



CHARLES MARTIN

IT IS FINISHED

A 5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

TETELESTAI. "IT IS FINISHED."

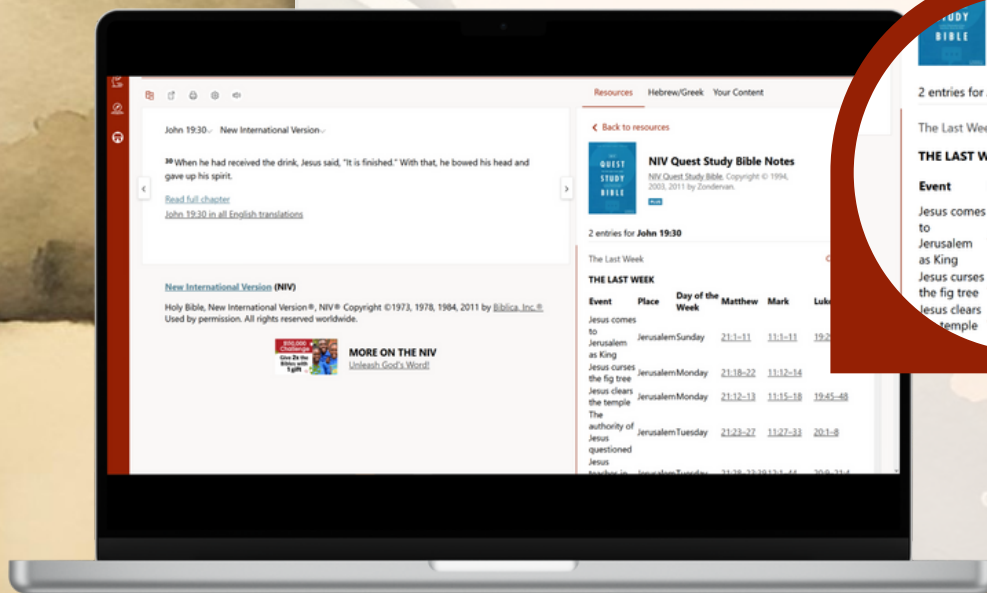
Jesus' final words on the cross have impacted us for eternity. With His death and resurrection, He finished the work of our salvation. But our transformation continues. In his book *It Is Finished*, Charles Martin takes us on a journey to the Cross to examine how the Holy Spirit is now at work in us as we are continually being made "perfectly perfect."

JOHN 19:30

When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (New International Version)

STUDY WITH BibleGateway+

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explore the NIV Quest Study Bible.*





DAY 1 | MIRROR & MAGNIFIER

Scripture: Galatians 5:11; Isaiah 8:14; 1 Corinthians 1:18–31

When you think of the Cross, what comes to mind? Death? Salvation? Hope? What about the word *offensive*? That's how Paul referred to it when writing to the church in Galatia. Centuries before that, Isaiah called it a stumbling block. But although it is foolishness to those who don't believe, to those being saved, it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

As we gaze upon the cross, it becomes a mirror that reflects our true selves and a magnifier that enlarges our view of who we are. Sadly, this may not always be a pleasant portrayal. We may be tempted to look away as we come face-to-face with shame, anger, lust, or pride. When we truly examine ourselves through the Cross, we see the sin and ugliness that Christ died to redeem. We realize that we're not so different from Judas. And this offensiveness can leave us feeling discouraged and hopeless.

Thankfully, God's weakness is stronger than the greatest effort we can put forth (1 Cor. 1:25). He hasn't left us alone to face this offense. He has given us the Holy Spirit, which is His power in us, and has removed the offense of the Cross. As we look to the Cross, we no longer see condemnation but hope as He transforms us to be more like Him.

Reflect

- What words come to mind when you think of the Cross?
- In what ways is the Cross a mirror and magnifier for you?

Pray

Father, thank You for giving me Your Holy Spirit as my strength. Help me to look to the Cross to see what You've done for me and let it transform me to be more like Your Son. In His name, amen.

DAY 2 | PERFECTLY PERFECT

Scripture: John 13:12–26, 34–35; Luke 9:23; John 14:16

What do you imagine your final words will be to those you love? When we think about the Cross and what it means, there are no words more beautiful and peace-giving than Jesus': It is finished. To everyone around Him, it looked as though Jesus' mission had failed. Whatever plan He had would not come to fruition. But He knew the truth—*tetelestai*. God's plan was being made "perfectly perfect," "completely complete."

