

## John 19

Once again good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to John 19? We will be partaking in communion together this morning.

In our last study we witnessed the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus. We also took an in depth look at the horrors of the scourging, and the difficult details of what the victim of a crucifixion endured.

Since we only studied verses 1-18 last time, we'll pick up this morning in verse 19 and finish chapter 19, as we see the sinless Son of God give up His life on the cross.

The title of this morning's message is IT IS FINISHED.

Would you stand with me as we read verses 19 and 20 and then we'll pray?

19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

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.

LET'S PRAY

It's hard to believe we started our study of John in December. And if you'll recall when we started this study, we discussed how 90% of John's gospel is unique when compared to the other gospels. And that's important to remember because to fully understand all of the events that have taken place, one must study all of the gospel records together to get the full picture.

You'll notice John doesn't give any indication of the sufferings of Jesus. John also doesn't mention the conversation between Jesus and the thief on the cross next to Him. These are described in detail in the other gospels. **SHOW PIC 1**

So I encourage you this week to read the other gospel accounts of the crucifixion to get the full perspective. Matthew 27, Luke 23, and Mark 15. **CLOSE PIC 1**

Jesus has been pinned to the cross, and this is where we pick up the scene...

**19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.** It was the standard operating procedure for a sign to display the crimes of the guilty, prominently displayed above the victim on the cross.

Now if you remember from our earlier studies, because it was Passover, Jews from all over the world would descend upon Jerusalem. Some historians estimate the city's population swelled to 2m Jews during the feast.

Point is, hordes of people saw the suffering savior on the cross.

And as the multitude of people passed by the 3 crosses, they would not only be shocked by the gruesome sight of Jesus on the cross, the onlookers were actually confronted with the sinless nature of Jesus.

See on either side of Jesus were criminals with descriptions of their crimes. Yet on the cross of Jesus, this sign from verse 19 simply described who He is, which is no crime at all.

**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.**

This sign above Jesus could be read in the three most common languages of the day - Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

Think about what we know of these 3 languages for a moment. Hebrew was the language of the Jews-the language of religion.

Greek was the language of culture and philosophy.

And Latin was the language of law and government.

All three - religion, culture, and government – played a part in crucifying Jesus.

Notice too this sign, written in the 3 languages, is a testimony that the Jewish King's rule is universal. Jesus is king over all.

But the religious leaders are furious over Pilate's wording of Jesus, look at verse 21

**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." ' "** Pilate's wording deeply offended the priests because they had refused and denied that Jesus is their King.

Yet perhaps even beyond this, the sign was another visual reminder of the Roman oppression. It was as if Pilate was celebrating that Rome had the authority and power to humiliate and torture even the "King of the Jews."

So the chief priests complain to Pilate and he says...

**22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."** A careful study of the gospels will reveal that this moment, this point right here, is the only time that Pontius Pilate found the courage to stand up to the Jewish rulers.

Over and over we saw Pilate scheming and plotting and planning because he didn't have the courage to stand up to these guys. But now Pilate decides to stand his ground.

The scene now shifts back to the cross...

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. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. Like all Jewish men, Jesus would've worn five pieces of clothing: a turban or headband, sandals, a belt, an outer cloak, and an inner garment. This means there was a piece of clothing for each of the four soldiers, plus the tunic without seam.

This tunic was a more expensive article of clothing - too valuable to tear as we'll see in the next verse.

I want you to pause and think about the scene here. Jesus has been stripped of all His clothing. If by some chance He's not completely naked, He would only have a small loincloth.

Don't let this uncomfortable imagery cause you to miss the beautiful truth here.

This reminds us that Jesus not only left the halls of heaven for a messy manger, Jesus let go of everything – even His last bit of clothing – becoming completely emptied, and poor for you and me!

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

A whole lotta Christians today are walking around, acting like they're poor. But we're forgiven, our sin debt is paid in full-we're rich in Christ Jesus!

Jesus' seamless tunic also reminds us of His role as our great High Priest, because Exodus 28 tells us that the High Priest wore a seamless garment.

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." [fn]

Therefore the soldiers did these things. Without realizing it, the soldiers were fulfilling prophecy. **Psalm 22:18. They divide My garments among them,  
And for My clothing they cast lots.**

Again try to imagine the scene. While Jesus bears the sins of the world, the soldiers are gambling away His shirt!

God's back is torn and bleeding. His heart is breaking in pieces. The veil in the Temple will be torn in two from top to bottom.

All the while the soldiers shoot dice for a tunic.

Perhaps we need to change our definition of being under-appreciated!

These 4 men were so wrapped up in their quest for new clothes they were oblivious to the most significant act in the history of the world.

Yet isn't this a picture of countless Americans today? Obsessed with gaining more things, instead of pursuing the savior?

