

The Sixth Word From The Cross: The Adulteress

This woman who encountered Jesus has her story recorded in John's gospel. When she thought her life was finished, Jesus invited her to a new beginning. The scene from John 8:2-11 unfolds with tension but ends in relief.

John 8:2–11 (NIV): At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. 3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group 4 and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” 6 They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. 7 When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only

Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.
10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Indeed, this woman caught in adultery was finished according to what the law in that day said should happen next. Death by stoning was the written consequence for her sin.

However, Jesus had a different plan for her on this day. She was not finished. She was to be forgiven and set on a new path with a fresh start. Perhaps Jesus thought about how His approaching time on the cross would pay the price for her sin. Soon, it would be finished so she could be free to live a new life. And not just her but whoever would call on His name for now on.

It would not be long from the scene in John 8 until Jesus was experiencing the moment where all who had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God would have the

crushing weight of their sin being dealt with on the cross.
And lifted from us.

John 19:29-30 captures the culminating moment when the final payment of all sin was paid in full. Jesus had been on the cross for six hours at this point and had just called out concerning His thirst from the crucifixion process which led to deep dehydration among his other painful ailments in His body, mind, and soul.

John 19:29–30 (NIV): 29 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. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The sixth word of Christ from the cross is spoken in verse 30.

"It is finished."

These are just three short words in the English language; only one word in the Greek. Tetelestai: it is in the perfect tense, and it means “it has been and will forever remain finished and there is nothing that can ever happen to unfinish what Jesus just finished.”

IT IS FINISHED!

What comes to mind when you hear those words? For those who have young kids or have raised kids, perhaps a question comes to mind that often is heard at the dinner table when kids are present.

“Can I be finished?”

Many kids in America seem to ask that question at dinner.

“Can I be finished?”

Then the negotiations begin.

It goes something like this:

Adult: "You can be finished when you eat three more bites."

Kid: "Three more bites and then I can have some dessert?"

Adult: "Well, five more bites and then dessert. Three more bites and no dessert."

Some parents bypass negotiations completely and get "old school" on their kids when asked: "Can I be finished?"

And the response is: "You can be finished when you clean your plate." Followed by the reminder that: "There are starving kids in _____(fill in the country that your parents used)." However, Jesus was not about finishing what was on His plate, but rather finishing what was in the cup.

The night before the cross when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane praying to His Heavenly Father, Jesus asked if He had to drink the cup that was before Him. The conversation went like this:

Matthew 26:39 (NIV): 39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is

possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

The Father said, “No. I’m sorry, but you have to finish the cup. It’s the only way to rescue humanity from the consequences of their sin.”

Jesus was overwhelmed to the point that He was sweating drops of blood as His soul was filled with sorrow.

The conversation in prayer wraps up like this:

Matthew 26:42 (NIV): 42 He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

And the answer was the same. The only way to rescue humanity is to drink all the contents of the cup of sin, shame, and suffering that comes with the cross. This was not a surprise to Jesus. He knew this day would come. This is why Jesus came from heaven to earth. He came to drink the whole cup. He even had a conversation on the

matter earlier with His disciples who were wanting a place of prominence in His Kingdom.

The question Jesus asks them concerning the cup is found in Matthew 20 verse 22.

Matthew 20:22 (NIV): 22 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said to them. “Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?”

I imagine what Jesus wanted to say at this moment was something like:

“REALLY? Guys, you don’t have a clue what is in the cup I am going to have to drink. And you can’t just kind of swirl it around and fake a big drink. You can’t just rearrange the sin of your life on your plate and fool God into thinking that you cleaned your plate and cleaned yourself up. The fact is there is so much sin on your plate that you could never take care of it all and so I am going to take care of it for you once and for all.

You see, there is coming a day very soon when I am going to be on the cross consuming all the contents of the cup that is filled with your sin, and I am going to drain that cup to the bottom. After I have consumed every last drop, I am going to slam that cup down and say a sixth magnificent word from the cross: IT IS FINISHED!

TETELESTAI...that means: "it has been and will forever remain finished and there is nothing that can ever happen to unfinish what I AM about to finish."

I am going to have to finish it because the reality is that you don't have a clue. You don't even know what you're doing or talking about, and so I'm going to ask The Father to forgive you. And for all that to happen, it's going to have to get really, really bad before it gets really, really good."