Does this mean that we now get to sit back and relax as all the work has been done for us? It's true that the work of our salvation has been completed with Jesus' death and resurrection. We must simply respond to and accept His invitation. But knowing Him changes us. And so there is work to be done. Jesus told His disciples to "go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15). He calls us to serve others just as He served. And when all else fails and we're just not sure what to do, He tells us, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

The wonderful truth is that He doesn't leave us to do this alone! As we are being made "perfectly perfect" in Him, He has given us a Helper to be with us forever. There are many days when we just don't feel like loving the person who gets on our nerves. When we're too busy with our to-do list to serve our neighbor or check on a friend who is struggling. But the Holy Spirit helps us. When we're open to His prompting, He gives us extra patience with others, or convicts us to recognize a need and set aside our own agenda to help someone or offer a listening ear. By loving and serving others, we have an opportunity to point them to Jesus.

Reflect

- The words "perfect love" and "perfected in love" and "perfected for all time" all share the same root (*telios*) as "It is finished" (*tetelestai*). How might recognizing the completeness of Christ's love in these words influence the way you view His finished work on the Cross and experience the depth of His perfect love in your life?

Pray

Lord, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to help me. Please guide me to those who need You. Help me know how to serve and love others around me today. In Jesus' name, amen.



DAY 3 | EYES TO SEE

Scripture: John 9:8–15; John 17:20–26; Mark 10:46–47

Scripture is full of statements that seem to contradict themselves. The first shall be last. A Servant King. Strength in weakness. Freedom through bondage. Life from death. One example we see repeatedly is that those who physically cannot see often see the best.

In Mark, we meet Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, who upon hearing that Jesus was coming near, called out to Him, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Even after being silenced by those around him, he continued to call out to Jesus. He certainly hadn’t witnessed any of Jesus’ miracles with his eyes, but still he could “see” who Jesus was. In another account, when Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath, the now-seeing man declared, “If this man were not from God, he could do nothing” (John 9:33). The Jewish leaders, who were educated and very “sighted” in the scriptures, did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God, though He was standing right in front of them.

Later, Saul, who professed to be among the most knowledgeable regarding the law and the prophets, gained true sight only after meeting the Lord and being blinded on the road to Damascus. Ironically, in his blindness he finally saw who Jesus was.

How is your sight? Do you see who Jesus is, or are you blinded by traditions, hurts, or hardships? Jesus told His disciples, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!” (Luke 10:23). Ask God to give you sight to see Him clearly.

Reflect

- What barriers or burdens do individuals often carry that keep them on the outside? How might the act of surrendering these burdens to the King on the throne impact our identity and how we live each day?
- How does pride or offense sometimes interfere with our ability to truly hear and obey the teachings of Jesus? What practical steps and attitudes can we embrace to cultivate a humble and receptive heart?

Pray

Lord, please give me eyes to see. Help me not to be blinded by my past wounds or the security of my education or background. Open my eyes to see my need for You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

DAY 4 | FOR GOD'S GLORY

Scripture: John 9:1–6; John 11:1–6; Philippians 2:5–11

If you've lived any length of time, you have certainly encountered hardship. Adversity is often enough to make even the most faithful believers doubt God's provision and love for them. But Scripture tells us that God has a greater purpose for our hardships.

When Jesus and His disciples met the man who was born blind, the disciples saw only what was in front of them: a man facing adversity. They assumed he or someone else had done something to deserve it, and it was as simple as that. However, when they questioned Jesus, He replied, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him." Jesus saw the greater purpose in this man's adversity. And after he was healed, the man gave credit to God and worshiped Jesus as the Son of Man, boldly pointing even the naysayers to Him.

Later Jesus performed an even more miraculous act when He raised Lazarus from the dead. Although it made no sense to the ones who were with Him, Jesus waited after hearing that Lazarus was sick. As Lazarus's dear friend, He could have hurried to heal him; however, again, Jesus had a greater purpose in mind. He declared, "It is for the glory of God." Even though this miracle angered the Jewish leaders even more, deepening their desire to kill Him, Jesus was not deterred by the adversity. He was fully focused on glorifying God.

When we are tempted to look around us at our difficult situation and listen to Satan's voice saying, "Did God really say...?" (Gen. 3:1), we must remember that God uses our hardships to bring Him glory and redeems even our deepest hurts.

Reflect

- Return to the story of Lazarus in John 11. Notice they rolled away the stone before Jesus called him out (John 11:40-44). What stone stands between you and Jesus? What needs rolling away in your life? What is preventing you from obeying His voice?
- We have an enemy who has worked really hard to obscure our view of Jesus. To lessen this Cross and to lessen Jesus. Do you feel as though you have experienced indifference or distraction from the power of the Cross? What are some practical ways we can regain focus?