I came across an author's humorous attempt at composing the average American's prayer.

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray my flatscreen TV to keep. I pray my stocks are on the rise, and that my financial analyst is incredibly wise.

I pray that all the wine I sip is white, and that my boat, pool and hot tub are all watertight.

Don't let racquetball get too tough, and I pray that all my sushi's fresh enough.

I pray my smartphone upgrade works, and my career path will never lose any of its perks.

And if I go broke before I wake, I pray my Beemer they never take."

It's obviously tongue in cheek.

Few things are as dangerous to a disciple of Christ than that of the trappings of materialism. That's why Jesus warns us in **Luke 12:15 And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness,[fn] for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."**

Let's read verse 24 one more time.

**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."[fn]**

**Therefore the soldiers did these things**

We don't often spend much time talking about Jesus' clothing, but we should.

Because think about clothing for a minute. Clothing identifies a person's culture, clothing identifies a personality, and clothing identifies social status more than any other single feature.

And being stripped of every article of clothing, nailed to the wooden cross of Calvary in naked humanity, Jesus shed every identifying mark of separation and division.

Why-because Jesus is the Savior of all the world.

Rich or poor, liberal or conservative, fancy clothes or dirty rags, we all need Jesus.

Jesus died for the church goer, just like He died for the church hater. Jesus died for the bible reader, just like He died for the bible burner.

On the cross Jesus paid the penalty, paid the price of our punishment for our sins. It doesn't matter what country a person is from, the color of their skin, their social status or their political viewpoints. Jesus paid it all.

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

Three Mary's stood by Jesus as He hung from the cross.

Shockingly these ladies showed more courage than the apostles!

We can't fathom the agony of Mary as she witnessed her Son crucified. I wonder what went through Mary's mind as she stood at the cross? Did she remember the myrrh, the embalming fluid the wise men brought to her baby?

Yet this is also another fulfillment of Bible prophecy

If you remember from Luke chapter 2, as Mary and Joseph brought their newborn son Jesus to the temple for dedication, a godly man named Simeon saw Jesus. Simeon took Him in his arms, and blessed the baby Jesus.

Then shockingly, Simeon uttered these words to Mary: **Luke 2:35**  
**yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."**

Think about the pain that Mary endured as Jesus' mother. Jesus was rejected, opposed, slandered, and plotted against.

Yet the crucifixion was the ultimate fulfillment of that solemn promise in Luke 2. Of all those whose feet were on the ground looking upon Jesus at the cross, no one suffered as Mary did.

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

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

Despite the torture and agony He was feeling, Jesus' attention was directed to others and not upon Himself. If there was ever a moment when Jesus deserved to be self-focused, this was it! Yet He never stopped focusing on the needs of others.

Jesus is our example.

Luke 17:33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Now the Bible tells us that Mary had other children born after Jesus. Jesus had both brothers and sisters, and if you remember from chapter 7 Jesus' brothers didn't believe in Him **John 7:5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

Is this why Jesus turned care of His mother to the apostle John, to emphasize that our relationships in Christ are even more important than those by blood?

Or perhaps Jesus did this knowing that John was the only apostle who would die a natural death, and would outlive even the siblings of Jesus?



Whatever the reasoning, John took Mary into his home from that day forward.

One more observation worth noting. Jesus' act places Mary under John's authority, a position that many Roman Catholics have found very uncomfortable in view of their false doctrine of Mary's supremacy.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing[fn] that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"  
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. Now this sour wine was the cheap vinegar-wine that the soldiers drank. Earlier on the cross, Jesus had rejected the pain numbing wine that was offered to Him.

Here, this drink wasn't to deaden the pain. Rather this was used to moisten His lips so Jesus could utter His final words.

Imagine how dry Jesus' throat and lips must've been after the hours of trials, beatings, scourging and the crucifixion. We rarely think about how arid and parched He must've been.

### SHOW PIC 2

Verse 29 says they used hyssop, which is a leafy, spongy, absorbent plant.

Now we can't let the significance of this plant pass us by. **CLOSE PIC 2** See Hyssop was the very plant used to brush the lambs' blood on the doorposts during the Passover. **Exodus 12:22 And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.**

Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover! This is why Paul said in **1 Corinthians 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**<sup>[fn]</sup>

**30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.**” The words “It is finished” are actually just one word in the original Greek language, “Tetelestai.” And its root meaning is PAID IN FULL.

Every single person who owes a debt is looking for the day when that debt can be marked PAID IN FULL.

This is the rallying cry of every Christian-my sin debt is PAID IN FULL.”

When Jesus cried out it is finished; it means all the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, which pointed to the sufferings of the Messiah, were accomplished.

When Jesus cried out it is finished, the ceremonial law was abolished; the substance is now come, and all the shadows are done away.

