

## Repent: Turn To Jesus!

*He and He Alone Finished  
Your Salvation*

## A Sermon on John 19:17-30

Year A - Good Friday  
14 - April - 2017

JJ<sup>1</sup>

“Ah...finished!” You all have said that plenty of times in your life. You’ve finished a big test. You’ve finished writing a big paper. You finished a project at work that had all kinds of detours along the way, but you can look at it as a job well done. You finish building your house or remodeling. You finished payments on the house. Women, when your child was born and your labor over—“Ah, finished!”

But we don’t always say it like that, do we? Sometimes it’s, “I’m finished with this!” You walk away in frustration. You quit because of a terrible boss or job. You give up when that stubborn bolt won’t budge. Sometimes even with relationships...“I’m finished with this!”

Today as we hear Jesus proclaim “It is finished!” we focus on what those words really mean. As we hear *Jesus proclaim salvation’s grand finale with these precious words from the cross*, may we all **Turn To Jesus in repentance, because he and he alone finished our salvation!**

As we look at what happened on Good Friday, we see all kinds of people thinking and behaving as though they were finished. Pilate was one of them. Pilate certainly thought he was finished. *It*

*hadn’t been a good day for Pilate. An angry mob formed outside his palace very early in the morning. And that mob was demanding a crucifixion, of all things! Pilate gave the Jews an opportunity to see a real criminal punished and an innocent man released, but they chose Barabbas! Pilate thought he could satisfy their bloodlust with a good old-fashioned Roman flogging, but 40 lashes minus 1 wasn’t enough to satisfy their hatred.*

The mob was on the verge of rioting—a career killer for a Roman governor. So, Pilate was finished. He had a bowl of water brought to wash his hands of the whole matter, as though physically washing hands could wash away the guilt of sacrificing innocent blood for the sake of his career! And to show he was finished with the Jews, he had a sign hung on the cross which *publicly proclaimed the reason for the crucifixion*. “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” The sign and Pilate’s intent did it’s job, sticking a burr in the Jews’ saddle: “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that ‘this man said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’”” But Pilate was finished. *Finished with Jesus, finished with the priests and the people, and finished with this whole frustrating debacle.*

Jesus’ enemies thought they were finished too. They thought they had finally

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<sup>1</sup> JJ is the acronym for *Jesus Juve*, which is Latin for “Jesus Help”. It is a short prayer used by many ministers and sacred musicians at the beginning of their work.

gotten rid of this rabble rouser. They thought they were finished and could get things back to normal where they held all the cards for the spiritual dominance of the nation of Israel.

The devil certainly thought he was finished too. Finally, at long last, he had beaten God! He had finally stuck it to the one who damned him. Along the way there were plenty of close calls where he almost did it (Adam & Eve; Jonah; Job; David; Kingdom of Judah), but God always managed to work things out. But now, oh now, the Son of God was being led to a cross to die—to fail!

Judas thought he was finished for another reason. Judas saw what his sin of greed had done to him. It led to him betraying his Rabbi—yes, even his Lord and Savior! But in Judas' mind he was finished. There was no turning back to Jesus. There was no forgiveness in God's heart big enough to forgive him for what he had done. He was finished, and so there was no point in living any longer. Judas figured he may as well get it over with and head off to the place he doomed to go—hell. So he killed himself.

Finally, the disciples thought they were finished. In the Garden of Gethsemane, they fled for their lives. Just a handful make it to bloody Golgotha. The rest had

gone to hide in fear. Even those who went to Jesus' crucifixion would soon join them. They thought they were finished. They thought they were doomed. Their hope of salvation was gone!

But all those people were wrong—every one of them. None of them were finished, at least in the way they thought. But what about Jesus? He actually cried out, "It is finished!" Was he wrong? What was he finished with?



