

## Done • John 19:28-30

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. *The Pace of Life*

1. The hurried pace of life here in SoCal is stunning.
2. If we could transport someone from 100 years ago to today, they'd find it unbelievable.
3. Just 35 years ago Alvin Toffler wrote the best-seller *Future Shock*.
  - a. He warned that advances in technology & culture were putting strains on people's ability to cope.
  - b. He said modern men & women have *too many* options & opportunities.
  - c. In order to handle the stress all this places on them, he predicted they'd begin shutting down emotionally & mental illness would become an epidemic.
4. *Some* of what Toffler predicted has come true.
5. But as he went on to say in his next book, *The Third Wave*, which came out 10 years later, humanity proved far more adaptable than he originally thought.
6. Someone found a way to cope with all the choices & invented the *Day-Timer*. The Day-Timer then evolved into the PDA.
  - a. Now the PDA has evolved into the all-in-one LMD (Life Management Device)
  - b. It's a cell phone, w/a camera, videocam, MP3 player, Internet, Email, & Organizer complete with Calendar, To Do list, & Address book.
  - c. With one of these devices we know where we're supposed to be, when we're supposed to be there, doing what, with who, for how long.
  - d. We can take pictures of it, then send them to others to prove it all took place.

#### B. *Completing Things*

1. Yet with all this help at organizing our lives, many people still feel *overwhelmed*. There's just so much to do; a lot ends up getting left undone.
2. We start a project, but don't complete it.
3. We jot down an item in our To Do list, but fail to follow through.
  - a. It just keeps getting carried over from day to week to month;
  - b. Until finally we check it off just to get rid of its nagging presence.
  - c. Every day it sits there on our To Do list it *mocks* us, reminding us of our *failure* to complete it.
4. Someone once said the average American's garage is a testimony to the problem of procrastination; a memorial to the unfinished project.
5. And now we see self-storage units popping up all over so we have *more places* to store our undone stuff.

#### C. *God Finishes*

1. The passage before us today reminds us that God *completes* what He begins.
2. We can count on Him to keep His promises no matter how great the obstacles.

#### D. *The Setting*

1. Jesus has been on the cross since about 9 in the morning.

2. It's now nearly 3 in the afternoon; 6 hours later.
3. Based on what we know about Roman crucifixion & what the Gospels tell us, the cross was set alongside the busy road that leads out of the northern gate of Jerusalem.
  - a. This road makes its way past a quarry known by the locals as "Skull Hill."
  - b. It was called that because the quarriers had made two holes in the white limestone cliff in the shape of eyes & another between & below them like a nose.
  - c. The cliff leered over the road like a skull & the Romans had found it a perfect setting for execution.
  - d. They always set the crosses of the condemned along a busy thoroughfare where many would have a chance to see how Rome treated those who got sideways with her.
  - e. Being in a place of easy access to the public also added to the torment of the victim, for now people could draw close to hurl insults, which is what the chief priests did with Jesus.
4. John was there & witnessed the entire ordeal.
5. In the vs. just before this, Jesus asked John to watch after His mother.

## II. TEXT

### A. Vs. 28-29

**28** After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" **29** Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth.

1. Jesus knew the end had come.
  - a. He knew the previous 6 hours had served to atone for our sins.
  - c. There was no need for Him to spend another minute in agony because the work He'd come to do was now complete.
2. The only thing left was to make sure *everyone else knew* He'd completed the work of our redemption.
3. So he said to those nearby, "I thirst."<sup>[1]</sup>
  - a. At this point, Jesus throat would be bone dry, his tongue cleaving to the side of his mouth in dehydration, His lips cracked.
  - b. The only ones who would hear His request for a drink would be the guards standing nearby.
4. John tells us there was a vessel of cheap wine at hand – the word refers to the vinegary beverage that was the staple of the poor.
  - a. The other gospels tell us that at the *beginning* of the crucifixion, Jesus was offered a drugged wine.
  - b. This was meant to numb the senses of the condemned & make it easier for the guards to nail him to the wood.
  - c. Most victims drank it gladly – anything to deadened the pain.
  - d. But Jesus *refused* because He came to *take* our punishment, not *avoid* it.
  - e. Now that the end has come & sin *has been* atoned for, Jesus needs the

- moisture so He can be clearly heard by all those passing by.
- f. His voice must be strong, so He asks for a drink.
  5. One of the guards dips a sponge into the vinegar, puts it on one end of a stick of hyssop, & lifts it to Jesus' mouth.

