

THE WORD OF VICTORY

Seven Greatest Words of Love

Let me just ask you a pretty frank question to begin with: How many of you have ever used this phrase “I just can’t seem to get it all done.” Let me see your hands. I just can’t seem to get it all done. How many of you have ever said this: “I need more time.”

Now, we all know we all have a limited amount of time on this earth. I hate to tell you this but the fact is you’re going to die with unfinished business. You will end your life having things that you’d wished you’d done but you didn’t, could have done but you didn’t, should have done, whatever, because you just don’t have enough time.

Only one person in all of history died with finished business, with no unfinished business. And his name was Jesus, of course.

The world is filled with unfinished projects and unfinished buildings and unfinished dreams.

Now, many of you know what this is, right? Mount Rushmore. Do you know that it’s actually unfinished because the sculptor ran out of funding? His original design was like [this](#).

As I said, you’re going to die with some unfinished business. Only one person has ever died having completed everything he came to do and that was Jesus.

For his entire life Jesus had one overarching goal. John 4:34, [“‘My food,’ said Jesus, ‘is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.’”](#)

Fortunately for you and fortunately for me he did. He did finish. And today we come to the sixth word of Jesus from the cross. We’ve been looking at the seven last sayings of Jesus that he said while he was dying on the cross. Last week, we look at “I am thirsty.” Today, we’ll look at the sixth one in John 19. [“Later,](#)

knowing that everything had now been finished, [we'll come to this a little later] and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.' [this is the fifth word] A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

I think it's important that he gave it up. He voluntarily gave it up. I call this phrase, "It is finished" the **Word of Victory**. The Word of Victory.

You know, throughout history there have been a lot of victorious statements. When MacArthur says, "I will return," and he goes back to the Philippines and when Neil Armstrong lands on the moon and he says, "The eagle has landed," and when a man says, "Honey, I threw the trash", those are statements of victory.

I want to tell you that these three words are the three most important words in your life. When Jesus said, "It is finished" he determined your future. If Jesus had not said these three words you wouldn't be here today, you wouldn't be headed to heaven, and the world would be a very, very different place. These are the three most important words in history. It is finished.

So, what is Jesus talking about? What are these three words? It is finished.

I think when Jesus said, "It is finished", Satan thought, "I've won. I have killed God. I've won and the Son of God is finished." But here's the thing: Jesus did not say, "I am finished." Because he wasn't. He rose three days later. He said, "It is finished." These are the three most important words in history. Nothing will ever be more important to you in your life than these three words. It is finished.

What was Jesus saying on the cross when he gave the word of victory? What was finished? The suffering? Yeah. His humiliation. Yeah. His pain. Yes. But much, much, much more.

What I want to do today is explain to you the four things that Jesus accomplished. This is Christianity 101. This is the basic gospel in a nutshell.

The first thing I want to explain to you is that this phrase is actually only one word in the original Greek. If you've taken the Evangelism Explosion training before, you know this. On the cross, Jesus shouted out this word in Greek, which is "*Tetelestai*".

You see, during the time of Jesus, this is a word that was common. It is a business term and it means, "Paid in full". And they actually would make stamps that said *tetelestai*. And when you paid off a bill they'd stamp it, "*Tetelestai*." In fact, archeologists have found many, many old papyri, that's old paper made out of plants, old papyri of tax records with the word *tetelestai* stamped on it. It meant paid in full. You have no more debt any more. It's been paid off. The debt has been cancelled.

So what did Jesus finish when he said, "It is finished"? What did he complete? What did he accomplish?

Write these down. Or take a picture. Four things.

Number one, the first thing Jesus accomplished was this:

1. HE SATISFIED WHAT GOD'S JUSTICE REQUIRED.

He satisfied what God's justice required. Let me explain this to you. God is a God of justice. He is eminently fair. God cannot be unfair. God is a God of justice and truth and righteousness and holiness and always does what's right and can never do what's wrong. So God is a God of justice and God is a God of order and God is a God of laws and God is a God of fairness.

