

Text: John 19:28-30

Title: “It is Finished!”

SERMON BUMPER – As we prepare for Easter we’re doing something we haven’t done before ... a Good Friday Worship and Lord’s Supper service, April 19 at 6pm in the Great Room. We’ll worship and share in the Lord’s Supper. Afterwards we’ll have a fellowship dinner together with complementary Chick-fil-A for all attenders. Then of course, we have our Easter morning worship services on our regular schedule, but to insure that we have sufficient parking for everyone, we’re not having Sunday Bible Study that day. Grab some of the invitation cards and share them wherever you go over the next two weeks.

We’ve been walking with Jesus in the Gospels through the days leading up to His crucifixion and resurrection. Today we come to the Friday of “The Week that Changed the World.” It’s a fateful day and the Gospel writers give us a tremendous amount of information, almost an hour by hour description of what Jesus endured on the day He died. The Gospel writers are like news reporters who have each interviewed different people to piece together this incredible story.

Last week we left Jesus late on Thursday night in the Garden of Gethsemane. But that place of prayer becomes the scene of a crime as a mob approaches Jesus, led by Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. In the wee hours of Friday morning we have...

THE BETRAYAL BY JUDAS

Let’s read together: **Mark 14:43 - Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.**

Judas had arranged with the authorities to identify Jesus with a deceptive kiss so they would know who to arrest. And with the arrest of Jesus one of the greatest human miscarriages of justice begins to unfold. And yet this great human miscarriage of justice is actually being used by God to carry out His divine justice. This is about two great attributes of God ... the holiness of God and the love of God. The *holiness* of God ... because a righteous and holy God must punish sin. The *love* of God ... because God loved us so much that He punished our sin by heaping it on Jesus. As you go through this this morning keep that before you. Next we have ...

THE JEWISH TRIAL BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS

Jesus is marched back into the city of Jerusalem under guard, first to the palace of a former Jewish high priest named Annas. He was still a very powerful man who questions Jesus and when Jesus doesn't answer him satisfactorily one of the officials strikes Jesus in the face. It's the first of many blows Jesus would endure over the next several hours.

Next Jesus is taken a short distance to the palace of the high priest Caiaphas. Here at Caiaphas' house Peter denied three times that he ever knew Jesus. Caiaphas heads the Sanhedrin, the powerful council of Jewish leaders. Actually, they had no real interest in justice; they simply wanted Jesus dead and out of the way, whatever it took. So they rounded up some characters to make up stories about Jesus.

Let's read together. **Mark 14:60 - Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?"**

Mark 14:61 - But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Mark 14:62 - "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Mark 14:63 - The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked.

Mark 14:64 - "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.

The OT prophet Isaiah predicted this:

Isaiah 53:7 - He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

In their minds Jesus is guilty and deserves the death sentence, but they are not allowed to execute anyone. That will have to be done by the Romans, but the Jewish leaders will not miss the opportunity to mock and abuse Jesus themselves.

They spit on Him and struck Him with their fists. The guards also beat Jesus as they take Him to the next point. So next there's ...

THE ROMAN TRIAL BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD

The Jewish authorities took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor of Palestine. It's Passover and he wants to make sure the peace in Jerusalem isn't disturbed.

Let's read together. **Mark 15:1 - Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.**

Mark 15:2 - "Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate. "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

Mark 15:3 - The chief priests accused him of many things.

Mark 15:4 - So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

Mark 15:5 - But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now Pilate doesn't really care about the Jewish charges of blasphemy, and he doesn't think that Jesus deserves to die. And he finds what he thinks may be a way out of this dilemma. Pilate discovers that Jesus is from Galilee which is the jurisdiction of another ruler named Herod Antipas. Herod happens to be in Jerusalem at that time so Jesus gets shuffled over to Herod's palace. Herod is quite amused with Jesus but ultimately Herod doesn't want to get involved so he sends Jesus back to Pilate.

Pilate is still looking for a way out of this. He thinks Jesus is innocent and, in his famous words, "I find no fault in Him," and he proposes an alternative. There was a custom in the day in which the Roman governor could release a prisoner at Passover. So Pilate brings out a criminal named Barabbas and gives the crowd a choice: Whom do you want released, Barabbas or Jesus?" He thinks the Jews will surely choose Jesus, but to Pilate's surprise they cry out, "Give us Barabbas." Then Pilate asks the crowd...

Let's read it together. **Mark 15:12-13 - "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them. "Crucify him!" they shouted.**

So Pilate renders his verdict, but first he brings out a basin of water and washes His hands, symbolically gesturing that he is innocent of Jesus' blood. Of course, ultimately Pilate will go down in history as the one responsible for Jesus' death. He has the soldiers tie Jesus to a post and brutally flog him with a whip that literally shreds the skin on Jesus' back.

Let's read together. **Matthew 27:27 - Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him.**

Matthew 27:28 - They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,

Matthew 27:29 and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.

