



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

John Sermon Series

Supports Session 11: It Is Finished

Sermon Title: “’Tis Done, The Great Transaction’s Done” (John 19:17-30)

Connection to Session 11

Jesus’s death on the cross fulfilled the Father’s plan and paid the price for our sin.

Introduction/Opening

Paid in full. When a bill, no matter its origin, is satisfied, the one who owed the debt has the privilege of saying it is paid in full. Or, to borrow the biblical language, it “is finished.” In 2022, the average American credit card debt was between five and six thousand dollars. Some Americans owed more and some, of course, owed less. What relief and peace comes to one when a debt is fulfilled! Humanity owes a sin debt that cannot be paid by effort or merit. For this debt a payment was required—the death of Jesus on the cross. In that act, He paid the price for everyone who would believe in Him. The debt was paid in full.

Outline

1. Jesus Went to Cross (vv. 17-22)
 - a. Jesus carried His cross to the Place of the Skull, also known as Golgotha (v. 17). John limits his report of the trip to one verse, though a more detailed account is in Luke 23:26-32. Prior to bearing the cross, Jesus suffered through scourging. Scourging was a cruel punishment prior to the horror of crucifixion. Jesus carried the cross as long as He could, and then Simon of Cyrene carried it the rest of the way (Luke 23:26). Gerald L. Borchert commented about the carrying of the cross: “Although Jesus has been whipped and condemned as a criminal, he is not a helpless victim but the Shepherd-King laying down his life for his sheep . . . The King was carrying his own cross to crucifixion and to his glorification.”¹
 - b. Jesus was placed on the middle cross between two other men (v. 18). The two other men were actual criminals, robbers, the same term used to describe Barabbas. (It is possible the third cross that day was intended for Barabbas.) “They crucified him” (v. 18)—the most profound fact in the history of redemption is three words in English and Greek. Crucifixion in Jesus’s day was not a new form of execution; however, the Romans were known to have perfected it. There is no description in the Gospels as to how Jesus was fastened to the cross. His post-resurrection appearances indicate nail marks in His hands or wrists (considered a part of the hand). The nails placed in the wrists better supported

1. Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 25B, The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 261.

the weight of the body. The feet were nailed to the cross as well. The body was positioned in such a way that breathing was difficult. The one crucified would eventually die by asphyxiation.²

- c. Pilate proclaimed Jesus King of the Jews (vv. 19-22). Pilate had a sign prepared and attached to the cross that read “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” The sign was written in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin, the three primary languages of the day. The Jewish religious leaders took immediate offense to it and wanted Pilate to change it. They wanted it to read that He *claimed* to be the King of the Jews. Pilate refused to make the change. Though this title was unpopular with religious leaders, one cannot escape the truth of the charge that hung on Jesus’s cross. He was and is the King of a spiritual kingdom.

2. Soldiers Fulfill Prophecy Near the Cross (vv. 23-24)

- a. The soldiers followed custom and divided Jesus’ clothing (v. 23). John indicates the clothing was divided into four shares, one for each of the soldiers involved directly in the crucifixion of Jesus. To these soldiers, who were professional executioners, this was a business venture.
- b. The soldiers decided to break custom and make Jesus’s seamless tunic a prize (vv. 23-24). They cast lots for His tunic. This was a fulfillment of prophecy as noted in Psalm 22:18, “They divided my garments among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing.” These men likely did not know the Scripture, nor could they know they were fulfilling the prophetic word. Again, this is a clear indication of God’s sovereignty in the drama of redemption.

3. Faithful Followers Gathered Near the Cross (vv. 25-27)

- a. A group of women stood near the cross (v. 25). These women were Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary’s sister; Mary, the wife of Clopas; and Mary Magdalene. Other gospel writers add Mary the mother of James the Younger and Joses; the mother of the sons of Zebedee; and Salome (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40). Some of these women may have been the same people mentioned by different writers who used different names. But they were all supporting Mary at the cross.
- b. One man stood near the cross (v. 26). The man known as the disciple Jesus loved was John, the author of the fourth gospel. Of the Twelve, John was the one closest to Jesus during His earthly ministry. It is no wonder that John would be present at the crucifixion.
- c. Jesus honored and cared for His mother (v. 27). To Mary, Jesus said, “Woman, here is your son” (v. 26). Then to John, He said, “Here is your mother” (v. 27). From that time on Mary lived with John. Why didn’t Jesus commit the care of His mother to His brothers who are named in the Gospels? At the time of Jesus’s death, none of them believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Jesus cared for His mother in the darkest hour of His life.

4. Jesus’s Work on the Cross (vv. 28-30)

- a. Jesus’s death fulfilled prophecy. Jesus’s last moments on the cross affirm the Old Testament prophecy. Jesus declared, “I’m thirsty” (v. 28). This is a fulfillment of Psalm 69:21, “Instead, they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” Again the soldiers, unaware of their fulfillment of prophecy, gave Him a drink of sour wine from a sponge attached to a hyssop branch.

2. Borchert, *John 12-21*, 263-64.

- b. Jesus proclaimed victory. After receiving the sour wine, Jesus declared, “It is finished” (v. 30). This phrase comes from one word in Greek, *tetelestai*, which carries the idea of something being paid in full. This was a cry of victory in a setting that by all appearances seemed to be a defeat.

Conclusion

Jesus completed the task set before Him and cried “It is finished” (v. 30). As the hymn writer, Philip Doddridge noted in 1851:

’Tis done—the great transaction’s done;
I am my Lord’s, and He is mine;
He drew me and I follow’d on,
Charm’d to confess the voice divine.³

The work has been done for all who will believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

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3. Phillip Doddridge, “O Happy Day,” Hymnary.org, 2022, https://hymnary.org/text/o_happy_day_that_fixed_my_choice.