You see, the only reason the universe works is because of God. God wired the universe to run on certain laws. There are laws of physics. God designed them all. There are laws in astronomy. There are laws in chemistry. There are laws in the environment. There are physical laws. There's the law of gravity. How about if

the law of gravity just worked every other day? And it was totally unreliable. God's laws always work all the time. So God designed the entire universe so that rotations work and gravity works and the laws of thermodynamics work. All of God's laws are immutable or unchangeable. But then, there are also spiritual laws and moral laws and relational laws.

God gave the moral laws to Moses and to the nation of Israel, to the Jews. And the Jews were to take the moral laws and share them with everybody else. You've heard the phrase that the Jews are God's chosen people. It's true. What were they chosen to do? They were chosen to be the purveyors or the ambassadors of God's moral law to everybody else.

As Human beings, you and I, we have two problems with the laws of God. Number one, we are completely unable to keep them all. We just can't keep them all. In fact, here's what the Bible says in Romans chapter 8, *"The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit."*

Jesus is the only person in human history who ever kept all of God's law perfectly. Because he was the Son of God. The first problem we have is that we are completely unable to keep all of God's laws.

The second problem we have is this: Justice demands that lawbreakers pay the consequences. You don't have laws and you break them and nothing happens. Like the law of the traffic light. When it's red and you don't stop, you get a ticket if you don't get into an accident. You suffer for breaking the law. Or the law of sleep. If you don't get enough sleep your body pays for it.

You see, you are free on this planet to do anything you want to. God gives you that freedom. But you are not free from the consequences. I'm free to go out and get drunk, cause accidents, blow up buildings, steal things, live a totally licentious self-centered life. I'm free to do all that. God gives me that freedom. However, he does not give me the freedom from the consequences of it. And every kick has a kick back and there's a payoff. And justice demands that lawbreakers pay a penalty.

So God is a just God but he's also a loving God. And Jesus did for us what God's justice and God's law required.

Look at the next verse. Look at this verse on the screen. *"After he had finished his work..."* – what's the work he's talking about? That work on the cross dying for our sins. *"After he had FINISHED HIS WORK, he became the source of eternal salvation for [who? For...] EVERYONE who obeys him."* (Heb. 5:9 GW) It doesn't matter what your background is. It doesn't matter what your culture is. It doesn't matter what your religion is. It doesn't matter what your personality is. Salvation is for everybody who obeys him, who accepts what he did for him.

Romans 5:18, *"Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people [that one trespass was committed by Adam when he disobeyed God in the garden], so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. [that one righteous act was committed by Jesus when he died on the cross]"*

So, what did Jesus finish on the cross? He satisfied God's justice that was required.

Number two.

2. HE PAID OFF THE DEBT THAT I OWED GOD.

When Jesus finished dying for me on the cross he paid off the debt that I owe God. You have a lot of debt in your life and I'm not just talking about your

financial debt. You owe something to everybody you've ever hurt, you've ever offended, you've ever sinned against. You owe them something because you've taken away something by offending them, hurting them, sinning against them.

But you're in even deeper debt to God because everything you have is a gift from God. Many times you've been ungrateful, you've been unthankful, you've been rebellious, you've done your own thing. You've basically said forget you God and did whatever you wanted to do. You've gone with your plan instead of God's plan. When God said do this, you've done the exact opposite. You're in deep, deep debt to God.

Here's what the Bible says in Colossians chapter 2. *"...by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."* Paul is saying that Jesus paid off your debt. It's paid in full. You don't have to pay it any more yourself. You don't have to nail yourself to the cross. He took that punishment for you. He has cancelled your debts.

Can you imagine waking up on Monday and getting a call from Visa credit card or American Express or Mastercard and they said, "We've just decided to wipe your slate clean. We're going to eliminate all your debt on all your credit cards; we're just going to wipe it out and we're just going to start over." Would anybody like that? Yeah.

That's exactly what Jesus Christ did for you when he cried on the cross It is finished. I paid all your debt. *Tetelestai*. Paid in full.

