

John Chapter 19 v 30

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[0 : 00] Lord, as we read those words, carrying his own cross, Jesus went out.

We are reminded that he is a model for us and he told us that we must take up our cross daily.

And again we realize that his crucifixion and his cross was unique. And we thank you again that he did what no other man could possibly do. Died for the sins of a vast multitude.

So we thank you for the sinless saviour dying for sinful men and women. Lord, as we think of taking up our cross daily and denying ourselves, we think of those in other countries who daily face death. And by owning the Lord Jesus, are taking up that cross which could lead to martyrdom. And so we remember persecuted believers especially.

[1 : 08] We have been told that the Pakistan churches are on high alert at this very time during the Easter services, fearing that there could be bombs, destruction, violence upon the lives of your people meeting at the Easter services.

And so we do pray for your protection. We do pray for your people in that land, living dangerously all the time. And then there are so many other countries where life is so terribly precarious for your people.

We think of Eritrea where thousands are fleeing and the choice is there, flee or stay. So Lord, we pray for your people there.

And then also on the East African coast, Somalia, where Al-Shabaab militants linked to Al-Qaeda, constantly perpetrating violence upon your people.

Lord, we can't imagine what it must be like to live day by day in places like that when we live in such safety and security. So we thank you for them, pray for your protection.

[2 : 22] And then as we again read these verses, we see the theme of kingship. Jesus, the King of the Jews. Pilate asking Jesus, are you a king?

And we thank you, Lord, that your kingdom, the kingdom of Jesus, is not of this world. And that we all need King Jesus to reign in our hearts, to be the king of our lives, telling us what we should be doing each day, just guiding our thoughts and actions.

So Lord, we do pray for King Jesus, that his kingdom may be established in the hearts of more and more, especially in this country.

And then we look forward to the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. We thank you that the kingship of Jesus will one day be manifest to all.

And then we thank you for the detail that we read. And we read that lovely detail of Jesus' care for his mother and the disciple whom he loved.

[3 : 34] And so we, again, we see our lovely Saviour, even in the agony of crucifixion, caring for his mother, providing for her.

And so we thank you for the love of Jesus, which is lavished upon each one of us. Each one of us can know the love of Jesus lavished upon us.

And so may we follow in his footsteps and may we care for others, look to see those in need. Lord, we thank you for the fellowship that you've called here, called us together.

Make us a fellowship of those who love each other deeply in the Lord. And so we pray for your continued blessing upon your word.

In Jesus' name, amen. Come to the third of our readings now, which is in John 19, carrying on where we finished.

[4 : 41] Verse 28. If you have the Church Bible page, 1088. Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, I am thirsty.

A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of a hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, It is finished.

With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Now it was the day of preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers, therefore, came and broke the legs of the first man, who had been crucified with Jesus. And then those of the other. When they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.

[6 : 06] He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happen so that the scripture would be fulfilled. Not one of his bones will be broken.

And as another scripture says, they will look on the one they've pierced. Later, Joseph of Amrathia asked Pilate for the body of Jesus.

Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who had earlier visited Jesus at night.

Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 35 kilograms. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it with the spices in strips of linen.

This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.

[7 : 09] Because it was the Jewish day of preparation, and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. Let's briefly pray together.

Whenever we think about the cross of your Son, the Lord Jesus, whenever we stop to consider all that took place on that day we call Good Friday, we have to say, O Lord, we don't understand. We can't really take it in. We can't fully comprehend what went on, what was so special, what was so momentous about this event. We can't fully comprehend everything that Jesus said and did in that day.

But, Lord, we thank you that you want us to know and understand certain things. You want us to understand things, O Lord, that are so essential, so important, so vital, that if we miss them, if we miss them and see only a man dying a painful death, then, O Lord, we miss out on what is the greatest and most wonderful truth in all of history.

