

John 19:16-30

~ Jesus: Lord of His Own Cross ~

Introduction

C.S Lewis referred to the cross as:

The diagram of love...

Stephen Charnock (the 17th century Puritan) called it:

The wellspring of our joy...

Saint Augustine referred to it as:

The pulpit of Christ by which He preached the love of God to all the world...

And C.H Spurgeon simply said:

It the sum and substance of the saving gospel!

My dear friends the eternal salvation of the human race is **NOT** an **impersonal activity** of a pre-determined fate!

It is the accomplishment of a **specific Person** acting intentionally **on behalf** of specific people!

Spurgeon again says that:

The cross is the lighthouse of God whose cheery ray gleams across the dark waters of despair, and cheers the dense midnight race, saving them from eternal shipwreck, and piloting their vessels into everlasting peace...

Redemption first and foremost is **NOT** a cold theological abstraction – it is **NOT** something that is detached from the holy heart of God!

It is a white-hot love affair; the **holy romance** of God Himself **irresistibly wooing** the object of His affection!

Doing everything He can to save her even at the greatest possible cost to Himself!

Unfathomable Mystery

One pastor says:

*The cross you see is the **unfathomable mystery** of the Christian faith!*

It is the unfathomable mystery!

Unfathomable **NOT because** the cross is **in any way** difficult to understand – it's **NOT** a difficult concept:

We understand substitution – we understand legal payment – we understand a debt **that is owed** to God!

Godman

But what is mysterious **about it** – is the fact that the very one **upon it** – is none other than:

The **eternal God** in human flesh come down to save us!

The **eternal God** in human flesh who has come down **to die** for us!

This is the mystery of mysteries friends – that the very one who bore our curse was the Maker of this world!

We **sing it** in our hymns – we **say it** in our prayers – we **recite it** in our creeds:

But do we believe it in our souls?!?!

John 19

That's the question John is asking us as we come to the **pinnacle moment** of His Gospel!

The pinnacle moment of John 19!

John 19 is the prayer of Jesus answered in John 17:

Father the hour has come to glorify the Son by completing the work you've given Him to do!

Main Point

And as we come to the pinnacle moment of John's entire Gospel – what I would **like to do** for us this morning is simply **walk us through** the text – hoping that this one main overarching point would be seen most clearly:

Jesus Christ the King of kings has paid our debt in full!

So John 19 – beginning at verse 16 John writes this:

Then he [that is Pilate] handed Him over to be crucified. Then they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by Himself, He went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. And there they crucified Him and two others with Him, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle...

Opening Gambit

From Gabbatha to Golgotha...

That is the way this scene have often been described!

Jesus is being lead from the **judgement seat** of Pilate in verse 13 – to the **judgement seat** of God in verse 17!

And what is perhaps **most striking about** this transition from Pilate to Calvary is **the lack of detail** that John describes!

Did you notice that John says **nothing about** the intricacies of the crucifixion!

Nothing about the intricacies of **Jesus death!**

This is a feature that is prominent – **NOT only** in John but in **all 4 Gospel** narratives:

Matthew says in passing:

When they had crucified Him!

Just as briefly **Mark** reads:

And there they crucified Him!

Luke adds his own unique description:

And they crucified Him there!

And John simply says:

There they crucified Him!

So what is **the reason** for this lack of historical detail of crucifixion?

If this is the **most pinnacle moment** of John's Gospel, why does he leave out such intricate details?!?!

Familiar

Well **2 main reasons** in fact:

The readers of John's Gospel would have been **overly familiar** with the concept of a Roman crucifixion...

They would have seen these events occur **as often as** you and I see **major events** happening **every so often** on the evening news!

Any detail therefore that John **had put into** describing this scene would have been both:

Gruesome and unnecessary!

See it was customary for **prisoners in these days** to be led by means of the **longest possible route** through the city streets – making it clear to the **greatest number of people** that:

Insurrection toward Rome was both **futile** and **foolish**!

