

SEVEN SAYINGS FROM THE CROSS

6 – IT IS FINISHED

John 19:30

INTRODUCTION

- "It is far easier to start something than it is to finish it." (Amelia Earhart)
- Many great artists have died, leaving behind unfinished masterpieces. Many composers have "unfinished symphonies". Sculptors and architects leave their incomplete works. (cf. Luke 14:25-30)
- We, too, sometimes leave life with some things unfinished; there are many things that we fail to complete and finish in our lives, but with the Lord Jesus Christ, this is not the case.
- Every work He begins, He completes.
- He began the work of creation, and at the end of six days it was completed (Genesis 2:1-3)
- He is called the "author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2)
- The good work of grace that Christ begins in the believer's life, He will perform to its completion (Philippians 1:6)
- And the work He came to this earth to perform was completed when He declared from the cross, "It is finished!"
- The fourth and the sixth cries were both made "with a loud voice" (Matthew 27:46,50; Luke 23:46)
- It is these two cries that concern most directly Christ's atoning work.
- They are also the most strikingly contrasted:
 - ✓ One is a cry of anguish, the other is a cry of accomplishment
 - ✓ One is a cry of torment, the other is a cry of triumph
 - ✓ One is the cry of the victim, the other is the cry of the victor

- Note that His head was lifted up as He said, this – it was as He died that “he bowed his head”
- Of all the words that Jesus ever spoke, surely this must rank among the greatest.
- This is the most well-known saying of the Lord from the cross, and the most beloved.
- The other sayings were either prayers to God or statements to the people around Him, but this one stands alone in that it is not specifically a prayer or an address to people.
- It was spoken to no one, yet was spoken to all – to everyone and everything that ever was or ever will be – IT IS FINISHED!
- These words reverberated to the highest throne in the heavens down to the lowest depths of hell.

Today, we will examine these words in relation to Christ Himself, to the Father, and to mankind.

I. A CRY TO HIMSELF

- A. His suffering was now over
- B. His humiliation was now over
 1. The cross was a humiliating and shameful death (Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 12:2)
 2. He is now highly exalted (Philippians 2:9-11)
 3. He is *made* both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36)
- C. It was through His sufferings that Christ was “made perfect” (Hebrews 2:10)
 1. By suffering, He became the perfect Saviour of His people (Hebrews 5:8-9)
 2. By suffering, He is made the perfect High Priest, able to succour them that are tempted (Hebrews 2:18)

D. He is satisfied with His work (Isaiah 53:11)

II. A CRY TO THE FATHER

A. He came to do the Father's will (John 6:38)

1. He did "always those things that please him" (John 8:29)
2. He "finished the work" the Father had given Him (John 17:4)

B. He drank the bitter cup of God's wrath to the very last drop

1. Jesus, in the depth of grief prayed that the cup pass from Him (Matthew 26:39)
2. Yet He submitted to the Father's will

III. A CRY TO MANKIND

A. He fulfilled all the prophecies concerning Him

1. Not one word concerning His life and death was left undone
2. This gives us confidence that He will fulfil every other prophecy and promise (Matthew 5:18)

B. He fulfilled the law

1. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil (Matthew 5:17)
2. The law with all its demands condemned us as guilty sinners (Romans 3:20; 7:7)
3. Christ lived a perfectly righteous life under the law on our behalf (Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. The ceremonial law with its sacrifices and feasts is abolished (Galatians 3:23-25)
5. It is nailed to his cross (Colossians 2:14-17)

C. The payment for sin is forever complete

1. This saying is one word in Greek – *tetelestai*

2. It was frequently used on ancient bills of sale to indicate that a full payment had been made
3. This verb is in the perfect tense – an action that has been completed in the past with results continuing into the present
4. Christ was proclaiming to poor, lost sinners, “Your sins are paid in full!”
5. The blood of animals could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:4)
6. But Christ offered “one sacrifice for sins for ever” (Hebrews 10:12; cf. Hebrews 9:25-28)
7. He is the “propitiation” for our sins – He appeased God’s righteous anger for our sins (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10)
8. The rending of the temple veil was the proof of this (Matthew 27:51)
9. He “by himself” purged our sins – no one contributed to this work, or ever will (Hebrews 1:3)

D. The devil is defeated

1. He came to destroy the works of the devil (Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8)
2. Through death He destroyed him that had the power of death (Hebrews 2:14; Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:55)

CONCLUSION

1. Christ has done all the work necessary for our salvation
2. Man’s proud nature says, “DO” this in order to be saved
3. But the Gospel says, “DONE” – Christ has done all that is required and we must only receive it by faith
4. Does your account of sins have written over it in Christ’s blood, “Paid in full”?