

## **It is Finished**

John 19:30

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### TRANSCRIPT:

John 19:30: "So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."

Let us pray. Oh Lord our God, we pray that in these few moments around Your word, we would be kept near the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by Your Holy Spirit, that You would raise our affections, that we might forever glory in the cross of our Savior. Oh Jesus, we love You. Help us to love You more. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

These three words in English, "it is finished," come from one word in the original language. But that one word, or these three words as is accurately translated in our translation, mean so much. You see, the Bible in many ways is like a mosaic or a puzzle where the individual pieces themselves do not seem to tell us much about the photo or about the image or about the art. But as you work through the different pieces of a mosaic and work through the different pieces of a puzzle, there comes this image, there comes this life, there comes this expression of design, of beauty, of magnificence. And the scripture is very much this way also. In that as we read our Bibles from Genesis through to Revelation, there are many pieces that don't seem to fit at the moment that we are reading them. But there are certain pieces that seem to bring out the picture. You know, in a puzzle or in a mosaic, when the centerpiece of the puzzle is done or the main part of the image is completed, it's pretty easy after that to get the rest of the puzzle done or to finish off the work. And these three words of scripture are very much like that centerpiece that helps all the other pieces come together and paint that wonderful picture. And the Bible is deliberate in the way it does this. God progressively unfolds His revelation to us over history, throughout time, and has desired and preserved His word in such a way that it communicates to us one grand theme of redemption through one unfolding story. And as we come to these words, Jesus', one of His last words on the cross, perhaps the second last word He said on the cross, His sayings, we have as it were that which is the centerpiece of the glorious plan of redemption set forth in the entirety of scripture. The Bible is like a

great musical composition, and we could say that this point in the scripture is like the crescendo. Here at the cross of Jesus, He said many things, all of which were very important. But these words here encapsulate the whole plan that was set forth from before the foundation of the world.

There are three words here: "it is finished." And the word "it" speaks to us of the work that the Savior was given to do. The Bible speaks of the Lord Jesus, in fact, Jesus speaks of Himself, saying that the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. The Bible teaches us Jesus Himself understood that His life work on earth was indeed a work given to Him by the Father, a mission. And so when Jesus there, hanging on the cross, cried out "it is finished," He points us to His work first and foremost by the representation of that word "it." And this work was not a work that Jesus simply came up with because He found Himself in the world and thought at the age of 12, "I might just do something very heroic for people." Like many of us do, we get a great vision of what our future may behold as we come into the world and grow up in the world, and we are informed and educated, we get ambitions and dreams and desires. Well, this was not what was like for Jesus; this was not just a good idea that He had at the time in which He lived. The Bible teaches us that what Jesus was given to do was given to Him before the foundation of the world. The Bible speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ in these ways: in Revelation, He's called the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. In fact, in First Peter, Peter says that He was truly foreordained before the foundation of the world, and in these last times has been made manifest for you. The Bible speaks of what Jesus Christ was doing as not something that was isolated in and of Himself, but it was the will of the Father. The Bible speaks that God sent His Son into the world. In fact, we see in the prophetic utterances in Psalm where it is said that the Lord said to His Son, or Jesus even was saying, He said, "A sacrifice and offering You would not, they're talking about God, You desired not, but a body You have prepared for me." This is the Son talking to the Father, understanding that the Father had prepared a body for the Son to assume, to take on humanity for a work. This all happened before Jesus was ever conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, and so we see that this work was not only planned but even as it seemed that the men in whom crucify, they crucified Jesus, that they were planning to crucify Him. The Bible says very clearly that all that they were doing was fulfilling that plan that God had made for His Son for the salvation of man before the foundation of the world. Peter on the day of Pentecost, preaching, says, "Him, being delivered by who He was delivered to you," he said to the Jews, "God delivered Him, the Son, to them, and you have taken and with wicked hands have crucified, but He was delivered to them." And it's what Peter says, according to the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God. In fact, when the apostles were threatened for the preaching of Jesus Christ, they got together in prayer, and they cried out