This is what we see in verse 17:

Carrying the cross by Himself, he went out to what is called Place of the Skull...

Through the **city streets** and out the **city gates** – Jesus was being led by the **longest route possible** to the place of the skull!

In Latin it would be called Calvaria:

*A medical term referring to **the top part** of a human skull!*

The point is that in both **Latin & Aramaic** this location was **primarily known** for its **death & destruction** amongst the Jewish people!

More than Physical

But the **second reason why** there is such lack of detail here – is because:

John is **NOT** intending to show us **merely the physical sufferings** of Jesus Christ!

We need to understand this friends:

There were thousands of people had endured the **literal sufferings** of crucifixion **long before** Jesus had ever stepped onto the scene in John 19!

And to be honest most of those people had suffered **for a lot longer** than Jesus did!

And so John is NOT interested in **merely showing** the pure physical atrocities of the cross of Christ – but:

John has a **theological purpose** in mind – a **theological basis** in highlighting for us the **theological significance** of what is taking place on the stages of redemptive history!

The King of the Jews

And the **theological significance** starts to come out in verse 19:

*So Pilate also had a sign made and put on the cross. which said: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. But many of the Jews read this sign, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘The king of the Jews,’ but that He **merely said**, ‘I am the king of the Jews. But Pilate replied, what I have written, I have written...*

6 times in this chapter Jesus is **proclaimed to be** the King of the Jews:

In Verse 3!

Verse 14!

Verse 15!

Verse 19!

And twice in verse 21!

John alludes to the sign that Pilate had written:

Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews!

See it was customary in these days for any prisoner being led to their death that they **NOT only** carry the beam on which their hands would become permanently fixed – but the victim **would also** carry the plaque that **hung around their necks** stating the **nature of the crimes** for which they were being executed!

That plaque would **later be nailed** to the cross above the victims head so all those passing by would know the crimes for which this person died!

Strike a nerve

And in this case the best that **Pilate could do** was to have the sign say:

Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews!

Indicating that Pilate **really didn't have** sufficient reasons to justify the killing of this innocent man!

He had no grounds for killing Him!

Jesus Christ was killed for the truth of who He was!

Nevertheless, Pilate does intend to have the sign written in **3 different languages**:

Once in **Aramaic** – the language of the locals!

Once in **Latin** – The language of the Romans!

And finally in **Greek** – the language of the Empire!

The point is that this was **Pilate's twisted way of getting back** at these Jews for manipulating his decision in putting Jesus to death!

Pilate is still **feeling sorry** for himself given his best efforts to assuage the crowd of putting Jesus to death – and so this is Pilate's **attempt** at humiliating these Jews with one last **political blow!**

And the **Jewish response** in verse 21 indicates that this clearly struck the nerve that Pilate **intended to strike!**

Verse 21:

*So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘The king of the Jews,’ but **that He said**, ‘I am the king of the Jews...*

But Pilate replied in verse 22:

What I have written, I have written...

The **Greek here** actually indicates a **more permanent reading** – it actually reads:

*What I have written I have written, and it will **always remain** written!*

Jesus Christ is the King of the Jews!

King of kings

Now friends don’t miss the **subtle irony** of this scene as Pilate now thinks that he’s **going to have** the final say in **mocking** these Jews – when **in reality** Pilate is only serving:

The ultimate purposes of a sovereign God

Pilate speaks **far better** than what he actually realizes in declaring Jesus as the King because this is **actually consistent** with **all of holy Scripture!**

Revelation 1:5 says that:

Jesus Christ is the Ruler of the Kings of the earth

Revelation 19 says that:

Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

Hebrews 1 says that:

His throne is an everlasting dominion which shall have no end!

Philippians chapter 2 says:

*At the name of Jesus Christ every knee will bow **in heaven and on earth** and under the earth, to the glory of God the Father!*

And Acts chapter 2 says that:

He has been crowned the King and universal Lord of heaven and earth...