And so we pray that by your Holy Spirit that you would open our minds, our thoughts, that you would help us, O Lord, to hear what you have to say in your word, and that, Lord, you would give to us faith and understanding to apply the truth of what Jesus did to our lives.

[8 : 37] We thank you again that we come, Lord, humbly before you, asking for your help, knowing that we need you to reveal to us what we can never find out by ourselves.

So help us, Lord, to be eager to hear your voice and give us, Lord, we pray, help. For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. I wonder if you've ever had the great satisfaction of running a half marathon or a marathon, or whether you've had the great delight of scoring an important goal in netball, football, or you've faced a demanding task, taking a degree, passing an exam, passing your driving test, something like that.

And when you've done it, when you've completed it, when you've got through to the end, the finishing tape, or that goal is in the net, or wherever it may be, there's a great sense of elation. And you see that with sportsmen particularly, don't you? Or sportswomen. They cross the line and their hands go up, or they punch the air. There's a sense in which they've triumphed. And even some of us ordinary folk can manage some of that.

[10 : 06] Even at times, perhaps, when we've done it, we've made it, we've completed it. What about these words of Jesus in verse 30 that we've read just a moment ago?

When Jesus had received the drink, he said, It is finished. We're not told he shouted it, or cried it, but just that he said it.

It wasn't that he whimpered it, or whispered it, but it was clearly audible for those around the cross to hear it loud enough to record it for us.

We know that it's true. We know that Jesus said that. We know what happened because, again, we're told this eyewitness, verse 35, The man who saw its given testimony, his testimony is true.

He knows that he tells the truth. He testifies so that you may also believe. He is an eyewitness. Not a myth. Not something that's made up in a storybook. But here is something which we know happened in history in which Jesus Christ spoke those words.

[11 : 17] In fact, in the language that Jesus spoke, or rather the language in which John's gospel was written, which is the New Testament Greek, it's only one word.

It's put, It is finished for our sake. But basically, it is finished. That's it. Just one word. Finished. As Richard remarked and told us, this is the sixth of seven sayings of Jesus from the cross. Only his final prayer, committing himself into the hands of his father, remains. That's found in Luke's account, another eyewitness.

Previous to this finished word, Jesus has spoken words of forgiveness. He's spoken words of salvation to one of the thieves on the cross next to him.

He's spoken of his feeling of desertion. Words of tenderness, which we read just there, concerning his mother. Words of thirst, showing the reality of all that he physically experienced on the cross.

[12 : 25] That it wasn't just some easy thing for him, but was something which drained him. And so we come to this saying, finished.

What's Jesus talking about? What's finished? Jesus doesn't say, I'm finished.

That may be a sense, as though utterly exhausted. He dies now, all strength, all power, all ability to keep himself alive.

That's one of the reasons why the legs were broken, because when somebody was crucified, the only way they could breathe was to push up on their legs enough to loosen their chest to take a breath.

And so when you broke the legs, of course, the person couldn't push up. And in just a matter of moments, they were dead from asphyxiation. But Jesus isn't saying, I'm finished.

[13 : 26] In fact, when you come to think of his death, and certainly, as we see there, there's that sense in which he is completely still in control of his circumstances. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jesus was the only person whoever, in this sense, was able to have the power of life and death over himself. Not talking about euthanasia. We're talking about actually being able to take from himself, give up the life that was his, in this way.

Certainly, crucifixion did bring men to a place of being finished. But that took usually days. That's why, here, after several hours, these other thieves, these other men, had to have their legs broken. They could have lived for 24, 48 hours, even longer, as they slowly dehydrated, as they slowly weakened, as they slowly asphyxiated.

But Jesus isn't saying that. In one sense, certainly, he is, and we can draw from his words this understanding that his sufferings have finished.

[14 : 38] And we're going to sing at the end of our service as the title, Man of Sorrows. It's a phrase that comes out from Isaiah's promises, looking forward to the Messiah who would come.

And Jesus was a man of sorrows, even if we were only to think about the pain that he endured here at the cross. We saw that right at the very beginning. He was flogged. No easy thing.