When Jesus cried out it is finished, the work of mankind's redemption and salvation is now completed

Jesus took the punishment for your sin. All that's left is for you to accept His substitution by faith! We'll talk more about this in a few moments.

Take careful note at the end of verse 30.

**And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit** Jesus' life wasn't taken from Him. He wasn't a helpless victim, but rather He is the determined Savior. He voluntarily laid down His life for us, taking the punishment we deserve. What a wonderful savior!

31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. We've talked about the tragic irony many times. The Jews were obsessed with obedience to the law while they crucified the Son of God!

32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. This was Rome's sole act of mercy during a crucifixion. Once a crucifixion victim's legs were broken it was impossible for him to push himself up, and take a breath. The crucified would quickly die of asphyxiation. Breaking their legs ended the torture.

34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. It's interesting that blood and water came out. If you've been studying along with us in Leviticus and Numbers, what were the 2 ingredients needed for the atonement of sin? Blood and water. This again points to Jesus paying the full price for all of our sins.

35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. The apostle John was the eyewitness. He reported these events to prove it was no accident that Jesus was pierced rather than having his legs broken. Our sovereign God was fulfilling His Word...

36 For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." [fn] "

The Law of Moses forbid the bones of the Passover lamb from being broken. Jesus dying before His legs could be broken was the fulfillment of **Exodus 12:46. "In one house it shall be eaten;**

you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.

And

Numbers 9:12 They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.

And

Psalm 34:20 He guards all his bones;

Not one of them is broken.

Jesus is our Passover. His blood frees us from the penalty of our sin.

37 And again another Scripture says, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”<sup>[fn]</sup> This is referring to the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”

This prophecy is pointing to the return of Jesus, when all of Israel will look upon Him, and realize the mistake of rejecting Him. In the end, the nation of Israel will repent and believe.

38 After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. Usually, the bodies of crucified criminals were left on their crosses to rot or be eaten by wild animals. But the Jews wanted no such horror displayed during the Passover season. Romans were known to grant the corpses of executed men to friends or relatives for proper burial.

The other gospels tell us that Joseph was “a council member,” meaning he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the most powerful Jewish religious leaders. The Sanhedrin were the ones who ordered Jesus to be crucified!

So why didn't this Joseph speak up at the trial of Jesus? Verse 38 tells us-because of fear of the Jews.

Joseph had tried to be a secret disciple. Now he takes courage and goes public.

There comes a time when all secret disciples will be challenged to be witnesses for Christ.

**39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, (the original Nic at night-John 3) also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.** Myrrh was a very fragrant gummy resin, which the Jews turned into a powdered form and mixed with aloes. The Jews did this to minimize the smell of decomposition.

**40 Then they took the body of Jesus,** Pause here

Think about the effort it would take to remove Jesus' body.

The spikes would need to be removed from His hands and His feet. No easy task

And consider the removal of the crown of thorns. Prying the briars that were embedded in the head of Jesus.

**40 Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.** You can imagine the scene as Joseph and Nicodemus would be covered in the savior's blood. Their hands, their clothes, all stained as they hurriedly prepped Jesus' body for burial.

And this is important to know because this made these devout Jews defiled according to the law, which means they couldn't partake in the Passover feast or festivities.

But that didn't stop these men!

Instantly these men cast religion off to the side to minister to Jesus.

And this is what being a follower of Jesus means to us today. We have to resist our tendency to gravitate towards the rigidity of religion, and instead run towards the grace found in our relationship with Christ.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

42 So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby. John doesn't mention that Joseph of Arimathea rolled a stone across the tomb's mouth, or that the women saw where Jesus was laid in the tomb. Again, it's important to study the other gospels to fill in the picture. So although they've laid Jesus' body in the tomb, He's not going to be staying there very long.

Next week, we see the glorious resurrection of Jesus as we study John 20.

This morning we're going to partake in communion together, as we rejoice in remembrance of what Jesus did on the cross for you and me.

Jesus cried out "It is finished!" Jesus paid the debt that you and I could never repay. No matter how many good deeds we do, no matter how much time or money we give, we've all been stained by sin. But the blood of Jesus makes us clean.

He did what we could never do-He removed our sin! We are freed from the grasp of sin.

If you died today, do you know for certainty you'd go to heaven? There is only one way-and that's to accept Jesus' sacrifice, to accept His free gift of salvation. If you've never done it, do it now.

**Romans 10: 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

As we partake in communion together, remember what Jesus endured for you! He loves you that much.

**Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

AND

**Luke 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."**

The more you focus upon the cross of Christ, the more overwhelmed you will be by Jesus.

The more you focus upon the circumstances of your life, the more overwhelmed you will be by your circumstances.

You get to choose. I pray you choose wisely.