And so Pilate **in attempting to** mock these Jews **only further advances** the Kingdom of God in the death of His Son – because Luke’s Gospel actually records that:

This title [the King of the Jews] actually results in the salvation of a human sinner that day!

I mean this is how amazing God is in working evil to the ends of His glorious purposes!

Gospel Tract

One pastor says:

*Do you ever think that Pilate realized that he would be writing the **very first gospel tract** in all of human history!*

Because notice that tells us that Jesus was crucified between 2 thieving criminals that day – one on his right and one on His left – that’s what we see **in verse 18!**

And in Luke account **of these 2 criminals** one of them is hurling insults at Jesus – while the other simply looks at Him and says:

Jesus remember me when you come into Your kingdom!

And Jesus looks at this man with the **eyes of grace** and says:

Today you will be with Me in Paradise...

Enters the joy

Now **how did** that man know that Jesus was a King!

With a Kingdom!

To which He was going!

How did that man understand the nature and character of Christ?!?!?

The simple answer is because of what **Pilate had posted** up above His head:

Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews!

This man repents – He now believes – and He enters into the joy of eternal life!

God's Authority

And see this is the way that God often works in **the world** over against every ruler – and authority – and power on the earth:

The heart of man tries to plans his way, but the LORD of heaven will guide his steps – Proverbs 16 verse 9!

Proverbs 21 verse 1:

The heart of the King is in the hand of the LORD; and as rivers of water, He channels it whichever way He desires...

We read in **Ezra** chapter 1 that God used Cyrus the King of Persia to accomplish the return of the Exiles!

And in the book of **Isaiah** chapter 45 Cyrus is referred to as **God's anointed servant!**

Friends:

God is **so sovereign** that He can use even a **sinful & wicked ruler** like Pilate to accomplish His own **sovereign** purposes!

The crown of thorns to which Pilate gave Him – only served as a reminder of our sin bearing Saviour!

The garments to which the Soldiers divide only serves as a **faithful reminder** that the Scripture would be fulfilled!

And now **even the sign** posted above the cross – only serves as a **universal reminder** in all 3 languages:

Jesus Christ – the King of the Jews – the Kings of kings!

I love the way that J.L. Reynolds puts this in his book – he says:

*When Christ uttered in the judgment hall, the remarkable words "I am a king," He pronounced a sentiment fraught with unspeakable dignity and power. His enemies might deride his pretensions and express their mockery of His claim, by presenting Him with a crown of thorns, a reed and a purple robe, and nailing Him to the cross; but in the eyes of **unfallen intelligences**, He was a king! A higher power presided over that derisive ceremony, and converted it into a **real coronation**. That crown of thorns was indeed the diadem of empire; that purple robe was the badge of royalty; that fragile reed was the symbol of unbounded power; and that cross the throne of dominion which shall never end!*

Jesus & Politics

And see what many Christians fail to recognize – is that for rulers and princes to **refuse to submit** to the authoritative Kingdom of the Son of God **is in effect**:

A claim to be the Son of God!

Because if there is no God above the state – if there is no authority above the leaders then **the state becomes** the ultimate authority:

The state itself becomes the authority of God incarnate!

But see from the **earliest days** of the church – the fundamental Creed of the Christian faith **has always been:**

Yesus Ho Kurious!

Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is King!

So that we're **NOT** voting on Jesus getting elected as the universal Ruler of this world – we're **NOT** voting as a **democrat nation** to get Him re-elected into office:

He's **already established** that position as the mediating King who has risen from the dead!

And so the reason why Christians insist on having a **public faith** is because:

The object of our faith is a **public King!**

He's **NOT** just King of your sweet little heart!

He's **NOT** just Saviour meek and mild friends!

He's the King of kings – He's the Lord of lords!

Now just think about those titles for a moment – like **what other kings** is that referring to:

Earthly kings!

Political kings!

Physical kings!

Human kings!

