

A Word of Completion

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this morning, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read, John chapter 19. John chapter 19, page 1092 in the Pew Bible.

I'm going to read it again at verse 28. John 19 and verse 28, where John writes, After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said to fulfill the Scripture, I thirst.

A jar of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, It is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. But particularly the words there in verse 30, as we were saying to the children, those three words, It is finished.

It is finished. As you know, there are many famous phrases that are famous phrases from history that are etched in our minds and in our memories.

[1 : 2 3] And even though we weren't there, and some of us weren't even born, there are famous phrases that we all remember. One famous phrase was when Martin Luther King, when he announced to the world, I have a dream.

Another famous phrase was when the astronaut Neil Armstrong, when he took that first step onto the moon, he said, This is one small step for man, but one giant leap for mankind.

Another famous phrase that I'm sure we've all heard time and time again, whether we like hearing it or not, it's from the 1966 World Cup final. They think it's all over. It is now.

Now, there are famous phrases from history that are etched in our minds and in our memories, even though we weren't there, and even though some of us weren't even born. But you know, one famous phrase which ought to be etched in our minds and in our memories is this famous phrase that was spoken from the lips of Jesus.

And even though we weren't there, and even though none of us were born, it took place long before we were born, this is a famous phrase that has had an impact upon all of us.

[2 : 3 7] Because Jesus here, he speaks a word of completion from the cross of Calvary. It's a word of completion. It is finished.

It is finished. And as you know, this is now the sixth in our seven-part series on the seven sayings or the seven words from the cross of Jesus. We've called these seven words crosswords.

They're the seven crosswords from Calvary. But these seven crosswords, they're not a puzzle. They're a picture. They present to us Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

They present to us the glory of the gospel in the Person of Jesus Christ. The first crossword, you'll remember, was a word of forgiveness, where Jesus said, The second crossword was a word of salvation, where Jesus said to the thief on the cross, Today you will be with me in paradise.

The third crossword was a word of affection, as we read it there in John 19. Jesus spoke to his mother, Woman, behold your son. And woman, and son, behold your mother.

- [3 : 47] The fourth crossword was a word of abandonment, where Jesus cried in the darkness, Eloi, Eloi, Lema sabachthani, My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me?
- The fifth crossword we considered at last Lord's Day was a word of torment, where Jesus cried, I thirst. And now the sixth crossword from Calvary is a word of completion.
- It is finished. It's a word of completion. But you know, when we look closer at this famous phrase, it is finished, we realize that it isn't a phrase at all, but it's only one word.
- It's one word in Greek. So if you were to read the Greek Bible, you would see that it's only one word, and I want you to learn this word, tetelestai. If this was the children's talk, I'd ask you to say that back to me, but I won't ask you to say it.
- Tetelestai. Tetelestai. It's a word that I want you to remember, because the word tetelestai, it is finished. It's a word that reminds you of three things Jesus did for you on the cross.
- [4 : 59] Tetelestai is a word that reminds you of three things Jesus did for you on the cross. Replacement, Reconciliation, and Redemption.
- Tetelestai is a word that reminds you three things that Jesus did for you on the cross. Replacement, Reconciliation, and Redemption. And there are three headings this morning. So first of all, replacement.
- Replacement. We read there, verse 30, When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, It is finished. And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
- But if you remember last Lord's Day, we mentioned that when John, the gospel writer, when he introduces this concluding section and scene around the cross of Calvary, he begins there in verse 28 with the words, After this.
- After this. And he says that because he's emphasizing after all this. After Jesus has been betrayed and beaten. After Jesus has been arrested and apprehended.
- [6 : 04] After Jesus has been falsely accused and flogged. After he's been mocked and maligned. After he's carried his cross and then been crucified at Calvary.
- After Jesus has encountered the darkness and the demonic darkness of hell for three hours. After all this, John says, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, he said to fulfill scripture, I thirst.
- And as we said, when Jesus said those words, I thirst, it was an echo from the book of Exodus. Because Jesus, the rock of our salvation, he was being split and struck by the staff of God's judgment.
- Out of him was pouring rivers of living water. But more than that, the cry, I thirst, was a howl from hell. Because Jesus, he's encountering and experiencing the flaming horrors, the fiery heat of hell.
- There's this supernatural darkness that shrouds the cross of Calvary for three hours. And that darkness is descending into his soul, the soul of our Savior.
- [7 : 15] It was a deep darkness, a demonic darkness, a darkness that's so deep that we cannot understand or comprehend. But what we do know is that he was being punished for our sin.
- He was being punished for our sin. And that's why when John introduces this closing section and scene from Calvary, he uses this word, tetelestai.
- And he uses the word more than once. He wrote there in verse 28, if you look at it in your Bible, he says, after this, Jesus knowing that all was now tetelestai, all was now finished.
- And then he uses it again in verse 30, when Jesus received the sour wine, he said, tetelestai, it is finished. And what we have to see is that John used the word, this word I want you to all remember, tetelestai.