### **B. V. 30**

**30** So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"** And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

1. He sucked some of the vinegar from the sponge, just enough to wet His mouth and loosen His swollen tongue.
2. He had a word to say – **One** word in Greek – & wanted to make sure no one misunderstood.
3. He worked the vinegar round His mouth, swallowed, pushed up on the nail driven through His feet to take in His last breath.
4. Then, as the other Gospels tell us – with a loud voice He sent forth His final breath in forming the word – "Tetelestai – Done – Finished – Completed – The End – Paid in full!"<sup>[2]</sup>
5. Then, using the same words that describe a child laying his head on his daddy's chest, John says Jesus bowed His head and released His Spirit from His spent body.

### **C. Finished!**

1. When Jesus cried out "Tetelestai!" it was no scream of agony.
  2. It wasn't a last angry curse hurled at His tormentors.
  3. Nor was it the despair of the defeated.
  4. The word was one of **triumph**, of successful completion of an important task.
  5. He didn't say, "**I** am finished" but "**IT** is finished;" meaning the task He came to Earth to accomplish.
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6. There are some famous & interesting last words from people . . .
    - a. **Peter Abelard** was the most famous philosopher of his time. Yet despite his great wisdom, when asked what would happen after he died, he replied, "**I don't know.**"
    - b. **Lady Astor** was William Churchill's lifelong opponent in politics. She spoke her last words when, on her deathbed, she momentarily awoke to find herself surrounded by her entire family, and said, "**Am I dying or is this my birthday?**"
    - c. As **Elizabeth I**, felt life slipping away she cried out, "**All my possessions for a moment of time.**"
    - d. Conrad Hilton, the famous hotelier was asked if he had any last words of wisdom. He replied, "**Leave the shower curtain on the inside of the tub.**"
    - e. When author **Wilson Mizner** briefly regained consciousness on his deathbed, he saw a priest standing over him. The priest asked if he had anything he wanted to confess. Mizner replied, "**Why should I talk to you? I've just been talking to your boss.**"
    - f. Convicted murderer **James French**, last words before being electrocuted

- were directed at some newspaper reporters. “Here’s you headline fellas; ‘French fries.’”
- g. Condemned killer **Thomas Grasso**, said, “I did not get my Spaghetti-Os. I got spaghetti. I want the press to know this.”
  - h. Being led before a firing squad, **James Roges** was asked if he had a last request. His reply – “Why yes, a bullet proof vest.”
  - i. **William O'Neill** was one of Teddy Roosevelt’s Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War. Just before the charge on Kettle Hill, He was standing in the American camp when one of the soldiers under his command suggested he not present himself such a tempting target to the enemy. O’Neill laughed, continued rolling his cigarette, and said, **“Sergeant, the Spanish bullet isn't made that will kill me.”** No more were the words spoken, than he was shot in the mouth, and died before he hit the ground.
  - j. Civil War **General John Sedgwick** was inspecting some fortifications when one of the men urged him to take cover from the occasional small arms fire that tested the position. Sedgwick said, **“They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist--.”** He was shot in the head by a Confederate sharpshooter.
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7. Jesus’ last words were a ringing and confident announcement of victory.
  8. Tetelestai. It means Complete – Finished – Done.
    - a. It’s been found written across tax records from that time.
    - b. When a person was convicted of a crime, their sentence was written up & handed to the jailor, who posted outside the prisoner’s cell.
    - c. When the time had been served and the proper fees paid, the jailor would release the prisoner, take down the sentence, and write in bold letters across it – “Tetelestai – Paid in full.”
    - d. The prisoner was then released & carried that completed sentence around with him where ever he went, to **prove justice had been served.**
  9. What Jesus did on the cross was to do for us what we could never do for ourselves – pay our debt of sin.
  10. And when He shouted out that victorious declaration, it was so that all might know the guilt of our sin, **all of it**, past, present & future, has been expunged.
  11. God is **perfect** in His justice. Since Jesus fully paid the penalty for our sin, God would be unjust to make us pay now.
  12. This is why in 1 John 1:9 John says. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful & **JUST** to forgive us & cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
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13. Some Christians have the idea that when they suffer, God is **punishing** them. Never!
    - a. What they’re experiencing may be the natural consequences of their foolish choices,
    - b. Or it may be the loving correction our Heavenly Father uses on us as His spiritual children.
    - c. But it is never, ever **punitive** – it’s **never punishment.**
  14. I’ve shared this before, but this is such an apropos illustration, I have to share it again.

