



HIGHLIGHT: John 19:28-30

H

²⁸After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now finished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he said, “I’m thirsty.” ²⁹A jar full of sour wine was sitting there; so they fixed a sponge full of sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it up to his mouth.

³⁰When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

EXPLAIN

E

After enduring a day full of torture, ridicule, and excruciating pain, Jesus utters His final words from the cross: “It is finished.” *Tetelestai*. This was one of the costliest sentences ever uttered, but one of the most beautiful—and understanding the sacrifice that Jesus made on our behalf will change us forever.

- v.28 “The Scripture” here could refer to two—or even three or four—different things. If John’s statement refers to the utterance that Jesus makes (“I’m thirsty”), it’s likely that he refers to Psalm 22:15. If it refers to the actions that those officiating the crucifixion undertake (a sponge full of sour wine), it refers to Psalm 69:21. If it refers more to Jesus’ spiritual thirst to return to the Father, John may be referring to Psalm 42:2. Of course, it’s also likely that John intended each of these, for Jesus fulfills everything ever said about Him.
- v.29 Hyssop is important in Scriptural salvation. David says in Psalm 51, “Purge me with Hyssop.” See, during the Jewish captivity in Egypt, just before the Passover, the Israelites were to use it to paint their door frames with the sacrificial lamb’s blood. So when David writes this, he means, “Cleanse me with blood. Based on the fact that an innocent victim provided the blood that saved me from death, regard me as cleansed!”
- v.30 The Greek word for “It is finished” is *tetelestai*. We find it only in two places in the whole New Testament: John 19:28 and John 19:30. It has rich significance, according to Warren Wiersbe, for it was traditionally used by four different groups of people:



- **Priests**
When an animal was brought to the Temple as a sacrifice, a priest had to examine it to ensure it didn't have any blemishes. If it passed inspection, the priest would say, *tetelestai*: "The sacrifice is perfect."
- **Servants**
When a master would summon his servant for a task, the servant would first kiss the master's hand and then listen to the request. When he finished it, the servant would return, take a knee, and say, *tetelestai*: "The task is done."
- **Artists**
When an artist put the final touch on a painting, he would say, *tetelestai*: "The work is finished; not a single stroke couldn't be added or taken away, because it's complete."
- **Merchants**
When a business transaction had been completed, the merchant would essentially hand the customer a receipt that said, *tetelestai*: "The debt has been paid in full."

A

APPLY

1. **What stuck out to you or challenged you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?**
2. **Describe a time someone has sacrificed so that you could have something. How did their sacrifice benefit you? How did it make you feel toward that person?**
3. **Why was it necessary for Jesus to die? What did His death accomplish? How might it be dangerous for us to become "too familiar" with the cross?**
4. **What about Jesus' death and resurrection is hard for people to believe? Why do you think the Cross is, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:23, "a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles"?**
5. **What do you think that Jesus meant by "It is finished"? How might Hebrews 9:22-28 help us understand part of it? What has Jesus' death "finished" in your life?**

R

RESPOND

- **What reaction do you have to the message of the cross? What is God leading you to do as a response to that?**

