

**Read: John 19:17-30**

## It Is Finished

### **John 19:17,18,28,30**

Carrying his own cross, [Jesus] went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Long ago, there was a famous religious leader named Buddha. Lots of people follow his teachings. Their religion is called Buddhism. When Buddha was about to die, he spoke some famous last words. On his deathbed, he told his followers: "Strive without ceasing." In other words, he told them, "Keep on trying hard. Keep working. You might make it!"

That's what we often tell ourselves: "If I just try my hardest, God will be happy with me. If I just do my best, I'm sure God will let me into heaven. I'm going to strive without ceasing!" Have you ever thought things like that? There's a big problem: We can't. Do you always try your hardest? Nope. Do you always do your best? Do you always do the right thing? No way. Every one of us is sinful. If we need to strive without ceasing to make it to heaven, no one is going to make it!

Thankfully, Jesus said something completely different before he died. On Good Friday, as he hung on the cross, Jesus said these words: "It is finished." Instead of saying, "You need to keep working really hard to earn your salvation," Jesus said, "It is done. I have earned your salvation. I have lived for you. I have died for you. So that you are forgiven and loved and saved. All the work is finished. That means it's not up to you, it's up to me. It is finished!" Isn't that great?

During Holy Week, some churches put up banners that say, "Paid in full!" Have you ever seen or heard that phrase before? It's absolutely true: "Paid in full!" Jesus paid in full for all of our sins. Jesus paid in full to win eternal life for us. Jesus paid in full the punishment we deserved.

That's why we can call the day that Jesus died "Good Friday." It's certainly sad that Jesus died. It's sad that it's our sins that led Jesus to suffer so much. But that was a good day. Actually, it was a great day, because on Good Friday, Jesus saved us. We want to do our best. We want to live for Jesus. As you do, remember this: You can't earn any of God's blessings. They are all gifts to you through faith in Jesus. That's why Jesus cried, "It is finished!"

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Do we always do the right thing?
- What did Jesus do on Good Friday to save us from our sins?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Compare Jesus' last words with Buddha's last words. What's the difference?
- Explain why Jesus' last words give us a lot more peace than Buddha's last words ever could.

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- By nature, every one of us thinks like Buddha thought. Why is it that we always think we can earn our way to heaven?
- Read Luke 23:39-43. How does that story show that Jesus truly saved everyone who believes in him?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for us. Because you did everything, we can know that we are saved and forgiven by faith in him. How good it is to know that it is finished! Amen.