

## **“It Is Finished”**

Mike Haddorff 12/23/25

When I sit with John’s telling of Jesus’ final moments, I keep circling around that simple, profound declaration: “It is finished.” I don’t hear resignation in that sentence. I hear clarity, a deep unveiling of what has always been true about God and about us.

On one hand, the Cross shows me the extent of God’s love, and not in an abstract way. This is solidarity expressed to the maximum. God doesn’t love from a distance. God steps into human flesh, moves through the full range of our experience, and willingly enters the darkest place we can go, suffering, abandonment, humiliation, and death. I honestly can’t imagine a clearer depiction of divine engagement with humanity. Whatever else we say about God, we have to reckon with this: God goes all the way into our condition and never stops loving. That’s not metaphor; that’s incarnation.

But something else is happening at the same time, something equally profound. In Jesus’ final breath we also witness the collapse of sin, evil, and death, not through domination, but through surrender. That little phrase, “It is finished,” comes right before he gives up his spirit. And I can’t help but see that as permission. Jesus is allowing death, our greatest fear, our greatest weapon, to collapse under its own weight. Evil is not overpowered by a bigger force. It simply exhausts itself in the presence of a love that refuses to play by its rules.

This is why Jesus could say earlier, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” He wasn’t handing us a doctrinal formula. He was showing us a path: the way to confront the powers of this world is not by escalating force, but by surrendering to the deeper reality of God’s life. I’ve learned this experientially. Whenever I try to meet power with more power, something in me shrinks. Whenever I meet it with surrender, real surrender, not passivity, something in me expands. I have learned to recognize this experience as love.

So what is this “kingdom” Jesus keeps speaking about? I don’t see it as dualism, one world over here, God’s world over there. That splits reality in a way Jesus never does. I think the “kingdom of this world” is within the greater reality of God’s kingdom. It’s part of the story, but not the whole story. It holds good and beauty, but it also holds the illusion we create, sin, evil, death. These aren’t substances; they’re distortions. They feel real, but they cannot endure the weight of what is actually true.

And that’s why the Cross matters. On the Cross, the “kingdom of this world” collapses, not because God crushed it, but because it cannot stand in the presence of self-giving love. Jesus doesn’t defeat death with superior power; he exposes death for what it is: something that only survives as we feed it fuel.

When Jesus says, “It is finished,” I hear this:

The illusion has run its course.

The distortion has spent itself.

The true kingdom, the one that never needed violence to be real, is what remains.

And that kingdom isn’t waiting for validation on resurrection morning. It’s already here, already present, already inviting us to live from it right now.