He uses it more than once in order to emphasize and explain that Jesus knew that his work on the cross was now complete.

[8 : 22] Jesus knew that his work on the cross was now complete. It is finished, he says. Tetelestai. It's a word of completion.

It's a word of completion. But as we said, tetelestai, it's a word that reminds you of what Jesus did on the cross for you. What Jesus did on the cross for you.

And what Jesus did, first of all, was replace you. Jesus was your replacement. Jesus was your replacement.

And I want to say this to you this morning in personal terms. I want to use personal words because I want you to see that Jesus was your personal replacement.

You should have been there. You should have been receiving the punishment. But he was your personal replacement. Now, as you know, Jesus, he was the spotless shepherd.

[9 : 21] He was the guiltless God-man. He was the righteous redeemer. He was the sinless savior. He was without sin. He knew no sin. And yet, on the cross, Jesus became your sin.

Jesus was burdened with your sin. Jesus bore your sin. And there's an important word that the Bible regularly repeats in order to emphasize and explain how Jesus was your replacement.

How he was your replacement. And it's a small but very significant word. For. Three-letter word.

F-O-R. For. You know, we often say that large doors swing on small hinges. Large doors swing on small hinges. But in the Bible, large theological truths, they swing on small words.

And you can't get much smaller than the word for. It's a small but significant word. For. It means in your place and in your position.

[10 : 31] For your benefit and for your blessing. For your sake and for your salvation. It's a small but significant word because Jesus Christ, this is the wonder of the cross.

Jesus Christ was convicted and condemned and crucified for your sin. For your sin.

And you know, this small and very significant word, it's repeated regularly throughout the whole Bible. It's there to be read. It's there to be loved as a small but significant word.

And every time we see it, we should see that Jesus is your replacement. Jesus is your replacement. You see it particularly in the Old Testament words of Isaiah 53.

Many of you, I'm sure, you learned Isaiah 53 as a child growing up. Where you read of those promises, those prophesied words that Jesus would be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, stricken for his people, made an offering for sin.

[11 : 41] And he would make intercession for the transgressors. Then you come to the New Testament and you hear Jesus talking. And Jesus is saying, I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Jesus also says, the son of man, he came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

It's all for. For, for, for. The Apostle Paul, when he speaks to the church, he says that God has demonstrated, God has declared his love towards us in that whilst we were yet sinners, whilst we were still walking in darkness, whilst we had no grace and no hope in our lives, Christ died for us.

Christ died for us. Paul tells us that Jesus, this Jesus on the cross of Calvary, who knew no sin, he became sin for us. He became a curse for us.

He loved us and guess what? He gave himself for us. It's a small but significant word that's regularly repeated throughout the Bible in order to emphasize that Jesus is your replacement.

[12 : 56] Jesus is your replacement. Jesus is your replacement. He was convicted. He was condemned. He was crucified for you.

For you. In your place. In your position. For your benefit. For your blessing. For your sake. For your sin. For your salvation.

For you, my friend. All for you. This is what you need to see. That the gospel is so clear.

It is all for you. It wasn't for him. He's not there for his sin. He has no sin. He's there for you. It's all for you.

And you know, you look at what the hymn writer wrote and you see, it's no wonder he wrote. He wrote those words, bearing shame and scoffing root. In my place. Condemned, he stood.

