so he was so often conscious of the devil's attacks that on one occasion when he was due to sweet son when he was advertised as a man who knows the devil better than most well the new testament tells us that we're not to be ignorant of his devices we're not to be ignorant of the wily schemes of the devil but on the cross Jesus has destroyed him who has as we saw who holds the power of death and Jesus has died that we might live

Jesus has died so that we might never die in the ultimate sense of that word so that whenever you're attacked by the devil as you no doubt will be remember the devil's power is as nothing compared to God's power I once remember hearing Douglas what will say in a sermon the devil may think he's powerful but God is all powerful and Jesus is the one who has destroyed Jesus is the one who has overcome and because he's overcome he encourages his people to know that we too shall overcome and all because of Teddy Lester all because of the fact that he fulfilled all that had to be fulfilled for our salvation the story is told of

Napoleon Bonaparte Napoleon of course was noted for his conquests but on one occasion Napoleon was present with some of his fellow soldiers and he had a map of the world in front of him or at least a map of Europe I think was a map of the world and on this map there was one red spot and that red spot happened to be Great Britain and Napoleon turned to his fellow soldiers and he said you know if it wasn't for that red spot I would have conquered the world changed days as our great witness he said do you know in the spiritual sense the devil may very well be saying the same the devil saying to his associates as he looks at the world do you know if it wasn't for that red spot I would have conquered but that red spot is not Great Britain that red spot is Calvary because of that red because of

Calvary the devil can't win Christ has won Christ has conquered and surely because of that and only because of that can we who are his people know for sure that we too shall overcome to go back to the poem I was quoting from earlier let me just share a few more verses from it before we draw this part of the service to a close the types and figures are fulfilled exacted is the legal pain the precious promises are sealed the spotless lamb of God is slain the reign of death and sin is over and all may live from sin set free

[ 35 : 04 ] Satan has lost his mortal power to swallow death in victory saved from the legal curse I am my savior hangs on yonder tree see there the meat expiring lamb tis finished he expires for me accepted in the well-beloved and clothed in righteousness divine I see the bar to heaven removed and all thy merits Lord are mine death hell and sin are now subdued all grace is now to sinners given and lo I fleet thee our towing blood and in thy white I claim my heaven Christ has conquered Christ has finished in the words of W.J.

Gunn the ransom of our soul is paid just finished conflict stern and sore the reign of sin and death is stayed Christ is king forever more and it's as those who recognise that Christ is king that Christ is Lord and we're so thankful today that he has finished and that he committed his spirit into his father's hand that we are here to do by his grace I trust seeking to commit ourselves too into those same hands are you thankful today that Christ did not say I'm finished but that Christ said it is finished Lord bless these thoughts on your word to us we know that we haven't even begun to explore the depth of meaning but we pray that anything that may have been said today would be applied by your spirit in a positive way to every heart present in order that we might be truly thankful today that it is accomplished that it is finished that Christ indeed has done it all for you glory sing amen a

Chop something don't fall or sing don't open n a finger oh■ that unt d you I I I