to the God who made heaven and earth and all that is in them, and they asked Him for boldness, but as they were praying in doing that, they said, "Lord, what Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles and the Jews and all that were gathered together against the Lord and His anointed, they did that which Your hand determined before to be done." You see, the cross of Jesus Christ was no accident; it was no mishap, no failure in the system; it was intrinsically designed by God to show the praises of His glorious grace. But not only does the Bible speak of this work as being planned, but it also speaks of this work as being promised. You see, God not only planned this work from eternity, but promised it in revelation to man. In fact, at the perfect hour, He promised it as our father and our parents, Adam and Eve, had fallen to sin and plunged the human race into sin and into depravity, there at the hour of despair, God confronted Satan, saying, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed," and then He said in the climax of that promise, "He will bruise your head, and you will bruise His heel." The promise that the seed of a woman shall come, Christ manifests in the flesh, and He would crush the serpent; He would destroy the works of the devil by His death. And so not only was the work planned, but the work of crushing the serpent's head and redeeming sinners out of every nation, tribe, tongue was planned and promised by God Almighty. But not only was it promised, it was prophesied of. God did not just make one promise there to Adam and Eve, and that was the end of it, but God continued to reveal His mercy generation upon generation. God sent His prophets to the nation of Israel, declaring that there will come one who will be a Savior. You just have to look at Isaiah chapter 53 to see the awesomeness of this: a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief, one who would be bearing our reproach, bearing our iniquities, bearing our sins, one who was like a lamb led to the slaughter, the one who would suffer for the transgressions of my people and make intercession for them, as Isaiah prophesies of. This is so clear throughout the entire scripture that when Jesus on the road to Emmaus there with His disciples, and they did not know Him and understanding, the Bible says that He opened up to them the scriptures from Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, and showed them the things concerning Himself. Oh, the blindness of man in the face of prophetic revelation to shut their eyes and ears to that which God has revealed. But not only was the work of redemption planned and promised and prophesied, it was pictured. As far as you can go, even back to the garden, God killed the animal and clothed Adam and Eve, and from that day of every day forward, there have been sacrifices and sacrifices that have all pointed forward to the promise. So much so that the nation of Israel on the day of atonement would, the sins of the people would be transferred to the animal by the laying on of hands of the priest, and that animal would go to the slaughter and would atone and cover the sins of the people, and all these sacrifices, day in, day out, sin offerings, all were testifying in picture, in type, and in shadow of the promised Messiah that would come and would crush the

serpent's head and would bring everlasting righteousness and life to those that are in darkness. God not only by His prophets made it known, not only He planned it and prophesied of it and promised it, but God Himself demonstrated it to the people of Israel in types and shadows and pictures, so much so that when John the Baptist saw the Lord Jesus Christ preparing the way for him, looked at Him and cried out with a loud voice, "Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world." All this was done prior to the coming of our Lord, so that when we see Jesus on that cross crying out "it is finished," we are not to read it as an isolated event of a poor man's that is suffering just like those two thieves on either side of him, but rather to view this in the glory of the plan of God and the promise of God and the prophetic utterances that God gave to His prophets and in the pictures and types and shadows which Jesus Christ had come to fulfill.

This work, the Bible teaches, not only was as everything we've spoken of already, but it was not only given in that way, planned in that way, but thanks be to God, it was pursued. The Lord Jesus Christ was very deliberate in what He did when He was on earth. He said to His disciples, "My food, my meat, my sustenance is to do the will of Him that sent me," and He said, "and to finish His work." The Lord Jesus Christ had this one consuming passion and goal and mission, that all that the Old Testament testified of, and all that are pictured, and all that the prophets had spoken, He, in time, in history, born of a woman, born under the law, came into the world to pursue the will of His Father. He says in John chapter 6, "I came from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me, and this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all that He has given me, I shall lose nothing, but I shall raise it up at the last day, and this also is the will of Him that sent me, that all who believe on Him shall have everlasting life." And the Bible teaches us that Jesus Christ not only had seen all these things, He understood His mission, and He pursued it to the very end. I love what He said in John chapter 12 when the Lord Jesus said, "Now my soul is troubled." He said, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, deliver me from this hour'? No, for this cause I came to this hour." It was for such a time as this when He saw the anguish of the cross and saw the pain and suffering, and not only the pain and suffering, He saw what the will of the Father would lead to, is that He would be forsaken of God, and He would be stricken, smitten, and afflicted for the sins of man, and seeing all that, He said, "This hour, yes, is troubling. Yes, it is, but what am I going to ask for? Deliverance from it? No, I have come for it."

You see, when Jesus cried "it is finished," He was thinking about the work that we have just spoken about, from its very inception in the mind of God, from all eternity, and to the day that He suffered and bled and died. And so He cries out, "It's..." but then He says, "is finished." The three words are translated from the Greek word "tetelestai," which means to be accom-

plished or to have that completed. In fact, the tense of the verb means that which has been completed and not only done and gone away with, but it remains completed and is established forever. And what Jesus is simply saying here is that the work of redemption has been finished, and it remains finished, that there is no more left to do with regards to satisfying the wrath of God for the sins of His people. Nothing more left to do. It is complete, it is finished, and it stands finished. And Jesus Christ, therefore, cried this out in the understanding of this, and what that simply means is that if it is finished and remains finished and cannot be improved upon and is forever finished, then we must understand this, that what Jesus Christ had finished was perfect, complete, and cannot be improved upon.