Pray

God, I know that You are always with me, even in my hardest moments. Please help me to remember that You can redeem my hurts to bring about Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 5 | POSTURE MATTERS

Scripture: Luke 18:10–14; Luke 23:32–42

How is your posture? This doesn't mean whether you sit up straight or avoid slouching. Rather, how is your posture toward God? Do you have a right attitude about your sin and about Jesus' lordship?

There are many examples in Scripture that offer a clear picture of proper posture. One is the parable Jesus shared about the Pharisee and the tax collector. While the Pharisee stood and thanked God that he was not like other sinful men, the tax collector humbly bowed his head and prayed, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" He was fully aware of his need for a savior, while the Pharisee felt secure in his supposed goodness. Jesus said only one—the tax collector—went away justified.

The criminals crucified on either side of Jesus provide another example of posture. Physically, they were both positioned the same—arms spread wide, helplessly hanging on a cross. However, one criminal had a very different attitude from the other. The gospel of Luke tells us that while one yelled at Jesus, demanding that He save them, the other acknowledged, "We are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." Then, in the last moments of his life, the man asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom. In some miraculous way, this man knew who was next to him and humbly positioned himself before Him.

The Old Testament also shows us an example of correct posture toward God with two well-known kings: Saul and David. When confronted about their disobedience, they had very different attitudes about their sin. After disobeying God's orders following battle, Saul justified his behavior and shifted the blame to others. However, when David was confronted about his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, he immediately declared, "I have sinned against the Lord." Acts 13:22 says David was a man after God's heart. What a position to hold!

DAY 5 | POSTURE MATTERS

Scripture: Luke 18:10–14; Luke 23:32–42

God doesn't expect us to beat ourselves up over our sin, but we are to have a right view of sin and our need for a Savior. When we humbly come before Him, He offers us right standing with Him.

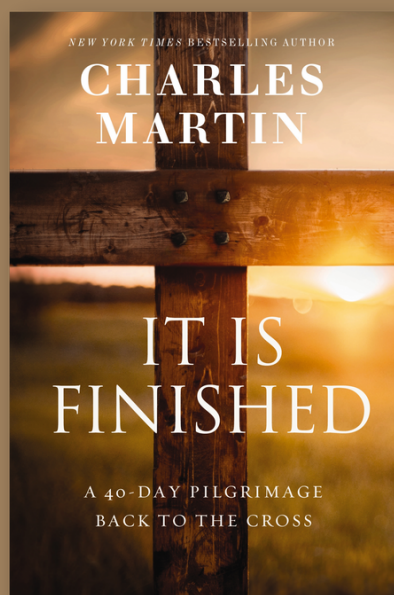
Reflect

- We are invited into the daily practice of dying to self. In this ongoing process, how does the promise of Christ living in us transform the way we approach each day, particularly when confronted with the reality of our inherent sinfulness?
- Despite our past sins and scars, we are now identified by the scars of Jesus. In what ways does this shift in identity impact your perception of yourself and others?

Pray

Lord, thank You that You have cast my sins as far as the east is from the west. Help me to know that I am secure in You, but also that I'm dependent upon You every day as my Savior. In Jesus' name, amen.

*Across forty days of vivid storytelling, **It Is Finished** offers you a unique and vital roadmap to trace the power and necessity of the cross throughout the Bible, from the book of Genesis all the way to your present-day reality.*



Through forty slices of the story of Calvary, master storyteller and vivid Bible teacher Charles Martin, will walk you back to the cross to look up at it from a different angle each day and ask the Father to reveal to you:

- What exactly did he mean when the dying Jesus said, "It is finished"—what was finished at the cross?
- When did what Jesus finish at the cross even begin?
- What does this man's death 2,000 years ago have to do with me today?
- What is God offering at the cross that I so easily forget and take for granted?
- What do I not realize about myself that the Father God has never forgotten?

Whether it is your first, tenth, or ten thousandth time looking up at the cross of Christ, you can trust *New York Times* bestselling author Charles Martin, to wrap an arm around your shoulder, come alongside and walk with you as a fellow pilgrim headed in the same direction and answering the same question: "What will I do with this man, Jesus?"

Because before we can celebrate the resurrection, we need to backtrack to where Jesus has been, how He got there, and what His presence there accomplished. And while Satan can't change what happened on that Friday, he has been working ever since to hide what happened there. To obscure the work of the Cross. To avert our eyes. But on this 40-day pilgrimage your eyes will open wide and your heart will race as you discover the answer to the question that can change your life, *Lord, why me? Why would you endure the cross and despise the shame, for me?*

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