It wasn't just a cat-o'-nine-tails, which was nasty enough. It was strips of leather interlaced with pieces of broken pottery and pieces of broken bone. Literally ripped the flesh from the muscle.

And there, soldiers twisted together a fat crown of thorns, put it on his head. Elsewhere, we're told, they hit him over the head with a stick to bang that crown into his head.

They slapped him across the face. And then there was the carrying of the cross, we're told. Imagine how on earth can you carry a piece of timber across your back, a back that is open and bleeding.

[15 : 40] Yes, the sufferings of the Lord Jesus were coming at last to an end. He wasn't going to suffer anymore. We know that he didn't just suffer at the cross, but we look through his life, we see him moved in his bowels, moved in his very heart with compassion, aching over the wickedness and sin of the world, weeping over a city which was rebellious and turning away from God.

We see Jesus as a man who feels and experiences real pain. And now he says, finished. We understand something of that when pain is over, can't we?

When we've undergone a painful experience of a root canal at the dentist or something else like that. Oh, it's finished, thank goodness it's finished, it's over. There's a sense of that.

How natural for Jesus to feel relief at the end of his torture. Not just his physical torture, for as we understand and as we know from the Bible teaches us that not only the body of our Lord Jesus

Christ felt agonizing pain, but actually he knew unspeakable suffering in his very soul as there God poured out his anger against our sin.

As he was treated by God as a sinner on our behalf. As there he was separated from and alienated from God. Where he tasted death, that is hell itself. That was over too.

[17:14] That bitter cup that he asked not to drink on the night before at Gethsemane, he drank it down to its bitter dregs. How natural for Jesus to feel relief that that was finished.

But of course suffering is part of life. Suffering is inescapable.

It's a reality that every person must experience. All of us are men and women of sorrow. Some people suffer more than most.

Some people go through times of immense suffering that we shall be spared from. Others seem to have so very little suffering. They're shielded from it. But the truth is that no one is completely free from suffering.

This life is a veil of tears. This life is a life of suffering. Both physical and emotional. And yet the reality is that all suffering has to finish.

[18:24] Suffering is not everlasting in that sense. Our suffering in this life has an end point in view. And for the believer particularly, the one who's seen that Christ died their death for them upon the cross, the believer who hears the words that is finished has the assurance that because Christ suffered for us, there will come a day when we shall be free from all suffering.

A day when we shall be liberated from all pain, both inwardly and outwardly. The great promise, the great hope that is held out for us in the cross is a finish for sorrow.

Here's how John hears this very promise spoken from heaven itself in Revelation 21. I heard a loud voice from the throne, that's God's throne, saying, Now the dwelling of God is with man and he will live with them.

They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away.

through the death of Christ we are brought into the end of suffering. His suffering was finished and through his suffering we have the assurance that all our suffering will finish too.

[19:57] But of course that isn't all that Jesus was talking about when he said finished. This word has much greater truth to speak of.

And it helps us to see that this word finished is a word that John uses earlier on in verse 28, just a couple of verses earlier, later, this is three hours later in fact because we know that Christ was on the cross for at least three hours, much later after he had been crucified, knowing that everything had now been finished.

What else had been finished finished, if not only the suffering of the Lord Jesus? Well, we see here what we're meant to understand, knowing that everything had now been finished and so that scripture would be fulfilled.

What was finished in the life of Jesus was that there was the complete fulfillment of all the promises of God through the Old Testament. They were brought to a completion, to a climax, to their perfect end result.

The whole of Jesus' life was that, not just the cross, but everything he said, everything he did had been promised and spoken about. That's why when Jesus rises from the dead, when he speaks to his disciples in Luke 24, he tells them this.

[21:23] He said to them, this is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. That's the whole of the Old Testament, split into those three sections.

Then he opened their minds so that they could understand the scriptures. He told them, this is what is written. The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.

