

Small Group Study Guide: It is Finished

Based on the sermon by Colin Toews, April 27, 2025

Welcome to your small group! This guide is designed to help us dive deeper into the powerful message we heard on Sunday. Our prayer is that as we discuss and reflect together, the Holy Spirit will deepen our understanding and transform our lives. Don't worry if you're leading for the first time; this guide will walk you through!

1. Set the Atmosphere (10-15 minutes)

The goal here is to help everyone feel comfortable and ready to engage.

- **Icebreaker (Choose one):**
 - **"Mission Accomplished!":** Ask everyone to share one thing, big or small, they've recently "finished" or accomplished. How did it feel to complete it?
 - **"Debt Free Dreamin'":** If you suddenly discovered a large, unexpected debt you were worried about (like a student loan or medical bill) was completely "paid in full" by a mysterious benefactor, what's the first thing you'd feel or do?
 - **Opening Prayer:**
 - After the icebreaker, transition by saying something like: *"Thanks for sharing, everyone! It's great to connect. Before we dive into the study, let's invite the Holy Spirit to guide our conversation and open our hearts to what He wants to show us today. [Leader or volunteer], would you be willing to open us in prayer?"*
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2. Sermon Summary (10-15 minutes)

Let's refresh our memories on the key points from Pastor Colin's message.

- **Main Scripture:** John 19:28-30 (NLT, as read in sermon, focus on ESV for study)
 - Pastor Colin read from a version that said: *"Jesus knew that his ministry was now finished. And to fulfill scripture, he said, I'm thirsty... When Jesus had tasted it, he said, it is finished. Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."*
- **Big Idea (The Central Message):**
 - Because Jesus declared "It is finished" on the cross, our salvation is complete and fully paid for, liberating us to live in the victory, forgiveness, and freedom He secured for us.

- **Highlights (Key Supporting Points from the Sermon):**
 - The Greek word Jesus used, "tetelestai," means far more than just "ended"—it means "Paid in Full," "Accomplished," or "Completed."
 - When Jesus said "It is finished," He meant the payment for our sin, the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah's sacrifice, His perfect life of obedience, and the way back to God the Father were all completely accomplished.
 - "Because Jesus said it is finished, you don't have to keep trying to earn what he already paid for."
 - Subsequent events like the Resurrection, Ascension, and sending of the Holy Spirit don't *add* to the finished work but *validate* it and *apply* its benefits to us.
 - **Group Discussion (Let's talk about what resonated with us):**
 - What stood out to you most from Sunday's sermon? Was there a particular point, story, or illustration that really hit home?
 - Did anything challenge you, confuse you (in a way that made you think), or particularly encourage you?
 - In your own words, how would you explain the main idea Pastor Colin was sharing?
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3. Digging into the Word (25-35 minutes)

Now, let's look closely at the Scriptures together and see what God wants to speak to us.

- **Re-read the Main Passage:**
 - Ask someone to read **John 19:28-30** aloud:
 - *"After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), 'I thirst.' A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."*
- **Observation (What does it say?):**
 - Looking at these verses, what specific actions does Jesus take or what words does He speak?
 - What details do you notice about His physical state or the surrounding circumstances?
 - Which words or phrases seem most significant in this short passage, especially in light of the sermon?

- **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**
 - The passage mentions Jesus spoke "to fulfill the Scripture." Pastor Colin highlighted this. Why do you think it was important for the Gospel writer to include this detail about fulfilling prophecy even in Jesus' final moments?
 - Pastor Colin emphasized the power in Jesus' cry, "It is finished!" It wasn't a sigh of resignation but a shout of victory. What do you imagine was accomplished in that very moment He declared those words?
 - What does the phrase "he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" suggest about the nature of Jesus' death? (e.g., was it taken from him, or did he have a measure of control?)
 - **Connection to the Sermon (Bringing it together):**
 - Pastor Colin explained that "tetelestai" (the Greek word for "It is finished") was a term used for debts being "paid in full" or tasks being "fully accomplished." How does knowing that original meaning change or deepen your understanding of what Jesus declared from the cross?
 - The sermon identified four key things that were "finished": 1) The payment for our sin, 2) The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, 3) Jesus' perfect life of obedience, and 4) Our access to God the Father. How do these verses in John 19 hint at or confirm these completions?
 - **Living in the Finished Work (Connecting to Application):**
 - Pastor Colin challenged us to live in the freedom of this finished work. Let's read **Hebrews 4:16**:
 - *"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*
 - How does this invitation in Hebrews connect to Jesus' declaration "It is finished"?
 - What does "confidence" in approaching God look like for you, knowing the debt is paid and the way is open?
 - Pastor Colin mentioned three daily choices: start with gratitude, refuse to pick up what Jesus put down (guilt, shame, etc.), and boldly walk into God's presence. Which of these feels most needed in your life this week, and why?
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4. Wrapping Up (10-15 minutes)

Let's bring our thoughts together and support one another in prayer.

- **Summarize Key Takeaways:**
 - Leader: *"As we close our discussion, what's one key insight or takeaway about 'It is Finished' that you want to carry with you this week?"* (Allow a few people to share briefly).
- **Share Prayer Requests:**
 - Leader: *"This truth that 'It is Finished' has real power for our daily lives. Let's take a moment to share any prayer requests. How can we pray for each other to live more fully in the victory and freedom Christ has won for us? Or are there other needs on your heart?"*
- **Closing Prayer:**
 - Leader: *"Thank you all for your honesty and for sharing. It's a privilege to walk this journey of faith together. Let's close in prayer, asking God to seal these truths in our hearts and empower us to live them out. [Leader or another volunteer], would you close us in prayer?"*

Leader's Tip: Remember, your role is to facilitate, not to have all the answers. Encourage participation from everyone, listen well, and trust the Holy Spirit to lead the discussion and speak to hearts. Enjoy the journey of discovery together!

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