In the Philippines, when's the time you normally pay someone else's debt? When you're in a jeepney. Like you're with a friend and both of you ride a jeepney to get home. You would take a seat that's close to the driver, reach out to him with your coins and say, "Mamang driver, eto ho, dalawa." "Mr. Driver, here's for the two of us."

Here in the States, when do you normally pay someone else's debt? When you

share a meal in a restaurant. After a meal, you try to take out your wallet, and you do it slowly or pretend you're taking it out until your friend pays for it himself. That's how someone else pays your debt. And you heave a big sigh of relief.

That's exactly what Jesus Christ did for you. Hebrews 10:18 says, "*And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.*" That's why you should heave a big sigh of relief and thank Jesus for what he has done for you. You no longer have to do anything at all. He did it all for you.

But some of you have felt guilty over something you've done wrong and you've believed God has forgiven you but you haven't really felt God has forgiven you and you keep trying to pay off your sin. Maybe if I go on missions that will pay off my sin. Maybe if I go to church that will pay my sin. Maybe if I tithe then I can get rid of this guilt. You're trying to pay off your sin when it's already been paid for.

That is good news. The sacrifice was final. It was complete and it is finished. *Tetelestai*. There will never be anything else you can ever do to pay for your sins, because it's already all been paid for. No need to keep repaying for your mistakes.

I remember one time reading about a lady who was an elderly woman and she went to her insurance company and she walked in and they said, "How can we help you, ma'am?" She said, "My husband died five years ago and I can't afford to keep paying his life insurance premium. I just cannot afford to do it anymore." They said, "Ma'am you don't need to. It's been paid off. It's done and now you get to benefit from it. He died and because he died you are now going to benefit from his death. You don't have to pay anything anymore."

And that's what Jesus did for you.

Number three. The third thing that happened when Jesus said it is finished was:

3. HE DEFEATED THE FEAR OF DEATH!

He defeated the fear of death. This is a universal fear. Nobody is exempt from it. Everybody has some fear of death. But Jesus broke that power and this was a battle cry. It was a shout of a victorious conqueror when he says I have defeated death and I have proved to you that you don't have to be afraid of it because I'm going to come back to life.

You see, in ancient times, soldiers who were victorious over their enemies would declare "tetelestai". It was a victory cry. On the cross, when Jesus cried out "tetelestai", he's saying death is not the end and you don't need to fear it any more. And if I am the resurrection you can be resurrected in believing in me.

Romans 5:17 says, *"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!"*

And Hebrews 2:14-15, *"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."*

I don't have to be afraid of death any more. I'm not afraid of death, I can honestly say. I'm afraid of pain, but I am not afraid of death. Because death is just a transfer and I know where I'm going. And I know I'm supposed to be there not here forever and I'm looking forward to being there since more and more of my friends and parents and relatives are there. Jesus breaks the fear of death. He defeats the fear of death when he says it is finished.

Number four. The fourth one. When Jesus Christ died for us on the cross one of the things he accomplished was

4. HE DESTROYED SATAN'S POWER TO CONTROL ME.

On the cross he destroyed Satan's power to control me. Let me tell you one

truth. If you don't have Jesus Christ in your life, if you don't have the power of God in your life you are defenseless against the devil. You are not anywhere near as powerful as Satan. If you don't have God's Spirit in your life you have zero defense, zero power, zero armor against Satan. He can just whip you around. He can manipulate your emotions. He can mess with your mind. He can get you addicted to all kinds of stuff. He's got all kinds of power. And you are flat out powerless. You have no defense against the devil if you don't have God in your life. You have none.

But when you get God's Spirit in you the Bible says, **"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world". (1 John 4:4)**

Let me tell you another truth. Satan has two favorite tools to whip you around. One of them is temptation and the other is condemnation. And he loves to use them both.

