

*He Loved Me...*

*He Loves Me Lots*

*The Gospel of John*

Text

John 19:16-30

Topic

Jesus said, "*It is Finished*" and dismissed His spirit.

Title

**"Let Me Start Off with One Word:  
'It is Finished' "**

---

***Sleeps with the fishes...***

... As a euphemism for death goes as far back as Homer's *Iliad*. It was popularized and became a part of our collective culture when the Corleone's received a package containing a fish wrapped in the late Luca Brasi's bulletproof vest. Luca slept with the fishes, and the Corleone family went to the mattresses without forgetting the cannoli.

**There are hundreds of euphemisms for death.**

Bite the dust, croak, pass away, kick the bucket, six feet under, pushing up daisies, take a dirt nap, and bought the farm.

**The most consequential death in the history of the universe was the death of Jesus on the Cross.**

The Lord gave the Cross a unique description in the Gospel of John. He said, "If I am **lifted up from the earth**, [I] will draw all *peoples* to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die" (John 12:32-33).

“Lifted-up” is borrowed from the Old Testament. The Israelites sinned during the Exodus, grumbling against God in the wilderness. God sent poisonous snakes into camp; many were bitten and died. The people asked Moses for help. God told Moses, “Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live *if they look at it!*”

Earlier in the Gospel of John, Jesus said, “And as Moses **lifted up** the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be **lifted up**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (3:14-16).

### **The bronze snake lifted-up on the pole illustrates Jesus being lifted-up on the Cross.**

- An Israelite who was bitten need only look to the pole, believing God that they would be saved.
- Anyone who looks to the Cross believing God will be saved.

With that in mind, there are two possibilities around which I will organize my comments: **#1 You Are Drawn To The Lifted-up Lord**, or **#2 You Are Born To The Lifted-up Lord**.

#### **#1 - You Are Drawn To The Lifted-up Lord (v16-24)**

H.A. Ironside writes,

*“Those of us who are saved can look back and recall how the work of the Holy Spirit began in our souls. We remember the time when we were just part and parcel of the world around us, and then there came an awakening. Perhaps at first we could not understand what was happening to us. We became unhappy and dissatisfied; we desired something we had never known before; we became conscious of our sinfulness and guilt; and we cried out in our hearts for cleansing and purity-that was the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.”*

No one can come to Jesus unless God draws them. Thankfully, **Jesus draws all men to Himself**. He is the Savior of **all men**, especially **those who believe**.

Joh 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

John omits Simon of Cyrene carrying the Cross for Jesus, refusing the wine offered to Him at the beginning, the taunts, the three hours of darkness, the cry about forsaken, the earthquake, the tearing of the Temple veil, and the centurion's comments.

John includes some things not in the other Gospels: The witness of the inscription, the details and significance of the dividing of the garments, the prophecy fulfillment citations, giving His mother to John, the final cry, and the piercing of His side.

John wasn't writing as a journalist or a historian. He chose events carefully to serve the overall theme of his Gospel.

When sharing Christ, we might need to edit ourselves and get to the point. Be concise. The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' most prolonged talk. It is shorter than a Ted Talk - taking only fifteen minutes to recite.

Joh 19:17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called *the Place* of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha,

Joh 19:18 where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

All four Gospels are united in condensing the violence perpetrated upon Jesus. They weren't looking to be R-rated or TV-MA.

Let's agree crucifixion was gruesome. We don't need to go into detail beyond what they chose to include.

Condemned men would carry the crossbeam on their shoulders to the place of crucifixion. Golgotha may have gotten its name from the fact that the hill, from a distance, resembles a skull.

Crucified with Jesus were two criminals. The scene would point Jews to Isaiah 53:12, which says the suffering servant is "numbered with the transgressors."

Joh 19:19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Joh 19:20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, *and* Latin.

Every criminal wore their charges around their neck as they made their way to Golgotha.

Think of the charges against you before you were saved.

Every evil deed for sure, but also the meditations of your heart and mind. The placard noting our charges would be so heavy that we would be crushed by it.

Joh 19:21 Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews." ' "

Joh 19:22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

**Pilate's perfectly parsed, purposely pithy placard** was a diplomatic insult. What he wrote was accurate, but it slandered the Jews.

Pilate was being used by God, inadvertently, to prophesy. God did the same thing earlier when Caiaphas said one man should die for the nation.