What did He finish? He accomplished that which the law of God required, and that was punishment for sin. Yes, all the types and the shadows pointed to the reality that mankind in sin, we who are dead in trespasses and in sins, has a debt to God that we cannot pay. In fact, that word "tetelestai" was often found on tax receipts and written on papyri going back many years ago. Tax receipts, and it was could be translated or also like this: "paid in full." What Jesus Christ was doing on the cross, what was happening to Him there, is that He was bearing in His body our sins. The punishment of the wrath of Almighty God fell upon Him instead of us. He was wounded, as the scripture says, for our transgressions, and He was bruised, as the Bible says, for our iniquities, and the chastisement of His peace was upon Him, and with His stripes, we are healed. You see, the Lord Jesus Christ was not only fulfilling Old Testament law, types, and prophecy, but He was paying a debt to God that we owed. A debt that we could not pay, that would plunge us forever into the depths of the eternal flame of hell. The debt that we could not pay with our own works, from our own hands. We could not give enough to God to satisfy the sin debt that was owing on our account, but God in love sent His Son for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and to save us from our sins forevermore. He did this. He fulfilled it. He satisfied it, and He did it once and for all. That the writer of Hebrews could say that by one offering, He has made one offering. He has settled the issue of sin. The Bible says one offering for sins forever. That's it. One offering for sins forever. Every day the priest goes in, and he sacrifices lambs and bulls upon the altar, and in those things are a remembrance of our sins. But this man, Christ Jesus, when He came, one sacrifice for sins forever. He's ascended up into heaven, seated on the right hand of the Father, and intercedes for those who know Him, who believe on Him, who trust in His precious blood.

It was Leon Morris who said this, "Jesus died with the cry of the victor on His lips. 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 that He came to do." Jesus is not saying that it is finished,

or finally I get to rest, or it's all done, this was a really hard day. No, no, no, no. When He died on the cross, it was the cry of a victor. "It is finished!" Loud He cried because He had finished that which the Father had given Him to do, and He did it perfectly in the satisfaction of the wrath of God for our sins. The cry of victory. The cry of salvation. The cry of mercy. The cry of hope. And because here Jesus cried "it is finished," you and I have a firm foundation upon which our souls may safely rest. If the work was not finished, or if the work required that we ourselves should add to it for its accomplishment, we could never truly rest in what has been accomplished at Calvary. But Jesus said "it is finished," so that our faith can find a resting place, not in device nor creed, but we may trust the ever-living one whose wounds for me shall plead. He says, "I need no other argument, I need no other plea. It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me. It is enough that Jesus saves. This ends my fear and doubt. A sinful soul I come to Him, He will never cast me out. I need no other argument, I need no other plea. It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me."

And if you believe in Jesus Christ this morning and have trusted what Jesus Christ has said and done and finished and accomplished, you may say with confidence that He died for me. As the Apostle Paul said, "For I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." He goes so far as to say, "I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain." Understand that if I'm to add anything to what Christ has done for my redemption, it is as if I am saying, "Jesus, what You did on the cross was not sufficient to redeem me from all my sin." No good works, no ritualism, no sacrament can suffice the wrath of Almighty God. But Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain; He washed it white as snow.

An encouragement for us this morning in the remembrance of these things is to realize that the blood which flowed from Calvary's mountain still flows to us today, and the Lord Jesus Christ that gave Himself for our sins, He stands as a Savior today and pleads with you this morning, "If any man thirsts, let him come to me and drink," or "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The Bible says there is no salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, and the wonderful thing is this, that what Jesus Christ has done for our redemption still extends to us today, still reaches sinners today, and He bids us come, to leave our sin, to leave the world behind us, to leave the things that enamor and take our thoughts and keep us from the glory of His redemption, and He says, "Come, be done with your sin, come to the cross, eat, drink, and live, believe on me, trust in me, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be

saved." He goes so far as to say, "Why should you perish, O house of Israel? Believe, turn, repent, and I will cleanse you, I will wash you, I will make you whiter than snow."

Here today stands a fountain open for cleansing, and all who come under the blood of Jesus Christ shall know mercy, shall know forgiveness. But my friend, you must come, you must come, you must see that your only hope is Jesus Christ, and that He is our salvation. And for we who believe in Jesus Christ, we come to a day like this to remember Him, and we say like the hymn writer, "Jesus, keep us near the cross, help us forever to glory in it, because You, by it, have changed us and saved us and redeemed us, and though we should be perishing in hell right now, though the ground under our feet should open and we should all fall into the pits of hell, You uphold us by Your loving kindness in Christ Jesus. You have saved us, and forever we should serve and worship this Lamb. Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small; but love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. There are no excuses for those that have tasted of the grace of God, for why we should not bear our cross and follow Him. Let us pray.