



– Anneke Kaai

# Practice Resurrection

Lenten Reflections  
on the Seven Last Words of Jesus

~ March 24, 2021 ~

# Finished

*"It is finished."*

~ John 19:30



*You are invited to light a candle as a sign that Jesus is present with you in Spirit.  
You can print off the image on the last page for you or your children to colour.*

*Feel free to sing along with the songs.  
Please read the **bold print**.*

## WELCOME

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
and the fellowship of the saints be with you all.

## SINGING ~ *The Time is Fulfilled*

The time is fulfilled.  
The kingdom of God has drawn near!  
Come let us repent  
and believe in the Gospel.

—Tom Wuest

## SETTING THE TABLE

Pause a few moments to take two slow, deep breaths. As you breathe in, pay attention to what you smell. What do you notice? Is the air pungent? Stale? Or did you catch a whiff of something mild or fresh? Is there a repulsive odor in the air? Or a pleasant fragrance?

Today's story from the Bible raises different questions, such as: What did the sour wine smell like? Or the hyssop plant? Did anyone notice the smell of blood, sweat, dust, and wood?

And when Jesus said, "It is finished," what was he referring to? His drink? His life? Or something else?

## WORD OF GOD, WORD OF LIFE ~ JOHN 19:28-30

Knowing that everything had now been completed and, so that the scripture should be completely fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

A jar full of sour wine stood there; so, putting a sponge soaked in the wine on the stem of hyssop plant, they held it up to his mouth.

When he had taken the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

*Pause your playback device and take a few quiet moments to let the Word of God sink in. Let the Spirit draw your attention to certain words, images, thoughts, and feelings.*

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

~ FINISHED ~

*"It is finished."*

(John 19:30)

Pause your playback device and try one of the following exercises today.

(You can give others a try in the days to come if you have time and interest.)

1. Take a few moments to reflect on the following questions:
  - Can you share a story of a time you've celebrated an ending? Can you share a story of a time when an ending has been sad?
  - What do you think was finished, or ended, at the crucifixion? Are there things that were ended that make you want to celebrate? Are there endings that cause you grief?

Take some time to write your thoughts down, or share them with a friend or members of your family.

2. Imagine you're standing at the cross. Is there something else you wish Jesus would end, or complete? Is there something you would like to be finished with? For example, I might say, "I'm finished with letting fear keep me from standing up for what's right."

How might you complete this sentence: "I am finished with \_\_\_\_\_"? Consider following through on what emerges...

3. When Jesus says, "It is finished," it's as if he's turning the last page of one chapter and starting in on a new scene of an ongoing story. The apostle Paul says our lives are to be an aroma, a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God (see 2 Corinthians 2:12-17 and Romans 12:1).

Breathe in deeply a few times, giving attention to the smells. Notice what is foul and what is pleasant. How does God invite you to continue the story? How might you spread the healing fragrance of Christ's love in the days to come?

Follow through on what the Spirit stirs in your mind and soul.

SONG FOR THE DAY ~ *Somebody's Gotta Pay*

Somebody told me about it and it burns me up at night:  
What kind of man would choose to spoil a child?  
Who do you call to make it right?  
Not gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
That's for sure, 'cause He won't fight.  
So I don't feel guilty about it, imagining that I  
Could be the reaper grim enough to make it right.  
The problem is there's no one with  
Enough to lose to pay for this.

Somebody's gotta pay for this.  
Nobody gets away unless somebody dies.  
And it's confirmed that there's been pain enough to satisfy the rage  
From the losses she sustained by age thirteen.  
Only then can the rest go free.

I'm still obsessing about it 'cause it doesn't end up nice:  
Another man, another choice, another child.  
And who's gonna pay for all these crimes?  
Some dream about avenging mine,  
I suppose, but nothing will suffice  
Unless you stumble upon it, like dream I had one night  
About a man who chose to pay the price  
On a tree, silently and still,  
Just long enough for me to kill.

Somebody's gotta pay for this.  
Nobody gets away unless somebody dies.  
And it's confirmed that there's been pain enough to satisfy the rage  
From the losses she sustained by age thirteen.  
Only then can the rest go free.  
Only then can we all go free.

—*Steve Bell*

CLOSING PRAYER

**O Christ, by praying for those who crucified you,  
you lead us to forgive without counting the cost.**  
**O Christ, by opening paradise to the repentant thief, you awaken hope in us.**  
**O Christ, by remaining faithful until death, you show us the road to greater love.**  
**O Christ, by taking the burden of sin upon yourself,  
you reveal to us the way of generosity.**  
**O Christ, come and help our weak faith.**  
**O Christ, create a pure heart in us; renew and strengthen our spirit.**  
**O Christ, your Word is near; may it live within us that we might live in you.**  
**Amen.**

BLESSING ~ *To Him Who is Able (Jude 24-25)*

To him who is able to keep you from falling  
and to present you before his glorious presence  
without fault, and with great joy,

To the only God, our Saviour  
be glory, majesty, power and authority  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord  
before all ages, now and forevermore

Amen, Amen.