Barely alive, Jesus is led out of the governor's palace and through the streets of Jerusalem carrying His heavy cross to a place outside the city wall where He will be crucified ... Golgotha. He stumbles along the way, so the soldiers force a bystander named Simon to carry Jesus' cross for part of the way.

As the crucifixion begins the soldiers offered Jesus a drink of wine mixed with some other ingredients which may have been a kind of sedative to keep Him from fighting for His life. But Jesus refused to drink it. Next, there's ...

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

We know that crucifixion was brutal form of capital punishment. Jesus was nailed to the cross then the cross was raised up leaving Jesus suspended above the ground hanging by his very flesh. Crucifixions took place along well-traveled roads because the Romans wanted to make examples of the criminals who were being executed in this way. Don't mess with the Romans.

Let's read together. **Matthew 27:35 - When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.**

Matthew 27:36 - And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.

Matthew 27:37 - Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matthew 27:38 - Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

Matthew 27:39 - Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads

Matthew 27:40 - and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!”

Then from the cross we hear Jesus speak. In response to all of the mockery and the violence done to Jesus amazingly He prayed aloud, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And by His death on the cross Jesus was making it possible for the Father to forgive, even the ones who had committed such a horrible sin to murder the Son of God. But He’s praying for our forgiveness as well.

Standing near Jesus’ cross were His mother Mary, the apostle John and some other women. Surprisingly Jesus, with all of His own sufferings, is concerned about the well-being of His mother. And there Jesus charges John to take care of Mary as though she was his own mother.

We also know that Jesus is crucified between two criminals who at first mock Jesus. But one of them has a change of heart.

Let’s read together. **Luke 23:42 - Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”**

Luke 23:43 - Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

In faith he calls out to Jesus, and Jesus’ promises the man that the minute he closes his eyes in death he will be with Jesus in paradise ... a word for heaven. What a wonderful promise to all who will call on the name of the Lord to be saved.

In the end Jesus’ only possession was the clothes on his back. The soldiers gamble to see who gets to take them, the fulfillment of an OT prophecy. Think of Jesus, the single most important figure in history dies with nothing to His name but the

clothes on His back. For our sakes the One who was rich became poor so that through His poverty believers become rich in righteousness.

The crucifixion probably begins at 9am and at about noon an ominous, supernatural darkness fell over the land that lasted about three hours. At around 3pm Jesus, very close to death, cries out in utter desperation, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?” In that dark hour, with the sins of all humanity heaped on Him He has been cut off from His heavenly Father. In those words Jesus expressed the terrifying cost of the sacrifice He was making for the sins of the world.

Jesus knows the end is near. Earlier Jesus refused to drink the numbing wine mixture, wanting to be fully alert throughout His crucifixion. But now that the price has been paid Jesus gasped that He was thirsty. And they put a sponge on the end of a stick, soaked it in some cheap wine and raised it up to Jesus’ lips.

THE LAST WORDS OF JESUS

Matthew and Mark record that Jesus cried out again in a loud voice and then He died ... “he gave up his spirit.” What did He say as He cried out with a loud voice? Luke records...

Let’s read together. **Luke 23:46 - Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.**

John records that Jesus’ said more ...

Let’s read together. **John 19:30 - When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.**

“It is finished.” In the Greek it is just one word ... *tetelestai* ... one word that forever changed history. There’s more packed into that single word than we may realize. Jesus doesn’t say, “*I am* finished.” He says, “*It is* finished.” The great Bible scholar Warren Wiersbe says that in NT times a servant would use this word *tetelestai* when reporting to his master that he had completed an assignment given to him. God sent His Son into the world to save the world. Mission accomplished. Jesus said...

John 17:4 - I have brought you glory on earth by completing (tetelestai) the work you gave me to do.

In NT times when a priest examined an animal sacrifice and found it faultless, the priest would declare *tetelestai*, meaning an acceptable sacrifice has been found. So we were redeemed ...

1 Peter 1:19 - with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

In ancient times when a contract was established and signed the parties would declare *tetelestai*. The deal is done. God established a covenant to redeem His people and that covenant, that contract, was signed in the precious blood of Christ.

The word *tetelestai* was used by merchants. When a buyer purchased something and the price was paid, the merchant would proclaim *tetelestai* ... paid in full! When Christ died on the cross He fully satisfied the righteous demands of God's holy law. He paid our sin debt so we wouldn't have to.

So at that exact moment as Jesus took his last breath His sufferings were finished. Everything that needed to be done for our redemption was completed. But the tense of the verb makes it even richer. Literally: It is finished and will continue to be finished forever. It is finished and it stands finished and it will always be finished.

So when you put your trust in what Christ did on the cross where He suffered and died, at the moment you trust in Christ "it is finished." Your sins are forgiven, right then and there. Your sin debt is paid in full, right then and there. The righteousness of Christ is imparted to you, right then and there. It is finished. But there's more. It will always be finished. That's why it is called "eternal" life. It never ends. Your old life is forever gone. Your sins are forever forgiven. Christ righteousness is forever yours. *Tetelestai* ... one word says it all.