So when the Lord Jesus declares finished, he's speaking about the fulfillment of the promises of God that were pointing to his life and could only be fulfilled by his life and his death.

That's why when you go back and read through the nativity story, you find Matthew particularly saying, this happened because in the Old Testament, the scripture said he'd be born in Bethlehem, that he'd be living in Nazareth.

The conception of our Lord Jesus, that he'd be born of a virgin. The events surrounding his birth, the very lifestyle of the Lord Jesus, his ministry, his teachings, his miracles, yes, his suffering and

death, were all foretold in staggering detail, hundreds, some even thousands of years, before any of them took place.

[22 : 42] And the incredible thing is this, that the majority of those promises that God made concerning what would happen to Jesus, they were fulfilled by people other than Jesus.

It wasn't that Jesus said, well, I know what the Old Testament teaches, so I'm going to do everything I can to engineer things in my life, to make it happen so people will recognize me as Messiah. No, how could they? Because most of these things were done apart from him.

It wasn't, look at what we read there in verse 24, of the soldiers who naturally want to get a bit of extra cash from their job, a bit of moonlighting on the side, so they have this beautiful piece of garment, this sort of ephod, this sort of nightgown we might call it, almost.

And they say, well, let's not tear it up in bits for rags, let's keep it, let's gamble for it. And whoever wins keeps it. But that was spoken about in Psalm 22 over a thousand years earlier.

How Jesus didn't have control over that? In the sense that they did these things because God promised that they would. Only those promises concerning his resurrection yet had to be fulfilled.

[24 : 04] Everything else about him was fulfilled. Finished refers to the prophecies of God that nothing had been left unfulfilled. Everything, even this thirst, I'm thirsty, again comes from Psalm 22.

We're told that one of the things that crucifixion did would dehydrate rapidly a person because of loss of blood, mainly. In that Psalm, it speaks about the fact that my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.

My mouth is so dry. Finished. The promises of God had to be kept for God's word cannot fail.

He always does what he says he will do. And so it is with the life of Jesus. Jesus, it recognizes that fact that everything that God had said would happen to him now has happened.

It's finished. It's completed. Dear friends, as believers, the truth is that we too have been given ownership of a great number of promises from God.

[25 : 12] In fact, every promise that God has given in his word is a promise that belongs to you, dear Christian believer. How do I know that? Well, that's because of what the Bible tells me.

In Paul's second letter, 2 Corinthians chapter 1. For no matter how many promises God has made, they are yes in Christ. In other words, they are affirmed.

They are fulfilled. And look at this. And so through him, the Amen is spoken by us to the glory of God. When we say Amen at the end of a prayer or at the end of a reading of Scripture, whatever it may be, it means we're saying that we believe that God will do as he's promised.

Amen simply means something like, may it be done. Let it be so. So every promise that God has made is ours if we are in Christ.

through his life and death and resurrection, God's promises are fulfilled and they become a reality for our lives when we put our trust in him. That's why it's so important that we read our Bible.

[26 : 23] So important that we understand what God has said to us in the Bible. So important that we understand the promises that he makes to us so that when we are faced with trials, difficulties or whatever, we can say, hold on, God has promised he'll never leave me or forsake me.

So though I feel lonely and though I feel isolated and though I feel like I'm going through a tough time, God's still with me. How do I know it? Because he's promised. And when my sins are great, when I feel really guilty about the things I've done in the past and the way I spoke and whatever, I don't need to be condemned.

I don't need to carry around that weight of guilt because I'm told that if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us. And so I know that when I confess my sins God has forgiven me completely and fully.

How do I know it? Because he's promised it and because it's completed and because it's finished because it's a perfect package which Christ has done on my behalf.

One of the difficulties that I find that when I come to this word finished I've got enough thoughts to fill five sermons but I've only got time for one.

[27 : 36] You'll be glad to hear. One more. One more thought which I think ultimately more than anything else is actually that very heart the very kernel the very hub of what Jesus is saying.

