

Good Friday 2026

Title: 7 Windows Into Jesus Heart

Text: Luke 23, John 19, Matthew 27

The Gospels preserve only a few of Jesus' words as he hangs on the Cross, but these seven sayings are like seven windows into his heart and into the meaning of Good Friday.

I want to begin by briefly looking with you at each of those sayings, just long enough to feel their weight.

Then I want to double down on one saying in particular—**“It is finished”**—and ask what it meant then and what it means for us now.

Pray:

Point # 1: The Seven Sayings

1. The Word of Forgiveness – **“Father, forgive them...”** (Luke 23:34)

As the nails are fresh in his hands and feet, Jesus prays.

Not, “Father, judge them,” but “Father, forgive

them, for they don't know what they are doing.”

The first word from the Cross is not condemnation but intercession.

He prays for the soldiers, the leaders, the crowd —and for all of us whose sin put him there.

If he prays this over his executioners, no one is beyond the reach of his forgiveness.

2. The Word of Salvation – “**Today you will be with me...**” (Luke 23:43)

Two criminals hang beside him. One dies hardened and mocking.

The other, in his final hours, admits his guilt, sees Jesus' innocence, and says, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

Jesus answers, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

No time to fix his life or earn his way in—just a dying plea, met by a royal promise.

Salvation here is immediate, personal, and certain:

“Today... with me... in paradise.”

If there's hope for a dying thief, there's hope for every heart in this room.

3. The Word of Care – **“Woman, here is your son... here is your mother.”** (John 19:26–27)

At the Cross stands Mary, watching her Son die.

Jesus sees her, and sees the beloved disciple. In pain, he still looks outward in love:

“Dear woman, here is your son.” “Here is your mother.”

He provides for Mary and gives John a new responsibility.

At the foot of the Cross, a new family is formed. That’s what the church is meant to be: people who care for one another because we all stand in the shadow of the same Cross.

4. The Word of Abandonment – **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** (Matthew 27:46)

This is the most haunting word.

Jesus, who has known perfect fellowship with the Father, now experiences the anguish of God-forsakenness.

He quotes Psalm 22, the cry of the righteous sufferer.

In that moment he steps fully into the darkness our sin deserves.

He goes as far into the feeling of abandonment as anyone can go, so that no one who trusts him will ever be truly abandoned by God.

If you've ever prayed, "God, where are you?" — your Savior has prayed that too.

5. The Word of Distress – **"I am thirsty."** (John 19:28)

This simple sentence reminds us how truly human he is.

The One who offered living water now hangs dehydrated, body failing, lips cracked.

He is not hovering above our pain; he has entered it.

The Creator of water becomes thirsty, so that he might satisfy the deepest thirst of our souls.

6. The Word of Triumph – **"It is finished!"** (John 19:30)

In a moment I want to double down on this statement...

John tells us: “When Jesus had tasted it, he said, ‘It is finished!’ Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

In Greek it’s one word: tetelestai— **“It has been completed and stands completed.”**

Not **“I am finished,”** but rather, **“The work is finished.”**

We’ll come back to what that means.

7. The Word of Trust – **“Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.”** (Luke 23:46)
Jesus dies with a prayer on his lips.

He quotes Psalm 31: **“I entrust my spirit into your hand.”**

After the cry of “Why have you forsaken me?” he returns to “Father.”

He yields his life, not to chaos or fate, but into the Father’s faithful hands.

This is how the Son dies—and it's how the Cross teaches us to live.

Point # 2: “It Is Finished” – What Did Jesus Finish?

Let's come back to that sixth word.

In John 19:30 it says, **“When Jesus had tasted it, he said, ‘It is finished!’ Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”**

One word: tetelestai. Meaning, **“To bring to an end, to complete, to fulfill.”**

In the perfect tense: **“It has been completed, and it remains completed.”**

Jesus is announcing that the mission the Father gave him is done.

Question: **What is finished?**

1. The Bible's story has achieved its goal

All the promises and prophecies, the sacrifices and symbols of the Old Testament, are reaching their climax.

The Passover lamb, the Day of Atonement, the suffering servant of Isaiah—all of it has been pointing to this moment.