And He's the King of **all those kings!**

Which means that:

If Jesus Christ is Lord then Caesar is **NOT!**

If Jesus Christ is Lord then Rome is **NOT!**

It means that if Jesus Christ is Lord – then:

We must kiss the Son/bow to the Son lest we perish in the way of His everlasting rule!

These men are standing in the presence of the one who has unbounded power and authority – and they **don't even recognize** their King!

The Soldiers

And again, this is all part of the humiliation of Jesus – as John now tells us that **NOT only** was He **hanging on the cross** and **dying on the cross** – but He is also:

Emptied on the cross

Verse 23:

After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His clothes and divided them into four parts, a part for each soldier. And they also took the tunic, which was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it, to see who gets it..."

Shame & Guilt

So this was one of the perks of being a Roman soldier in these days – typically there were **4 Roman Soldiers** performing the crucifixion:

And **part of their payment** for the work that they would do is taking the clothes of the criminals they would hang!

And John is **NOT only** highlighting the depravity of human nature here as a **poker game** now breaks out under the foot of the cross – but John is also highlighting the nature of His **guilt** & the nature of His **shame** as John now tells us that:

Jesus is now **stripped down naked** to the flesh & exposed for the world to see!

Because remember John's favourite book of the bible is the book of Genesis – it's a book that he continually **goes back to** in order to show us the fulfillment of these things!

And remember what we read about Adam and Eve eating the fruit and **coming to see** their condition of **sin & nakedness**:

They sowed fig leaves together and tried to hide their shame under the cover of **physical clothing!**

And so John is telling us that our Lord has borne the **shame** of our sin!

And the **guilt** of our sin!

And the humiliation our sin incurs!

And He's taken that on Himself!

God's Sovereignty

And the beauty of this scene is that **NOT only** are these soldiers **acting in accordance** with their own **human agency** and **sinful self-volition** as they crucified Jesus – but all of this happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled – verse 24:

This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled that says: They divided my clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing...

This is the beauty of God's divine sovereignty friends!

This is the beauty of God's divine providence!

Divine sovereignty & human agency are:

Never at odds with one another!

They are never pitted against one another!

Or made to be enemies!

When Spurgeon was asked by a member in his church **how he reconciles** divine sovereignty and human agency when reading the Scriptures – Spurgeon simply looked at the man and said:

I never try to reconcile friends!

God is sovereign **over all things** – and yet man is **completely accountable** for the sins and the crimes that he commits!

John is **NOT interested** in trying to reconcile these 2 compatible concepts – He merely states the reality and shows us the point!

Sympathizers

And the point is that **while the soldiers** are dividing the clothing of Jesus – rebelling against God – and fulfilling the Scriptures on behalf of Jesus – the sympathisers are present giving a completely different reaction in **verse 25!**

John says:

Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. And when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved [that's John], He said to His mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then He said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home...

The Care of Mary

Here we get a picture of Jesus as the **caring/generous** Son that He was to Mary His mother!

Jesus has been **stripped** – and **beaten** – and **bruised** at this point!

He has been **plundered** and **pillaged** and **robbed**!

He has been stripped of **every earthly possession** He ever owned!

And yet in this **final act** of generosity & love – being the Good and godly Shepherd of His sheep – Jesus now takes time in **discharging to John**:

The **care** and **concern** of His very own mother!

The one who has raised Him!

And loved Him!

Who fed Him!

And bathed Him!

And clothed Him!

And Kissed Him!

Like only a mother could!

No doubt this moment was the sword that Simeon said would pierce the side of Mary in Luke chapter 2!

And as He's hanging on the cross – atoning for sins – bearing the weight of shame and guilt – He still takes the time to:

Honour His father and mother...

Obey His father and mother!

Caring for His father and mother!

Most likely Joseph (Mary's husband) had passed away by this point – and so the **care of Mary** was now the responsibility of Jesus!

In a society like this women needed a men to provide income and stability – and here Jesus cares for His mother in a way that **only the Son of God could!**

Family of God

And it's in this moment that Jesus **NOT only** ensures the care of His own earthly mother – but it's **also here** that Jesus is creating:

A brand-new family of God!