The ultimate reason why Jesus said finished is because he had completed the work that his life's mission was all about.

Just a few hours less than 12 hours really beforehand Jesus was praying. We have that prayer in John 17 and in that prayer again this word finish pops up.

It's always helpful to do that. If there's a word in the Bible you're not sure about look where it appears elsewhere. Look how because it's all connected it's one message so it will always bring that the same understanding. John 17 verse 4 I have brought you Jesus is praying to the Father I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

So when Jesus says finished he is speaking about the work that God the Father gave him to do the work that he was sent into the world to carry out. In fact all the way through John's Gospel Jesus kept speaking about his life being all about doing what God's work was.

[28 : 59] So in John chapter 4 when he has been speaking to the woman by the well and speaking to her himself as the Messiah so that she and many others come to believe in him his disciples come with some food thinking he's going to be hungry but Jesus says my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

Later on in chapter 5 the very work that the Father has given me to finish and which I am doing testifies that the Father has sent me. Jesus came into this world to work.

He says elsewhere the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve. We sing that hymn the servant king. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to serve his God to serve him and to do the work that was appointed for him.

The work that he left heaven for was to come into this world to bring glory to God. And it's in that connection of this work that Jesus now says finished.

I haven't seen this lately on papers but of course there was a time particularly when a ship was being launched. We don't seem to make too many ships so we still make one or two here in Whitby trawlers and that but there would be the queen wouldn't there or one of the royal family would be there and there would be great crowds and press and so on and with a bottle of champagne broken against the bow of the ship the ship would slide into the sea and she would say something along the lines may God bless this vessel and all who sail in her.

[30 : 41] But as that ship is sent into the water it's not ready for its voyage yet. It's not completed yet. It's really just the hull has been fashioned and formed.

It's watertight but there's several months of work to be done. It needs to be fitted out. Engines need to be put in place and so on until it's completely seaworthy. But when Jesus says finished he really means just that that the whole job is done and dusted that there's nothing left to be done that it's complete it's perfect that what he did and accomplished by his life and particularly by his death upon the cross has brought about something which is the full package.

As the writers later on through the New Testament speak about the comparison between the work that went on the religious things that were done before Jesus came and the sacrifices they did and the sacrifice of Jesus we see that theirs had to continue again and again day after day week after week but Jesus was once and for all.

His Hebrews 10 day after day every priest stands performs his religious duties again and again he offers the same sacrifices which can never take away sin but when this priest that's Jesus had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God.

When do you sit down? When you finished the work. You don't sit down when you still got half the lawn to cut or half the hedge to trim you sit down when you finished it and that's exactly what happens.

[32 : 20] Jesus by the offering of himself to the cross for our sin completed did it finished it wrapped it up and what was that work? What was it that Jesus had completed by his death upon the cross?

Simply this our rescue our salvation that plan of God by which sinful human beings separated from God under his wrath awaiting his judgment could be delivered forgiven and brought back into a right relationship with God to become his children and to inherit and have everlasting life.

And in fact in one sense this very cry finished of Jesus doesn't just speak if I can put it that way about what he has done in his life but what God has been doing throughout the whole of history from creation up to that point in time.

For God has been at work in this world and in fact planned and purposed to rescue people even before he had made the world. working as he did through Abraham working as he did through Moses and Israel working as he did through David and the prophets working all the while building up building up preparing for this very moment in history when finished would be said done

completed the climax is reached the pinnacle is conquered the gracious work of God is now ready everything that has happened since that moment upon the cross when Jesus died is the direct outcome of the cross everything that has happened in the world the history of the church throughout the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament as it spread as this message of God's reconciling love of the cross of Jesus spread men and women turned from their pagan gods from their false gods their idols they turned from irreligion they turned to the living God and they found in him the very purpose and meaning for life everything was because of what