### **The Lord uses unbelievers to suit His purposes.**

They act of their own free will but in ways that glorify God and further His purposes.

The Lord is probably using the unbelievers you are around. Not to prophesy but, for example, to challenge your claim that knowing God makes you a new creation, indwelt by God the Holy Spirit.

Joh 19:23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic...

Think of this as asset forfeiture. Whatever criminals had in clothing was distributed among the executioners, a squad of four soldiers.

The soldiers unwittingly fulfilled Bible prophecy. In Psalm 22:18, David wrote, "They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Jesus didn't ask the soldiers to divide His garments and cast lots. This was supernatural providence.

Joh 19:23 ... Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.

Joh 19:24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "THEY DIVIDED MY GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

*Jews knew these verses.* They ought to have been awed to see prophecy fulfilled before their eyes.

The birth of Israel as a nation in 1948 was a prophecy fulfilled before the eyes of the world.

We can identify specific means by which you may be drawn to the lifted-up Jesus:

- Fulfilled Bible prophecy can draw a person. I know that is what initially drew me to the Lord.
- The compassion of Jesus as He instructs John to care for His mother - a widow about to have her eldest son die. In a cruel world with so much abuse, pure compassion draws.
- We see the authority of Jesus throughout John's account. He was in charge. It is the kind of righteous authority for which our hearts hunger.

God uses people. He uses blessings and buffetings. He uses your circumstances. He can speak through visions and dreams.

Jesus draws all men to Himself - and we emphasize all, whosoever, whoever. Some cannot reconcile God's sovereignty with mankind's free will. They conclude that for God to remain sovereign His grace in salvation must be *irresistible*. It sounds feasible, until you realize that it means God only irresistibly draws a small, elect group, leaving the majority of the human race to perish eternally.

Would Jesus consign most of the human race to eternal, conscious torment without giving them a way of salvation?

**I can conceive of no crime against humanity greater than condemning billions of people to the Lake of Fire for eternity who by God's own design could not respond to the Gospel and be saved.**

Besides, the Bible tells us that grace *is* resistible. As Stephen was being stoned, he said to the Jews, "You always **resist the Holy Spirit**; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you" (Acts 7:51).

It is biblical to believe God has given man free will and He remains sovereign. Philip Melancthon said, "We do better to adore the mysteries of the deity than to investigate them."

This doesn't mean that we can ignore unpleasant truths in the Bible. But if we come to a conclusion contrary to the nature of God revealed to us by Jesus, *we are wrong*. Let us adore the ever-living God.

## **#2 - You Are Born To The Lifted-up Lord (v25-30)**

Even though he was the only Gospel writer present, John recorded just twelve English words Jesus spoke from the Cross:

- "Woman, behold your son!" "Behold your mother!" (19:26-27).
- "I thirst" (19:28).
- "It is finished" (19:30).

Joh 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

An overlooked argument as to why we can believe the Bible to be true is that no human author would name several major characters Mary. Nor would there be two Judas'.

Joh 19:26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

Joh 19:27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

The "disciple Jesus loved" is code for John. Along with Peter and James, John was part of what commentators call the 'inner circle.' They accompanied Jesus at times the others did not. You cannot, however, see this as spiritual bragging by John or favoritism by Jesus.

The disciples, at least some of them, had nicknames. It's common when you hang out with guys. John and his brother James were called, *Boanerges* - Sons of Thunder. This James was also called James the Less. It can mean younger or smaller in stature.

He is not to be confused with James, the half-sibling of Jesus.

There was Simon the Zealot. Not to be confused with Simon Peter. Peter is translated from *petros*, meaning Rock or Rocky in English. Jesus renamed him *petra*. Not to be confused with Peeta in *The Hunger Games*.

*Petros* was used to signify a small stone; *petra* referred to a large boulder.

There was the infamous Judas Iscariot, but another Judas who they called Judas *not* Iscariot.

Thomas was also called *Didymus*, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Thomas, both meaning *twin*. Scripture does not give us the name of Thomas' twin.

Jesus telling Mary that John was now her son, and telling John that Mary was now his mother, is quite remarkable beyond its compassion. Jesus had male siblings: James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude. He had unnamed sisters, too. They were the offspring of Joseph and Mary after the Lord was born.

The responsibility of caring for their mother should fall to these adult children. Jesus circumvented convention and gave John the responsibility.