[13 : 56] Sealed my pardon with his blood. Hallelujah. What a saviour. What a saviour we have. That he did it all for you.

All for you. That's what the word tetelestai means. That's what it reminds you that Jesus was your replacement on the cross. Secondly, it reminds you that Jesus brought reconciliation on the cross.

So there's replacement. Then there's reconciliation. Reconciliation. When Jesus received the sour wine, he said, it is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Now as you know, our relationships with one another are important. Whether family relationships or marriage relationships or church relationships or community relationships or work relationships, our relationships with one another are important.

But when there's a barrier in that relationship, when there's a breakdown in that relationship, there needs to be reconciliation. There needs to be reconciliation. And there are types of reconciliation counseling that are used to help restore and reunite broken relationships.

[15 : 14] But you know, in many ways, the gospel is reconciliation counseling. The gospel is reconciliation counseling because that word, tetelestai, it's a word that reminds you that Jesus brought reconciliation.

Jesus brought reconciliation. And the gospel shows us that our relationship with God is a broken relationship. And it has been broken since the very beginning, since Genesis chapter 3, when our first parents, Adam and Eve, they severed their relationship with God by sinning against Him.

Prior to the fall, as you know, mankind, they enjoyed perfect unity and perfect union with God. They had perfect holiness and perfect happiness. They had this royal and righteous relationship with God.

But all of it was ruined when Adam and Eve severed their relationship with God by sinning against Him. And their sin brought a split.

It brought a schism. It brought separation. It brought enmity. It made us enemies of God. It brought a barrier. It brought brokenness into our relationship with God.

[16 : 27] And that brokenness, we're told, has passed down to every generation. We don't need to look far to see the brokenness in our world because we are all broken people living broken lives in this broken world.

but the glory of the gospel is that the gospel is our reconciliation counseling. The gospel is our reconciliation counseling because it's in the good news of Jesus Christ that God has promised and God has provided the means by which that relationship can be restored and reunited and reconciled to God.

And the only way it can actually happen, the only way for our sin to be removed and our relationship with God to be reunited and restored and reconciled, the only way is through sacrifice.

The only way is through sacrifice. Sin can only be removed through sacrifice. That's what the Bible teaches. Our Bible asserts and affirms to us that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

There's no removal of sin. There's no forgiveness. There's no freedom from sin. Sin is the, sin can only be removed through sacrifice.

[17 : 49] And you know, you read through the Old Testament. You read through the Old Testament and that was the message of all those Old Testament sacrifices. Sin can only be removed through sacrifice.

And when you consider all of these sacrifices, the thousands of sacrifices that were offered to the Lord, day and night, morning and evening, they were offered for centuries at the tabernacle and at the temple.

But they were all pointing forward. They were all pointing to one place and to one person. They were all pointing to one sacrifice and to one Savior.

They were all pointing to this cross, the cruel cross of Calvary. And you know, you read your Bible and you're told that all these Old Testament priests, they stood daily.

They didn't get a moment to sit down. They had to stand daily at the burning altar offering sacrifice upon sacrifice upon sacrifice. And the Bible tells us that they never really removed sin.

[18 : 50] They never really properly propitiated our sin. They never fully forgave our sin until Christ came. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that when Christ came and offered up his life as our sinless and spotless sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, it was his blood.

Not the blood of all the bulls and the goats and the lambs, but it was his blood that restored the breach. It was his blood that reconciled the brokenness.

It was his blood that reunited this great break that existed between God and humanity. It was his blood that gifted and guaranteed reconciliation in our relationship with God.

My friend, this gospel message is our reconciliation counseling. So we all need counseling and we all need reconciliation counseling from this message.

And the good news is that tetelestai is a word that reminds us that Jesus has brought you reconciliation. Jesus has brought you reconciliation.

[20 : 04] It's his blood that has reconciled the brokenness. But you know what I love is what Paul teaches us and tells us in the New Testament.

Because Paul teaches us and tells us, he says that every Christian is an ambassador for Christ. Every Christian is an ambassador for Christ.

