



When Jesus had tasted it, he said, “It is finished!” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19:30

LAST WORDS.

Week 6

Week 6, Day 1

Monday

"It is finished!"

John 19:30

John 19:30, 1 Corinthians 15:54-57

THE CRY OF VICTORY

"It is finished" is not a death gurgle. "It is finished" is not "I am done for." "It is finished" will not be, as we know from the tradition of the ordering of these words from the cross, the last words of Jesus. "It is finished" is a cry of victory. "It is finished" is the triumphant cry that what I came to do has been done. All is accomplished, completed, fulfilled work. The work that is finished, moreover, is the cross. He will be and is resurrected, but the resurrected One remains the One crucified." - Stanley Hauerwas - Cross-Shattered Christ



REFLECTION

Have you ever thought of these last words of Jesus as a victory cry? More specifically, have you ever thought of these last words of Jesus as your victory cry? The three words "It is finished" are a promise and confirmation that Jesus' life, torture, mockery, and crucifixion were not for nothing. It is a seal that His work of salvation is accomplished. It is a promise that we are heirs of His grace and sacrifice when we put our faith and lives in Him. Take a moment and write down these three words from John 19:30. Set a schedule to look at these words this morning, this afternoon, and this evening. Each time you look at them, thank God for what they mean for our lives.

John 19:30, John 1:1-5, Genesis 1:31-2:2

THE CONSUMMATION OF CREATION

"On the sixth day of creation "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). So on the seventh day "God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done" (Genesis 2:2). Accordingly the seventh day was hallowed. But God's work, the work of the Trinity, is consummated in Jesus's great declaration from the cross, "It is finished." His life, his death, his resurrection, as Irenaeus insisted, recapitulates creation, recapitulates God's covenant with Israel, uniting creation and redemption in Incarnation.

At the beginning of the Gospel of John we are told: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. - John 1:1-5

Creation has an end, creation is to be consummated, and the name of that end and consummation is Jesus." -Stanley Hauerwas Cross-Shattered Christ



REFLECTION

From the very beginning, God had a plan. God has always been at work to free and save His people. Christ upon the cross shouting "It is finished" is a declaration that has been working since creation. Everything in creation has been pointing towards Jesus since the beginning. Everything in creation continues to point towards Jesus' sacrifice and future return. Our lives are meant to be pointing toward this, too. Spend time reflecting on this day and seek to direct your life today towards the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

John 19:30, Colossians 1:24-27, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27,
Hebrews 12:1-14

FINISHED, BUT NOT OVER

A finish line is a relatively straightforward thing. In a race, whether biking, running a marathon, racing in a car, or swimming a distance, there is a destination that marks when the competition is complete. The competitors work, train, prepare, and execute to attempt to cross that finish line. After the work is done and the race has been won or completed, the work that has led to this moment is finally at an end. Pretty simple.

Scripture refers to life as a race. Paul talked about it this way: the author of Hebrews referred to it in this manner, and when we look at Jesus' final words on the cross, we are reminded of this image, too. Life is a race where everyone is seeking the finish line of the "purpose," "meaning," or "ultimate fulfillment" of life, but scripture is clear that the finish line is Christ, and the race is not our attempt to receive Him, but our attempt to keep our eyes on Him. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He declared the race won for all who call Him Father and Savior.

The race is finished, and we know we have victory in Jesus, but that does not mean that the work of the race is over. We still must point ourselves towards Jesus who crossed the finish line for us. We must train our hearts and minds in this life to walk towards Him, reflect Him, share Him, and trust in Him. The race is finished, but the work we must do in this already-won race of life is not over. Don't lose sight of the finish line. Keep heading daily toward it, toward Him.

"It is finished.' But it is not over. God remains at work, making us, his creatures, divine." - Stanley Hauerwas - Cross-Shattered Christ



REFLECTION

For any race that is meant to be run, there is training involved. The race of life is the race of training the soul for an eternity with Jesus. Spend time today making a "training plan." Specifically, pray and assess your heart and life towards God. Ask yourself where you feel you fall short of keeping your life in line with Christ, and make a plan for how to keep your steps centered on Christ. Invite Him into those areas of weakness.

John 19:30, John 1:29-36, Hebrews 10:1-4

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

"There is no aspect of Christian faith more difficult for us to believe. It is in the nature of the human being to think that Christ's work could not possibly be finished, that we have to do more, we have to add to it, we have to earn it." -Fleming Rutledge The Seven Last Words from the Cross

These three last words of Jesus are the hardest for us to believe because they are words said outside of our efforts, outside of our worthiness, and outside of our repayment. The gracious gift of Jesus' sacrifice is so nearly impossible to believe because there's nothing we can compare it to in this life. It's so radical, beautiful, and kind that we can't wrap our hearts or minds around it. The closest we can get to understanding it is to think of someone paying off a sizable financial debt that we couldn't pay or of someone taking our place for a crime that is worthy of death, but even still, these images fall short of what Jesus did for us.