Truth is Jesus didn't say these things. However, I wonder if He thought them? Regardless, He had a cup before Him that needed to be consumed by Him and only Him. What was in the cup that Jesus did not want to drink?

All the wrath of God and all the sin of humanity all swirled together that was a deep, dark, death potion. In the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was asking His Father about the cup, He knew how gross that cup would taste because He knew the ingredients. He knew the saying was about to come true for Him in a very real way: "You are what you eat and drink."

The Apostle Paul tells us what Jesus was about to become as He consumed the cup. 2 Corinthians 5 is where Paul writes:

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV): 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus became sin; His cup was filled with the sin of humanity from all people of all times. He drank it to the last drop and became what He drank. Jesus became sin for all humanity when He consumed the cup and sacrificed His life on the cross as a sin offering for all people.

Galatians 3:13 tells us what also was mixed in the cup when again Paul writes:

Galatians 3:13 (NIV): Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole."

Jesus became a curse; His cup was filled with the curse from God that would have and should have been our curse. However, Jesus made what has been called the Great Exchange. He became the curse on the tree for all humanity for all time in exchange for all humanity having the opportunity to be redeemed by what Jesus finished.

Tetlestai: "by what has been and will forever remain finished, and there is nothing that can ever happen to unfinish what Jesus finished."

The sixth last word of Christ from the cross was: "It is finished."

In this word, Jesus proclaimed that He had drained the cup of wrath filled with the sin of the world and our curse; and He drank it all the way to the bottom. It was a bitter drink over a six hour slow, sacrificial sipping, and consuming of all the contents of the cup from 9am-3pm on Calvary's Cross.

Show video - Adulteress (www.skitguys.com).

What do we do with the fact that it is finished?

Perhaps we could do what Jesus invites us to do: Remember. Remember that "It is finished." The sacrifice and the slow death sip of the cup was drained to the bottom of every drop. And His mission to rescue the world includes rescuing you from sin, death, Satan, and hell is finished and will forever remain finished, and there is nothing that can ever happen to unfinish what Jesus finished. Your sin and my sin have been consumed by Jesus. Forgiveness is ready to be experienced by all who allow the deep, dark, drinking of the cup to be done on all our behalf.

For those who have placed their faith, hope, and trust in Jesus and have allowed Jesus to drink their cup of wrath and sin and curse, today we pause and remember that He is a great God who rescued us and gave us back our lives.

The way Jesus asks us to remember His sacrifice is by cleaning our plates and drinking our cups of remembrance through the Lord's Supper.

The broken pieces of bread represent the broken body of Jesus that was cursed on the cross for us. On that cross when Jesus' body was broken, we got our lives back.

The contents in the cups are a reminder of the precious blood of Jesus that was poured out at the cross to cleanse us from all our sin, cursedness and unrighteousness.

And let me just pause here for a moment. Often times people want to just skip over this blood thing. See many have drained the blood from the gospel. There has even been parents who complained at Christian schools when they taught about the crucifixion that it might cause

nightmares to their children. But truth is blood isn't the gory part. It has been required from the garden. God had to sacrifice an animal to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. In the deliverance of the people from Egypt blood had to be placed around the doorpost. The high priest had to sprinkle blood around the altar so that Israel could maintain a right relationship with God.

Blood is not the gory part sin is.

The problem is we have seen on television murders with blood spattered across our scenes or seen an auto accident that has blood attached to it so we have looked at blood with the wrong insight. We see it as disgusting. And that is how the enemy wants you to view it. But that was not God's design.

Leviticus 17:11 (NIV): 11 For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

See we look at blood as death, but actual it is life. Sin is what brought death.

The coverings He provided Adam and Eve after their sin were coverings of life. The blood on the doorposts of the Hebrew people at Passover was the protection of life.

The yearly sacrifice God instituted for Israel was intended to restore them with life.

So Jesus came died on a cross a bloody mess because that was able to bring us freedom, deliverance from shame, insecurity and guilt. His blood brought us life.

The cross was gory no doubt about it, as a matter of fact Isaiah tells us:

Isaiah 52:14 (NIV): Just as there were many who were appalled at him— his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness—

So, as we prepare to eat the bread and drink the cup, may we remember today that what Jesus said on that day at the cross still has implications on this day and throughout eternity for our lives: It is finished!

No stones of condemnation need to be thrown. Only humble adoration and thanksgiving need be given for what Jesus has done to remove our sin and shame and give us a new beginning to go and sin no more because it is finished.