Did you notice the language:

Here is your mother – here is your son...

That is **adoption** language!

That is **covenant** language!

That's language of a new-spiritual **formation**!

He is fashioning as it were:

The Spiritual family of God!

Mary and John are standing together hearing the words of Jesus and coming to see that:

Their mutual attachment **in Him** becomes **the basis** of their commitment & love to one another

In other words:

The family of God **the church** is born at the foot of the cross!

The family of God **the church** is born in the shadow of His blood!

Jesus prays for the unity of the church in John chapter 17 – and now we see that He is **winning for Himself** the unity of the church **in John chapter 19**!

And this is why Paul in writing to the Corinthians says:

*To never forget that your brother is one for **whom Christ died**!*

This is **why it matters** if you call yourself a Christian and yet slander the people of God!

This is **why it matters** when you and I **break fellowship** over something as simple as a Bible translation – or a Christmas tree in the sanctuary:

Yet claim to have the spirit of the living God!

Because you're **NOT just slandering** God's people – but you're slandering the cross of Christ and what Jesus paid for!

Friends the people **in this room** are the ones for whom Christ died!

And all those who are **united to Him** by faith – are also **united to one other** in love!

The death of Jesus **wins for us** the unity and reconciliation of the Church of God **in the death of His Son!**

7 Sayings

And so **having ensured** the needs of His mother – and ensuring the unity of the Church – John now **quickly moves** to:

The climax of the Cross

Verse 28:

After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now finished and that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He said the words, 'I am thirsty...'

There are actually **7 sayings** of Jesus dying on the cross – this one is:

The **third to last** saying of Jesus!

And really with all of these sayings **you have to understand** that every breath He is taking is **excruciatingly difficult** for Him to do!

When a person was crucified, their feet were **permanently fixed** to the bottom!

And so **every breath** they take needed to take **was done by** putting **all of your weight** on the **bottom part** of your feet – and then pushing **down upon the nail** in order to elevate the body – to open your lungs:

So you could breathe!

And here we see that Jesus is **NOT only** pushing down upon the nail in order to breathe – but pushing down **in order to speak!**

7 times he performs this act!

7 times He utters His words!

I am Thirsty

And this phrase that He says *I am thirsty* is **particularly striking** for us because all throughout the Gospel of John – Jesus has repeatedly been depicted as the **one** who:

Is the very source of living water!

Jesus is the one who can give us the soul-satisfying joy of eternal life!

In John chapter 2!

John chapter 4!

John chapter 6!

John chapter 7!

Jesus is the one who can give you the **soul-satisfying joy** of eternal life!

Scripture Fulfilled

And so obviously this is showing us that Jesus Christ the **source of living water** had to **become like us** in order to be the one who could satisfy our every need!

The source of living water must Himself thirst if He is to become like us **and provide for us!**

But there's actually **more going on** in the mind of God!

Because because Jesus was **keenly aware** that the Scripture needed to be fulfilled in Psalm 69:21:

And they gave me sour wine or vinegar to drink!

He had **already been** offered wine **earlier that day** in Matthew 27:

*And they gave Him **wine mixed with gall**...*

But Jesus rejected **that offer** because:

That wine would have served as a **numbing** agent – a **dulling** agent – something that would have **aided** the pain of crucifixion!

But Jesus **didn't want** the pain to be taken away – He **wanted the Scriptures** to be fulfilled!

Posca

And so in verse 29:

*A jar full of sour wine **just so happened** to be there sitting with the soldiers!*

This is a different wine from the wine offered in Mathew's Gospel!

This wine would have been known as the ancient beverage of **posca**

It was an ancient beverage for **soldiers** – & **slaves** – **lower-class citizens** of the Empire!

People on the internet will tell you how to make this drink – it was made up of:

Wine – vinegar – herbs – water – spices – salt!