Satan is the great tempter. Since the beginning, he is man's greatest enemy. He tempted Eve and she succumbed to his temptation and mankind has been under the spell of the evil one since then. He even tried to tempt Jesus three times after Jesus fasted for 40 days. And there are so many verses in the Bible calling the devil the tempter. Like in 1 Thess. 3:5 where Paul says, **"For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain."**

You see, the way he uses temptation is he minimizes it. "It's no big deal. Come on! Everybody does this! Go ahead and do this thing. Rebel against God. You're smarter than God. You know what will make you happy more than God does." And he's giving you all these thoughts in your mind. He doesn't have to speak aloud. He just puts these ideas in your mind. Just like God but in an evil way. When Satan puts an idea it's called temptation. When God gives you an idea

it's called inspiration.

And then the moment you give in to temptation, you sin, you know what he does? He reverses strategy and instead of minimizing it he maximizes it. "You did that? Are you kidding me? God will never love you again. It's over. You're a goner. God can never use you. You'll never be blessed. What kind of person do you think you are? That is so big you could never, never be forgiven for that."

See his strategy? Minimize the sin before you do it. Maximize it afterwards. Temptation then condemnation. What did Jesus Christ do on the cross when he said it is finished? He defeated temptation and condemnation.

Folks, the Bible says that Jesus destroyed the irresistible power of temptation. He now gives you the power to resist it. In fact, he promises in Colossians chapter 1:13, *"For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."*

You say, wait a minute Rolly. You say Satan is defeated but it seems to me that Satan's still pretty much alive right now. Yes. But he's on borrowed time.

I tried to think of the best illustration to explain to you the predicament that Satan is in right now between now and the end of history. The only thing I could give you is something that's a little bit gory. Have you heard of the phrase "running around like a chicken with its head cut off"? And have you actually seen a chicken running around, maybe even flapping its wings when it's already dead?"

I Binged it and here's what Copilot says, *"Yes, it's a rather peculiar phenomenon. When a chicken's head is swiftly removed, the brain and spinal cord are severed, leading to an immediate loss of consciousness. However, the chicken's body can continue to move and twitch due to residual neural activity and reflexes."*

The chicken's dead and doesn't know it. And at the cross Jesus whacked off the head of Satan! He's running around with his head cut off. He's dead and doesn't know it.

If you have Jesus Christ in your life Satan has zero power over you except the areas that you choose to give him. When you choose to give in to temptation then you give him what's called a foothold in your life. And that's the problem. Sometimes, we cooperate with Satan rather than with the Holy Spirit. We go looking for temptation. One way to defeat temptation, is to immediately take your mind off the temptation. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you. He will because God is faithful.

You see, if you have Christ in your life he can only affect you by suggestion. He cannot come at you full on. Now if you don't have God in your life you're vulnerable. You're wide open. But when Jesus Christ died on the cross one of the things he did was he defeated the power of Satan to manipulate you. Does Satan still tempt me? Yes. But I now have the power inside of me that gives me the energy to say no. And I didn't have that power before.

And then not only does he have temptation he has condemnation. But Jesus destroyed Satan's leverage to accuse you. Romans 8:1 says, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."

So let me summarize. Jesus fulfilled the Scripture, what God had promised to do. He satisfied the law. And in his own justice did what God required. He paid off the debt that I owed – a massive debt that I could never possibly pay off on my own. He took my penalty. He defeated the fear of death. He destroyed Satan's power to control me. Is that a reason to celebrate? Yes!

These are the four things that give us hope. This is the uniqueness of the Christian hope. And there's hope for your future too. If you feel like giving up, don't. Look at the next verse. Philippians 1:6 says this: ***"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*** He will

bring it to completion because of what? Because Jesus Christ finished it about 2000 years ago on the cross. Is there anything in there about you doing something? No. It's all about him doing something. It's all about his work.

Let me show you a trailer of a movie shown in theaters a few years ago. Folks, like that guy in the movie, you can have hope whatever desperate circumstances you're in. Because Jesus finished his work of salvation on the cross, you don't have to work for your salvation.

Video – Captive

I started this message by saying you're going to end your life with unfinished business. But there's one thing that's definitely been finished for you. And it's our last verse. Ephesians 2:8. I'm quoting from the Message which I think explains it very clearly to us, *“Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish!”*

Do or done. That's your choice. Let's bow our heads.