Jesus can say to the Father: **“Every Scripture about the suffering Messiah has now found its fulfillment in me.”**

The long story of redemption has reached its turning point.

2. The burden of sin is fully borne

On the Cross, Jesus is not only showing love; he is bearing our sin.

He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

When he cries, **“It is finished,”** he is announcing that the work of atonement of salvation is complete.

The guilt that the law could expose but not

remove has been laid on him.

The penalty has been carried out. Nothing remains to be added to his sacrifice.

The debt of sin is not partly paid, or put on a payment plan; **it is dealt with once for all** in him.

2 Corinthians 5:21, “**For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.**”

3. The powers of darkness are decisively defeated

The Cross looks like Satan’s victory.

But from God’s perspective, it is the moment when sin, death, and the devil are defeated and disarmed.

In “**It is finished,**” Jesus is declaring that the decisive blow has been struck.

The accuser’s case is answered.

The sting of death is broken.

The strong man is now bound.

4. The way to God is opened

Luke 23:44-45, “By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. 45 The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle.”

When Jesus dies, the temple curtain tears from top to bottom not with human hands but by the hand of God.

God himself is saying, **“The barrier is gone.”** “It is finished” means there’s no more need for repeated sacrifices, no more priest standing between you and God.

Through the finished work of Christ, the way into God’s presence is open.

Point # 3: What “It Is Finished” Means for Us

If this is true, it changes how we live.

1. We can live with assurance, not insecurity.

Many of us live like Jesus cried, **“I got it started; now you finish it.”**

We think, “Yes, Jesus died for me, but now it really depends on how well I perform, how consistent I am, how strong my faith is.”

But on Good Friday, Jesus doesn't say, “It is started” or “I've done my part.” now you do yours!

Jesus says, **“It is finished.” It will always be finished; it stands finished for all eternity!”**

Your standing with God rests on his finished work, not your fluctuating performance.

Your hope is not in “I will get there,” but in “He has done it.”

2. We can stop trying to pay a debt that's already canceled

Some of you carry within this sense that you still owe God.

You may think, “I should suffer a little for what I’ve done. I need to make it up to God.

Good Friday says: that’s not your job.

If the debt has been paid, you don’t keep paying.

If the record has been nailed to the Cross and wiped clean, you don’t keep trying to rewrite it.

Jesus does not invite you to add your suffering to his as payment.

He invites you to trust that his suffering is enough.

You can confess your sin, grieve your sin, turn from your sin. But you do not atone for your sin. He already has.

3. We obey from rest, not for reward

If you think the Christian life is finishing what Jesus left unfinished, everything becomes anxious striving.

But if you hear “It is finished,” obedience becomes response, not payment.

You obey not to win his love, but because you are loved.

You serve not to earn a place in the family, but because you already belong.

We fight sin, forgive others, and bear our own crosses standing on solid ground—not to be accepted, but because we are accepted through the finished work of Christ.

In Closing: What is Jesus speaking to you?

On Good Friday, Jesus speaks seven times from the Cross:

- To your guilt: “Father, forgive them.”

- To your fear of death: “Today you will be with me.”
- To your loneliness: “Here is your mother... here is your son.”
- To your darkness: “My God, why have you forsaken me?”
- To your weakness: “I am thirsty.”
- To your uncertainty: “It is finished.”
- To your future: “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.”

Today, that sixth word stands over all the others: “It is finished.”

So let me ask you:

Are you still trying to finish what he has already finished?

Are you still trying to pay what he has already paid?

Are you still carrying what he has already carried?

Good Friday is not about us cleaning ourselves up for God.

It is about God, in Christ, finishing what we could never start and paying what we could never afford.

“I owed a debt I could not pay, Jesus paid a debt He did not owe”

So in the quiet of your heart this Good Friday, you might want to pray something like this:

“Jesus, if you say it is finished, I will stop living like it’s not.

I entrust my sin, my shame, my past, and my future into your hands.

I entrust my spirit into the hands of your Father.”

And as you do, hear the Crucified One speak over your life once more:

“It is finished.”

This is the appropriate way to receive communion today, remembering and recognizing that Jesus paid the price in full, He finished the work of redemption so we could

enter into God's rest. We can enjoy both peace with God and the peace of God today and always because of what Jesus did for us!