The same was true of the Jewish people at this time. They were hardwired to believe that their sins could only be forgiven based on their ritualistic sacrifices to God. Goats, rams, bulls, and lambs were the offerings of forgiveness from God for hundreds of years. When Jesus came, He lived the perfect, spotless life and yet took on the torture, the sinful pains of separation from God, and mockery upon the cross. He became the sacrificial lamb of all sacrificial lambs. Never again would animal sacrifices or the work of atonement be necessary. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He declared that the impossible was now possible. He stated that freedom was here and had a name, Jesus. Behold the Lamb of God who has saved us from our sins and repaid the debts our lives never could.



REFLECTION

It is so hard to believe you are forgiven. We know ourselves better than anyone else. Thankfully, there's another who actually knows us even better, Jesus, and in spite, actually, because of His deep knowledge and understanding of who we are, He has forgiven and saved us. Begin a practice today that might help you to trust that you are forgiven. Write down Jesus' last words, "It is finished," and follow that with writing, "He has forgiven me. I am set free." Try this practice when you struggle to remember or believe what He has done for you. End this time by thanking Him for this glorious gift.

Luke 23:34, Luke 23:43, John 19:26, Matthew 27:46, John 19:28, John 19:30

"'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..." - Charles Spurgeon Christ's Dying Word for His Church

"'It is finished!' Jesus' final word (tetelestai in the ancient Greek) was the cry of a winner. Jesus had finished the eternal purpose of the cross. It stands today as a finished work, the foundation of all Christian peace and faith, paying in full the debt we righteously owed to God and making peace between God and man." - David Guzik Enduring Word Commentary

"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." - Leon Morris

"The verb telew (teleo, 'to finish') was used in first and second centuries in the sense of 'fulfilling' or 'paying' a debt and often appeared in receipts. Jesus' statement 'It is finished' (tetelestai, tetelestai) could be interpreted as 'Paid in full.'" - Tommy Tenney

"The ugliness of his Crucifixion corresponds to the ugliness of the sin of the world. He has passed through his ordeal "out of bondage into freedom, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life." It is finished. It is accomplished. It is enough. It is once- for all." - Fleming Rutledge - The Seven Last Words from the Cross



REFLECTION

Spend today re-reading Jesus' last words. Read these quotes from Christian pastors, preachers, commentators, and authors. Meditate on these reminders of what Jesus' last words mean. Ask God to help these words be imprinted on your heart.

Week 6, Day 6

Saturday

Reflection Day

REFLECTION NOTES AND QUESTIONS

This week we looked at Jesus' last words from John 19:30, "*It is finished*". As we wrap up this week's study, go back and read John 19:30. Reflect on these words that Jesus spoke. Reflect on what they mean about His character, His work on the cross, and how it should change the way we see Him and live. Reflect/journal your thoughts on this or these following prompts:

- Write down what you learned about who God is this week.
- What is something you looked at this week that you want to receive from God in greater measure? Why?
- How can you begin to posture your life to receive more from Him?

Week 6, Day 7

Palm Sunday

Rest Day

Luke 19:28-40

What is Palm Sunday? Traditionally, Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter Sunday when Christians remember and reflect upon Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, which marked His final week of life on earth. Palm Sunday is meant as a preparation for our hearts as we turn towards Holy Week, a time set aside to remember Jesus' final days, arrest, trial, torture, crucifixion, and ultimately His resurrection.

Palm Sunday kicks off the heaviness of Holy Week with a glimpse of the joy that comes from seeing Jesus for who He really is. Palm Sunday reminds our hearts that the story of the crucifixion and sacrifice of Jesus, although weighty on our hearts, begins and ends with a celebration. The King has entered the sacrificial chamber and is preparing to free the world with His life, yet not even the power of death can stop Him from His glorious return and resurrection.

This is what we remember and celebrate today on Palm Sunday: the King entering into His final and greatest battle, the battle for our souls. Spend time thanking Jesus today for His glorious entry into Jerusalem and ask Him to help turn your heart to worship Him daily as the King and Savior that He is.

Use today to rest, pray, and catch up on any of this week's readings you may have missed. Use today as a preparation for your heart toward the next week's study of God and His word.