

# LAST WORDS



WEEK OF 03/29/26

IT IS FINISHED

JOHN 19:30

## Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to help you listen to and receive God's Word.

## Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Read: John 19:30

## Devotional (30- 45 minutes)

In 2012, in a small church in Borja, Spain, a church member named Cecilia Giménez noticed something troubling. A century-old fresco of Jesus — *Ecce Homo*, "Behold the Man"— was deteriorating. Moisture had caused the paint to flake. The face of Christ was fading. And like many well-intentioned people, she thought... *someone needs to do something*. So, she picked up a brush to restore it. But what emerged was no restoration — it was distortion. The careful work of the original artist was ruined beneath "thick strokes" of good intention. The suffering Christ became a global joke. They called it "Monkey Jesus."<sup>1</sup> Cecilia didn't ruin the painting by neglect. She ruined it by addition. By trying to fix what was already finished.

1. Have you ever made something worse by addition? In other words, you tried to help by doing something, but your good intentions (and actions) ultimately made things worse. (Ex. a project, a situation, a relationship, etc.) If you feel comfortable, please share the experience.

**What does "It is finished" mean?** | "It is finished" is a single sentence in English but one word in New Testament Greek. It's the word *tetelestai*. It. Is. Finished. The greatest danger is not rejecting the work of Christ—but trying to improve it. He doesn't invite our assistance though. He doesn't ask for our finishing touches. He declares as fact: **"It is finished."**

2. Read John 19:28 and John 17:4. What is the "it"? What exactly is Jesus saying is finished?
3. One implication of the finished work of Christ is that the devil has been disarmed (cf. Colossians 2:15). Satan is active. He still blinds. He still tempts. He can hurt you. He

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bu.edu/sequitur/2016/04/29/handler-ecce/>.

can even kill you. But if your sin is forgiven – he cannot *condemn* you. How does this truth resonate with you today?

4. Another implication of the finished work of Christ is salvation for sinners. Read Isaiah 53:4-6. What encouragement can we draw from this passage?

**What does “It is finished” change?** | *Tetelestai* changes everything. We can no longer walk around haunted by the debts we no longer owe. Our debt is cancelled. The account is closed. The currency of heaven is not in our effort, our track record, our church attendance, or our moral improvement. Heaven only accepts one form of currency: *The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ!* In fact, anything we do to fix what is finished actually fouls up what is finished. *If it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. (Romans 11:6 ESV)*

5. When you sin, do you ever feel as though you need to make right your wrongs or pay back God? In other words, has there ever been a time when you’ve bought into the “do more, try harder” (false) gospel?

**Big Idea: Jesus said, “It is finished” – the law fulfilled, the devil defanged, the wrath drained, the sinner saved. Christ left nothing unfinished! Now go live!** | Because of the finished work of Christ, the Christian life essentially begins on finished ground. Before we rise. Before we pray. Before we feel one godly emotion or take one righteous step – we wake up already covered. Already held. Already shielded by the words: “*It is finished.*” Whatever comes – you are guarded, grounded, garrisoned in the protective custody of *Tetelestai*.

6. Religion says: “Get busy. Close the gap. Pay up.” The Gospel says: “The gap is closed. It is finished. Paid in full. Now go live!” What needs to happen in order for you to be less religious and more gospel-centered? What might this look like for you on Monday morning in the ordinary grind of your life?

### Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you that heaven will not be a trophy room filled with all our earthly merits. Thank you that our only hope is the finished work of Christ. Thank you that – by grace – we were purchased, sealed, and delivered at Calvary. Thank you that our debt has been fully paid. Help us, oh God, to cast our whole weight on your finished work. Enable us to serve out of our freedom, gratitude, and sheer joy in knowing that, “*It is finished.*” May this be first word over our lives; not the last. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**Prayer Requests** (10-15 minutes)