It was **NOT** a beverage to **dull you** – but to refresh you!

To **hydrate you!**

It was – one pastor calls it:

Ancient Roman Gatorade

It was a drink to **slake** your thirst – to **replenish** your salts – to **hydrate** your body – and these soldiers would have **been drinking this stuff** all day long in the **hot/humid** sun of Jerusalem!

And so John says that – some kind soul in hearing Jesus' cry:

Fixed a sponge e on a hyssop branch and held it up to the mouth of Jesus...

It is finished

And then in verse 30 – we see the reason why Jesus accepted the wine and drank from this sponge!

Something more **than just** demonstrating the human thirst **of Jesus!**

Something more **than just** completing the fulfillment of Scripture **in Jesus!**

Something more than **just demonstrating** the kind act of a random soldier **near Jesus!**

But Jesus takes a sip of the sour wine in His final breath because:

Jesus had a **sermon to preach!**

It's a **one-word sermon** in the Greek – **3 words** in English – but probably the most **profound statement** of Christ hanging on the cross:

When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said in His final moments of His life:

It is finished

Tetelestai

It's a word that means:

Done – completed – finished – finalized – paid – confirmed!

Many have said that:

*This is the **greatest single word** to be uttered by Jesus!*

Spurgeon said:

It is an ocean of meaning in a single drop of language...

Friedrich Krummacher [Crew-Mah-Kher] the German Protestant said:

In this word, you hear the fetters of chains bursting forth and prison walls falling down...barriers as high as heaven are overthrown – and gates which had been closed for thousands of years, once again move on their hinges...

Farmers

Farmers would use this word when speaking of the perfect animal that was **born into the fold** without spot – or wrinkle – or blemish!

They would cry:

Tetelestai!

Priest

The Priests in the temple would use the word speaking of a lamb they had inspected for sacrifice – and when they had found no spot – no wrinkle – no blemish – no imperfections the priest would cry:

Tetelestai!

Finished – complete – nothing else needs to be done!

Painting

An artist **would use the word** when painting on a canvas and stepping back to find that **NO MORE WORK** was needing to be done with a final stroke of the brush – he would cry:

Tetelestai!

Debt

But perhaps **most notably** it was a word **used on a legal document** when speaking of a legal debt that needed to be paid – and a person who came along to pay the debt would **finalize the bill** and rather than writing the words:

PAID IN FULL!

They would write:

Tetelestai!

Sacrifice of Christ

And so it's **NOT hard** for us to see the reason why Jesus used this word when dying on the cross!

Jesus was communicating to the world that:

The work the Father that was **given to the Son** was now fully & finally completed!

There was nothing else that needed to be done!

The work of salvation was now completed!

The task of saving sinners was now fully done!
 The task of revealing the Father was now fully finished!
 Christ had accomplished **every means necessary** to bring us into heaven!
 He had completed the work salvation!
 Accomplished the role of redemption!
 Fulfilled the law of righteous!
 Appeased the law of justice!
 Satiated the law of holiness!
 Paid the penalty!
 Defeated the Devil!
 Atoned for sins!
 Exhausted the wrath!
 Satisfied the justice!
 Appeased the anger!
 Bore our shame!
 Taken our guilt!
 Cleansed our sin!
 Expunged our record!
 Erased our debt!
 Established His Kingdom!
 And opened up the way!

Tetelestai!

In the words of Hebrews 10:

*He has made an offering **once for all** those who are being perfected by His blood!*

The author goes on quoting God:

And I will remember their sins no more!

Tetelestai!

In the words of that famous Hymn – a thousand tongues:

*He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
 He sets the captive free;
 His blood can make the foulest clean;
 His blood availed for me.*

Tetelestai!

*His love my heart has captive made,
 His captive would I be,
 For He was bound, and scourged and died,
 My captive soul to free.*

Tetelestai!

O Friends there is no greater word in the Koine Greek language than the simple phrase of Jesus:

It is finished!