—Brian Moss

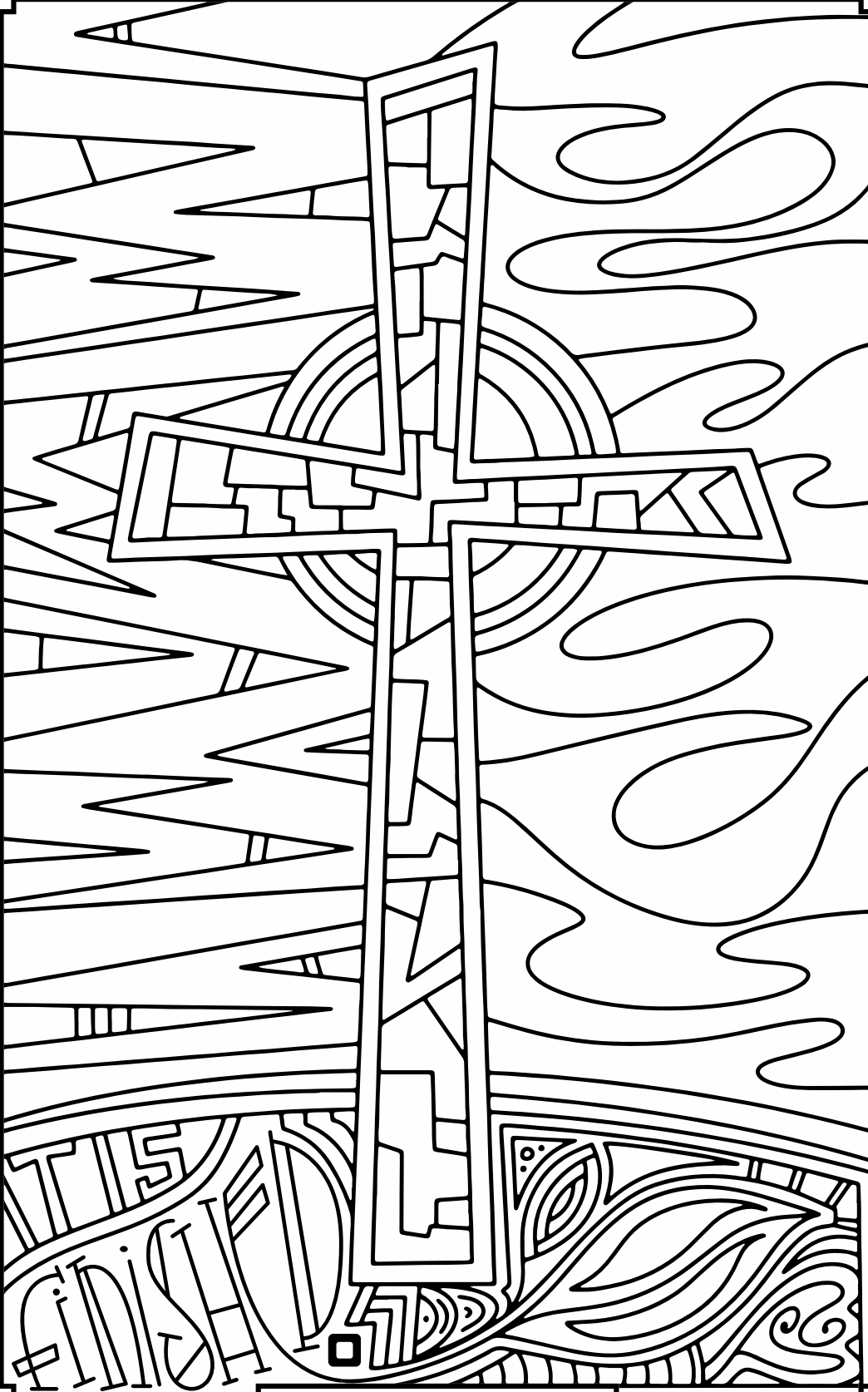
The image on the cover is taken from *In a Word*, by Eugene Peterson and Anneke Kaai. Kaai says this about the image: "The black planes, which symbolize heavy prison doors, are slid apart...the Light of freedom breaks the bonds. The vertical red strips are reminiscent of the blood that the Israelites smeared on their door lintels at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. It points to Christ, who has made our salvation possible."



*Practice Resurrection* is the result of a partnership between Living Hope Christian Reformed Church ([livinghopecrc.ca](http://livinghopecrc.ca)) and Highland Community Church ([www.highlandcommunitychurch.ca](http://www.highlandcommunitychurch.ca)). Images from [Illustrated Ministry.com](http://IllustratedMinistry.com) are purchased and used by permission. Songs by Tom Wuest, Steve Bell and Brian Moss are used by permission. Please support the Christian arts by purchasing their music at sensible websites.

GOD, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY

WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? I AM THIRSTY. IT IS FINISHED. GO, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.



ARE DOING. THEY TELL YOU, TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE. HERE IS YOUR SON. HERE

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? I AM THIRSTY. IT IS FINISHED. GO, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.