Jesus had completed and done at the cross that's why in Hebrews 12 we read Jesus the pioneer and the perfecter of our faith everything that's happened even in your life and mine in bringing us to this faith in Jesus it was done because of what Jesus cried it's finished and so it means dear friends that from beginning to end our salvation our relationship with God is completely full it's completed there's nothing to be added to it nothing to be given to it this is what God has promised God had promised many centuries ago but written here in Hebrews 10 this is the covenant God says I will make with them after that time says the Lord I'll put my laws in their hearts I'll write them on their minds then he adds their sins and lawless acts I'll remember no more and where these have been forgiven sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary because Jesus said it's finished it means that you and I can do nothing to make ourselves right with God there's nothing that we need to add to Jesus' work there's nothing we need to contribute we don't become more Christian by coming to church we don't become better friends with God by reading the Bible we don't somehow by giving to charity remove our sins no it's all been done by Jesus finished if you are a believer this evening if Christ is the one in whom you've put your faith then you are totally completely utterly safe everything rests and remains on what Jesus has done all the security of your life in heaven is in his word on the cross completed finished it's the confirmation it's the guarantee of every spiritual blessing that we enjoy both now and shall enjoy yet to come in God's presence through eternity because Jesus gave himself to die in our place because he gave himself to be the sacrifice for your sin and mine we can be certain that he will never fail to bring us into heaven life and its fullness he purchased it you see he's paid for it every single penny has been paid of the debt that we owed every single penny has been paid so that we might inherit and have the riches and the treasures of heaven it's all been done by Jesus and there's nothing more to pay nothing more to give nothing more to contribute finished have you received have you have you taken hold of the finished article of what Jesus has done for you are you enjoying the things that he paid for you see he is able again in Hebrews chapter 7 this time he is able to save completely those who come to God through him what are you what is your hope for the future what are your thoughts about when you face death what are you going to say to God when you stand before him are you hoping that he'll say well you know you've not been too bad you've not been so good but you've not been too bad so I guess

[38 : 29] I can just about squeeze you in a back place on the back row of heaven somewhere or perhaps you're hoping that he will say well you gave that money away to charity and you always help people and you're a nice person so I guess I can let you in let me say this to you in all seriousness this evening that unless Jesus Christ is your saviour and your faith and hope is only and solely in what he has done for you on the cross then you haven't got a I don't know what phrase to use really you haven't got a chance there is no way that you're going to get into heaven there is no way that you can face death with confidence that God will accept you and receive you unless Jesus is the one that you're trusting because he's the only one who's able to do it he's the only one who's finished it you see nobody else has completed it nobody else has done it nobody else is able to punch the air nobody else is able to raise their hands and say it's done it's accomplished it's achieved no one only Jesus and those who put their trust in him can say it too because we are those for whom he did die finished completed the perfect package all for us all at great cost but all because of great love let's sing our closing hymn this evening do join us if you're able to on Easter

Sunday morning we'll be having a all age service as we think about not just what happened on the cross but what really also happened afterwards when the Lord Jesus rose again from the dead we're going to sing man of sorrows 2 4 8 what a name for the son of God who came ruined sinners to reclaim hallelujah what a saviour verse 4 lifted up was he to die it is finished was his cry now in heaven exalted high hallelujah what a saviour is he your saviour he's the greatest saviour the only saviour but if he's not your saviour then you're not saved let's stand as we sing we sing Amen. Ruin sinners to repay, Hallelujah, what a Savior.

There each day must all be rude, In my place of empty stone, Sealed my pardon with His crown,
Hallelujah, what a Savior.

Guilty, high, and helpless we, Slaughter slam of God lost we, Mill against all the guys■■■ keep Now
in heaven their souls have died.

[42 : 59] Hallelujah! What a Savior! When he comes, a glorious King, All is ransomed home to
free.

Hallelujah! What a Savior!

And now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you before his presence in glory
without fault, and with exceedingly great joy, to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory, be majesty,
be power and authority throughout all ages, forevermore, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.