Tetelestai!

What are you going to do now?

And so here is the question that we have to see – the question that I need to ask as we come to an end of our time in this passage finish friends:

What are you going to do now that you don't have to do anything!

That question will set you free

There is nothing more to be paid!

There is nothing more do!

To say!

To accomplish!

Nothing to earn!

Nothing to add!

We cannot add one iota!
 We cannot take away one iota!
 It is finished!
 It is completed!
 It is finalized!
 It is paid!

TETELESTAI!!!

So when your conscience is assaulted – remember it is finished!
 When Satan accuses you – remember it is finished!
 When the terrors of death frighten you – remember it is finished!
 When you feel like you can never be good enough – remember it is finished!

Conclusion

Let me finish today with a quote from Jon Bloom an author at Desiring God he says about this word:

*Shortly after 3pm, Jesus whispers hoarsely for a drink. In love, He has drained the cup of His Father's wrath to the dregs. He has borne our full curse. There is no debt left to pay and He has nothing left to give. The wine moistens His dry mouth just enough to say one final word, and God the Son dies. It is the worst and best of all human deaths. For on this tree He bears our sins in his body (1 Peter 2:24), "the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God" And now at last **it is finished...***

Remember Tetelestai

In a few moments we're gonna sing of the cross of Christ – and then we're gonna welcome new members into fellowship – we're gonna go out and we're gonna have some tea & coffee & biscuits in the courtyard:

And we're gonna remember ***Tetelestai!***

And we're gonna go home and put our heads on our pillows and go to sleep and then we're gonna wake up – and **start a new week** and we're gonna go out and work hard as Christians:

And we're gonna remember ***Tetelestai!***

And then gonna come back next Lord's Day – we're gonna sing songs – and pray prayers – and read Scripture – and hear the sermon:

And we're gonna remember ***Tetelestai!***

It is the theme that is **written over** every part of today's service!

Stamped **over every** Baptism!

Forged **onto every** testimony!

Written **over every** communion!

It is the single greatest word written in the Koine Greek language – and it's what Jesus so triumphantly uttered for us on the cross:

Jesus has paid it all!

And now we come to the throne of His Grace and enter into the rest of His eternal life:

Tetelestai!

John 19:16-30

Discussion Questions

[Read John 19:16-30].

Main Point: *Jesus Christ the King of kings has paid our debt in full!*

Q1. Explain what you know about the atrocities of Roman Crucifixion? – Why do you think John focuses so little on the details? **[Cf. John 20:30-31].**

Q2. Consider the irony and intent behind Pilate's actions, particularly with the inscription *The King of the Jews*. – How did Pilate intent for this statement to be read? – How does God intent this statement to be read? **[See Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:5; Revelation 17:14; 19:16].**

Q3. What does it mean to bear public witness to Christ in today's world? – Why should Christians step boldly into the public square proclaiming Christ as King? **[Answer: Because He is King].**

Q4. Examine Pilate's inscription in three languages and how, even in mockery, it became a testament to Jesus' true identity. – Why is the idea of God's sovereignty such a comfort for Christians? – How do you see God's hand today challenging the unexpected situations that come up in your life? – In what ways can we surrender our own plans to God's sovereign will?

Q5. [Read verses 23-27]. How does Jesus' example of caring for family members inspire us to prioritize relationships? – How should this affect the way we see our own church community as a family created through the sacrifice of Christ? – How should this guide the way in which we handle disagreements and disputes in the church?

Q6. [Read verses 28-30]. Consider the phrase *I am thirsty*. Why is this profound given what we know about Jesus in John's Gospel? [Cf. **John 4:10-14; John 6:35; John 7:37-39**]. – What does this teach us about His atonement and what He went through on the cross?

Q7. Jesus declares *Tetelestai* a term implying a debt fully paid and a mission fully accomplished. – What does it mean for you to know that Jesus has “finished” the work of salvation? – How can we find peace in knowing that God's work is complete, even when we sin against God?