My Christian friend here this morning, you are a representative of King Jesus. You have a message from King Jesus. And you're to take that message, says Paul, 2 Corinthians 5, you're to take that message to your friends and to your family, to your workplaces and to your workspaces, to your congregation and your community.

And the message is simply what this counseling is setting before us. Be reconciled to God. Be reconciled to God.

Paul writes, we are ambassadors for Christ and God is making his appeal through us. He is using us. This is the wonder of it, that God would use us.

[21 : 15] God would use us and God's message to our unconverted friends and family is simply, we implore you. We encourage you. We plead with you.

We beg you, if need be, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. Be reconciled to God. You know my unconverted friend here or at home this morning, I want to say to you and I want to say it to you so lovingly because you all know me.

You all know me by now and if I say any more I'll start crying so I won't but don't let this linger any longer. Don't let this linger any longer.

Don't let this linger any longer. Be reconciled to God. Be reconciled to God because it's his blood, the blood of Jesus that brings reconciliation.

It's his blood that brings reconciliation. This gospel is our reconciliation counseling. So be reconciled. Be reconciled to God.

[22 : 32] Come to this wonderful counselor. That's how he's described in the Bible. He's a wonderful counselor and be reconciled to him. Tetelestai.

It's a word of completion. It's a word of completion but as we said it reminds you of three things Jesus did for you on the cross. He's your replacement.

He brings you reconciliation and he guarantees you redemption. So there is replacement, reconciliation and lastly redemption.

Redemption. Verse 30. When Jesus had received the sour wine he said it is finished and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. You know throughout this crucifixion scene all of the gospel writers all of them they draw attention to the sour wine that was offered to Jesus.

The sour wine when you look it up it's I suppose a modern equivalent if you wanted it would be like red wine vinegar but it's also mixed we're told with gall which was a bitter herb from a myrrh plant and when the red wine vinegar and the gall when they were mixed together it created this anesthetic.

[23 : 52] It was there to dull the senses. It was there to numb the pain of crucifixion. But what's interesting is that Matthew tells us that just prior to the crucifixion Jesus is offered the sour wine.

So before he's put onto the cross Jesus is offered this sour wine but he refuses. Jesus refuses because he didn't want anything to numb the pain he didn't want anything to dull the punishment that he was going to receive on our behalf in our place.

And so he wanted to suffer as our sinless and spotless sacrifice for our sin. But after it's all over after Jesus had encountered the demonic darkness after Jesus had experienced the horrors and the heat of hell in his soul after Jesus had endured all of God's wrath against our sin after Jesus has served as our replacement after he has been he has been sacrificed to bring reconciliation after he has suffered for our redemption after he has satisfied the divine justice of a holy and a righteous God after all that after it is finished John tells us verse 29 a jar of jar full of sour wine stood there so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth now with us

John isn't highlighting that Jesus is now giving in he's giving in to the pain it's too much pain and punishment on the cross no John is highlighting that at this very point Jesus is fulfilling the final prophecy Jesus is fulfilling the final prophecy the prophecy we were singing about in Psalm 69 they also bitter gall did give unto me for my meat they gave me vinegar to drink when as my thirst was great but more than that more than fulfilling the final prophecy John tells us he affirms to us that Jesus is our Passover lamb Jesus is our Passover lamb that's why John says that the sponge full of sour wine was held to the mouth of Jesus using a hyssop branch a hyssop branch because the hyssop branch that's what all the Old Testament Israelites used to apply the blood of the Passover lamb to the lintel and the doorposts of their homes and it was that blood that's the blood that brought them safety and shelter in salvation that's what brought them security in salvation and John is highlighting to us right here at the cross that this

Jesus is our Passover lamb who came to take away our sin and John is saying to us so lovingly when you shelter under his blood you find safety you find security in salvation when you shelter under the blood of the Passover lamb you are safe you are secure you have salvation and you know that's why William Cowper William Cowper he wrote he said he points us to the cross and he says there is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins and sinners plunge beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains you know my friend Jesus is your Passover lamb he is your Passover lamb so that when you shelter under his blood you find safety and you find security and you find salvation you find replacement you find reconciliation you find redemption because you are redeemed you are bought back as the Bible emphasizes and as the