- a. Some years ago, I met with a woman who was recommended for counseling by one of our members.
- b. This woman believed in God & wanted to have a relationship with Him, but she felt totally unworthy.
- c. She'd committed adultery & the guilt overwhelmed her.
- d. When she came to see me, her marriage was falling apart, her job was in danger, her relationship with her children was strained, & her health was beginning to deteriorate from all the stress & guilt.
- e. It didn't take long to zero in on the fact that she believed she'd erred so greatly, all the bad stuff that was happening to her was *necessary* to atone for her adultery.
- f. She really believed she had to go through a certain amount of pain in order to **PROVE** she really was sorry.
- g. I tried to explain about God's forgiveness but it just didn't get through; she was stuck behind the immensity of her guilt.
- h. So I asked her to close her eyes & picture the cross w/Jesus hanging there.
  - 1) I told her to approach the cross, to get real close & to hear Him as He lifted his head & shouted out, "It is finished!"
  - 2) Then, I said, "Now, tell Jesus, 'No it's not!' Tell Him He's wrong – it isn't finished. Tell Him what he did wasn't enough & that you have to add to it."
  - 3) She began shaking her head & big tears fell as she began to sob.
  - 4) The awareness of the completeness of God's forgiveness washed over her like an incoming tide.
- i. In an instant, she was free; free of the lie the devil had bound her in.
- j. The truth of Romans 8:1 became hers –

**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.**

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. Let Him Love You

1. Because of the cross, forgiveness is already ours.
2. When we blow it & mess up, all we have to do is *admit* it & reach out to take hold of that forgiveness.
3. Jesus *shouted* "It is finished!" so that *all* might hear it – so WE can hear it. Hear it now!
4. Don't let the devil tell you God can't or won't forgive you.
5. That's a lie aimed at defeating you and keeping you from being free to enjoy the fullness of God's love.
6. Do you know why Jesus went to the cross?
  - a. To atone for our sins and provide complete forgiveness. But why?
  - b. So *nothing would stand in the way* of God's lavish love for you!
7. Some of us feel unworthy of God's love, & because of that, we fail to enjoy it.
  - a. Let's settle something right now – you are, I am, totally *unworthy* of God's love!
  - b. God loves us not because of who we are but because of who HE is!
  - c. If we merited God's love, then the credit would go to who? US!

- d. We give all praise & honor to God because He loves us *apart* from our merit.
  - e. This is the mystery that fills our worship with the awe that makes it more than just noise.
  - f. Ephesians 2:8-9 says –
- For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**
- g. What a bummer heaven would be if people walked around bragging about how they got there by their own efforts.
  - h. In heaven, only One gets the honor, the worship, the praise – Jesus; He is the Only One who is Worthy!
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- 8. One day I'm walking through the store & see a really nice outfit my 14 year old daughter Karesse would look great in.
    - a. I buy it, & have it specially wrapped.
    - b. It's no special occasion; I just love her & want to show her that love by this special gift.
    - c. I bring it home & at dinner that night hand it to her.
    - d. But instead of taking it, let's say she asks me what it is.
    - e. I tell her it's a gift. What for? Just because I love & want to bless you.
    - f. Then she says, "I'm not really feeling very worthy of that Dad. I've not been as good a daughter lately as I could be. Let me work on being more worthy of this present and when I'm ready, I'll let you know."
    - g. You know what my reaction is? Deep disappointment!
      - 1) That present was an expression of my love and desire to bless her.
      - 2) I know all about what kind of a daughter she's been lately and that had NOTHING TO DO with my giving the gift, because a gift is not about worthiness or merit.
      - 3) It's meant to show the goodness of the giver, not the recipient.
      - 4) Her rejection of my gift is an insult.
  - 9. So is our failure to simply rest in the completed work of Christ and abide in the place of His love & blessing.
  - 10. One of the highest forms of worship we can give God is to *let Him love us* without looking for the **why** of His love within ourselves.
  - 11. The answer does not lie there – the Answer is in Him.

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[1] Fulfilling Psalm 69:21 - "They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

[2] Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46