From outward appearances, Jesus looked like he was done for. He was arrested and crucified! *But Jesus wasn't finished. Not yet. Jesus wasn't done fulfilling the law with a perfect love. In a shocking act of love, he looked down from the cross and forgave the very soldiers whose fingerprints were on the hammer and nails. In a saving act of love, he looked over to a criminal, who earlier had mocked him, and assured him that*

*that very day he would be with him in paradise. Then, in a son's final act of love, he looked down from the cross, and, seeing his mother, said, "Woman, here is your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother!" And from that time this disciple took her into his own home."*

Mary was truly blessed in being the mother of Jesus, her Savior. But that blessing also came at a cost. 40 days after Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph brought

Jesus to the Temple to fulfill the requirements of the law. It was there that aged Simeon prophesied "...a sword will pierce your own soul too" (Lk. 2:35). One of the great Lutheran theologians, Johann Gerhard, describes the fulfillment of those words so well: "She sees Jesus lifted up, but cannot touch him; sees him nailed and cannot loose him; sees him dripping with blood, but cannot remove it; sees his body wounded, but cannot bind them up; she hears his cry 'I thirst' and cannot give him a drink; as many torments there are in the body of Christ, so many wounds are there in the mother's heart."

*Jesus provided for the mother's physical and emotional well-being, but he was still not finished. Jesus wasn't done providing the world with far more! Not only was Jesus fulfilling a perfect life of love on the cross, he was still fulfilling the prophecies of Scripture!*

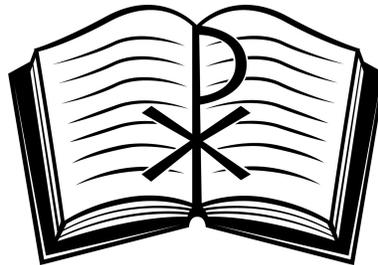
*The first fulfillment of Scripture was done to Jesus by the soldiers. They took Jesus' clothing and divided it into four shares, but then cast lots for his tunic. Shocking when you consider that the Lord used the soldiers' greed and cruelty to provide us with proof and certainty that Jesus was the long-promised Savior!*

*The second fulfillment of Scripture was done by Jesus. "...knowing that everything had now been finished, and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine was sitting there. So they*

*put a sponge soaked in sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth."*

*All Jesus' suffering before and during crucifixion resulted in terrible thirst. As true God, he created water. As true man, he was desperate for a drink of it! "I thirst" is powerful proof that Jesus' suffering was real. Even more, it is powerful proof that Jesus fulfilled Scripture down to the tiniest detail!*

*Jesus drank the vinegar to fulfill Scripture and because he had something else he needed to say, something else we desperately need to here! Jesus wasn't finished until fulfilling every letter of the law. Jesus wasn't finished until fulfilling every prophecy of Scripture. Then and only then was Jesus truly finished. "When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished!" Then, bowing his head, he gave up his spirit."*



*Jesus' word "it is finished" is the "final word" on the FACT of your forgiveness! I say word, because in the Greek language, it is only a single word: TETELESTHAI. "It is finished!" It's the very word shopkeepers would write on a bill when the debt was paid in full.*

*Our debt is paid in full! The debt of being natural born sinners. The debt of an entire life filled with pouring sin into our account every day of our lives! That debt, friends, is paid in full. There is no down-payment we have to cover. There is no balance remaining we have to pay. It is,*

*simply put, FINISHED! The whole Bible is summed up in this one word: FINISHED!*

*If there is anything that our Lenten journey has proclaimed, loudly and clearly, it is that **Jesus, and Jesus alone, finished our salvation!** Nothing or no one dare take the place of Jesus. No human work, no matter how right or “holy” it feels, dare turn Jesus’ FINISHED into “to be continued” or “maybe.” No amount of sorrow over your sin does it. Jesus alone finished your salvation. No amount effort to try and make your good outweigh your bad does it. Jesus alone finished your salvation. No amount of really believing does it. Your faith didn’t die on the cross for you. Jesus alone finished your salvation!*

Friends, let there be no doubt in your hearts or in your minds. Simply, be still and know that Jesus is God and Savior of the world! ***In simple faith, repentantly turn to Jesus—he and he alone finished your salvation.*** Salvation is accomplished always and forever through Jesus. Salvation is yours only through Jesus. “It is finished!” Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> SDG is an acronym for *Soli Deo Gloria*, which is Latin for “To God Alone Be The Glory”. This is a statement of humility used by many ministers and sacred musicians at the end of their work to let themselves and others know that it isn’t about getting glory for themselves, but about giving all glory to God.

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