[27 : 51] Bible explains you are redeemed and my friend you are redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold says Peter no it is all by the precious blood the precious blood of Christ so my friend are you sheltering under his blood are you finding security in his blood do you have safety in the blood of this precious lamb because there is power power wonder working power in the precious blood of this lamb and Jesus is saying to us all this morning tetelestai it is finished tetelestai it is finished it reminds you of three things just in conclusion replacement it reminds you of reconciliation it reminds you of redemption replacement reconciliation and redemption tetelestai a word of completion it is finished as we were saying to the children it is finished means paid in full paid in full tetelestai it's from the language of business where God has recorded he's written down all your sins that you ever committed but when you trust in

Jesus when you trust and shelter under what he has done on the cross for you you find in Jesus your replacement you find in Jesus reconciliation you find in Jesus redemption and all your sins that have been named and noted all your sins that have been recorded and receipted all your sins they are sealed and stamped with the word paid in full tetelestai it is finished it's all paid in full and so I want to ask you this morning the same question I asked the children I know the time has gone but I want to ask you the same question I asked the children because the gospel is for the children as much as it is for the adults in fact Jesus said you need to become like little children in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven and so I want to ask you just the same question that I asked the children have you asked Jesus to pay for your sin have you asked

Jesus to take away your sin have you asked Jesus to save you from your sin have you asked Jesus to deal with your sin and if you have like we said to the children your sins are stamped with the word paid in full it is finished tetelestai paid in full so have you come to him and if you have not yet come to this Jesus why not why not greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends you are my friends he says if you do whatsoever

I command you and the command my friend is so clear so compassionate come just come have you asked Jesus to save you from your sin may the Lord bless these thoughts to us and let us pray oh Lord our gracious God may give thanks to thee for these precious words of Jesus these words that mean so much to us now as when they were first said and we give thanks that these words have given comfort to countless millions throughout the centuries that Jesus cried from Calvary's tree that it is finished it is all complete it is paid in full and help us then we pray to shelter under his blood to be found in him or that we might know that reconciliation and redemption through his blood that we might see that Jesus is our great replacement that in my place condemned he stood sealed my pardon with his blood hallelujah what a saviour or that we would all leave here this morning echoing the words of the hymn writer saying what a saviour we have in

Christ and in Christ alone bless us Lord we pray bless thy truth to our souls that would find lodgment there and bear fruit to thine own glory keep us we pray go before us take away our iniquity receive us graciously for Jesus sake amen we're going to bring our service to a conclusion this morning we're going to sing the words of psalm 22 psalm 22 it's in the sing psalms version on page 27 psalm 22 psalm 22 psalm 22 page 27 we're singing from verse 27 down to the end of the psalm psalm 22 as I've said many times before it is the psalm of the cross it's the psalm of the suffering shepherd you have the psalm of the suffering shepherd in psalm 22 the saving shepherd in psalm 23 the sovereign shepherd in psalm 24 so psalm 22 is the psalm of the suffering shepherd it sets before us the cross the cross of Jesus it begins with a saying from the cross my god my god why have you forsaken me and it ends with a saying from the cross although you can't see it in this psalm but it says there the last line of page 27 the righteous acts that he has done he has done literally in Hebrew is it is finished it is finished it's a psalm of the cross and it's telling us to come to the one who has finished it come to him he says in verse 27 the whole earth will remember him and turn towards the lord their god all peoples will bow down to him the nations of the world abroad dominion to the lord belongs and over nations he is king the rich of all the earth will feast and worship with an offering so we'll sing psalm 22 from verse 27 down to the end of the psalm to God's praise the whole earth will remember him and turn towards the lord their god all peoples will bow down to him the nations of the world abroad dominion to the lord belongs and over nations he is king the rich of all the earth will feast and worship with an offering all those whose destiny is dust dust will humbly kneel before his throne they cannot keep themselves alive for they depend on him alone

[36 : 54] alone for austerity will serve the lord and generation still to come little tale of people yet on the righteous act that he has done the grace of the lord jesus christ the love of god the father the fellowship of the holy spirit be with you all now and forevermore amen