We know from the Gospels that His brothers and sisters did not believe in Jesus until *after* His resurrection. Jesus entrusted Mary to the care of a believer over that of His birth family.

It speaks to us of what the Scriptures call the "household of faith." It is a metaphor for the Church that the Lord is building between His first and second comings. It is a clue to the reader that this is a new economy, a new dispensation, in which those born-again constitute a single family in God's household. We, spiritually, are each other's brothers, sisters, fathers, and mothers.

In First Corinthians 10:32, we find a distinction that only became true after the resurrection. Paul the apostle recognizes three different classes of persons: "Give none offense, neither to the **Jews**, nor to the **Gentiles**, nor to the **church of God.**"

- Jews are the physical descendants of Abraham.
- Gentiles are anyone not descended physically from Abraham. If you are not a Jew, you are a Gentile.
- The Church is an entirely different entity. It is spiritual and supernatural, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, relating as a family of those who have been born-again.

You are either a Jew or a Gentile whom Jesus is drawing to Himself, *or* you are born into the family of God, the Church. *Those are your only options.*

Joh 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"

I mean absolutely no disrespect by saying that Jesus was able to check off every item on what we would call a bucket list. His list was not about bungee jumping or about retiring anywhere but California.

- It was about coming as God in human flesh, setting aside the independent use of His deity to live as a man among men.
- It was to be tempted by the devil in a sort of re-creation of the temptation of Adam and Eve. Not in a beautiful garden with fruit everywhere, but in a wilderness while fasting 40 days.
- It was about being our substitute and sacrificing Himself on the Cross to draw all men to Himself.

Joh 19:29 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.

There are several potential causes of death when a person is crucified: Suffocation, cardiac rupture, heart failure, something called hypovolaemic shock, respiratory acidosis, asphyxia, and pulmonary embolism, to name a few.

Did you know it *is* medically possible for a person to die of a broken heart? It is called Takotsubo cardiomyopathy. Otherwise known as death by broken heart, "it is an emotional stress or anxiety-induced surge of adrenaline and norepinephrine that creates a toxic environment for cardiac tissue. The victim's arteries tighten to such a degree that it stuns the heart into a rapid rise of blood pressure, the consequence of which is congestive heart failure."

Dehydration was a potential COD. Jesus, dehydrated, received some sour wine. It is not to be confused with the "wine mingled with myrrh," Jesus refused when offered to Him on His arrival at Golgotha (Mark 15:23). That was a sedative. Think morphine drip. Jesus resolved to die unmedicated. He had business to conduct and wished not to be impaired.

The mention of "hyssop" reminds us that at the first Passover, when the nation of Israel left Egypt, the blood of the sacrificed lamb was applied to the doorpost with...

**Hyssop, dipped in blood** (Exodus 12:22).



Jesus is the final Passover lamb, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.

Joh 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

**"It is finished" is one word: *tetelestai*.**

You've heard that *tetelestai* can mean 'Paid in Full' and that it has been found written on ancient receipts. Not exactly, according to Biola University. The receipts archaeologists discovered have only *tetel* written on them, not *tetelestai*. On the Cross, Jesus paid the debt owed for sin. But *tetelestai* means "It is finished!"

The total number of things that were "finished" grows every time you think about this most beautiful saying of Jesus. J.C. Ryle writes, "The finishing of all the known and unknown sufferings which He came to endure, as our Substitute - the finishing of the ceremonial law, which He came to wind up and fulfill, as the true Sacrifice for sin - the finishing of the many prophecies, which He came to accomplish - the finishing of the great work of man's redemption, which was now close at hand - all this, we need not doubt, our Lord had in view when He said, "It is finished."

Spurgeon adds,

*"All the types, promises, and prophecies were now fully accomplished in Him... All the typical sacrifices of the old Jewish law, were now abolished as well as explained. They were finished - finished in Him... When He said, "It is finished," Jesus had totally destroyed the power of Satan, of sin, and of death... Children of God, ye who by faith received Christ as your all in all, tell it every day of your lives that 'It is finished...' Sinner, there is nothing for God to do. "It is finished!" There is nothing for you to do. "It is finished..." Every stumbling-block is rolled out of the road; every gate is opened; the bars of brass are broken, the gates of iron are burst asunder. "It is finished! Come."*

**L**et me end with two words: "It is finished, O Lord, come!"

***Tetelestai Maranatha!***