

## It is Finished -- Sixth Word

*Jesus' Words from the Cross*

By Rev. Rodney Kleyn

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Text:** John 19:30

**Preached on:** Sunday, Marcy 23, 2008

### **Trinity Protestant Reformed Church**

3385 Van Buren,

Hudsonville, Michigan 49426

**Website:** [www.trinityprc.org](http://www.trinityprc.org)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/trinityprc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/trinityprc)

The text is in verse 30, the words of Jesus:

“It is finished.”<sup>1</sup>

In Greek that simply one word. And one word can say so much. When the young people stand at the front and make confession of faith they say one word, “Yes.” And that one word implies so much for them. The parents bring their children for baptism. They say, “Yes,” one word. In marriage, “I do,” and so much is implied in that little statement.

Beloved, there is no one word every uttered in the history of this world that means so much as this one word of Jesus:

“It is finished.”<sup>2</sup>

It calls to mind the beginning which was before the beginning of time, the eternal counsel of God. It looks ahead to the end and to the final victory and the new heavens and the new earth when all things will be accomplished and all things will be made new. Contained in this word is the whole gospel of salvation, everything, every elect sinner’s salvation. This is the apex, the climax, the turning point, the hinge on which all of history and all of your salvation and mine turns. This is it.

And tonight it is our privilege just for a little while to meditate on this word of Jesus. It demands your attention. You may not come to this word of Jesus uttered from the cross which gives the essence of the cross with a blasé attitude. You may not leave here tonight thinking, well, that wasn’t so important. This is it.

“It is finished.”<sup>3</sup>

That will be our theme, it is finished. We will notice three things. First, that this is a cry of conquest; second, that it is a cry of completion; and then, third, that it is a cry of

---

<sup>1</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

comfort. We should think of these words first as words, or a word, one word, that Jesus speaks to Satan. And when we do, we see it as a word of conquest. This is actually a word that Jesus didn't just say, but a word that Jesus shouted from the cross and that is remarkable in itself.

But in the gospel of Luke chapter 23 verse 46 you read this concerning the seventh word, the next word of the cross:

“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”<sup>4</sup>

And the word that he cried with a loud voice isn't the last word, but it is a word that he speaks before he speaks the last word and it is this word.

“It is finished.”<sup>5</sup>

He said it with a loud voice from the cross. And he said it with a loud voice because it was a cry of victory.

The history of this world and the world itself is the scene, the setting of a great battle between the seed of the woman, Christ, and Satan, called in Genesis three the seed of the serpent. From the very beginning of the world, even from before the beginning of the world Satan designed to undo everything that God had done. He designed to make ugly every thing that God has made beautiful. He designed to bring defeat and death into the world of life that God had made. And his desire, especially is this, to prevent the salvation of any of God's people, any one of God's people.

And so already in heaven Satan wars against God and Satan is cast out of heaven. In the garden Satan comes into the new creation that God has made and he makes war against God by coming to the creature, Adam and Eve, created in perfection. And he, through his wife and craft, brings sin and death into this creation. And this is a battle that rages all through the Old Testament. It is there in the children of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. You see it again throughout the Old Testament. Enoch is persecuted. Noah is mocked. Abraham is a stranger in the earth. The Israelites are persecuted in Egypt. They are fought against when they come to take their inheritance. They are tempted after they are in the land. Satan is always attempting to undo what God has done.

And this battle between the devil and Christ intensifies during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. In the book of Revelation chapter 12 you read about that. You read about another wonder that John saw in the heaven:

“...a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the

---

<sup>4</sup> Luke 23:46.

<sup>5</sup> John 19:30.

earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”<sup>6</sup>

Satan hated the birth of Jesus Christ. Satan’s design was to destroy, to destroy the one whom God had sent to save.

And, you see, the viciousness of that battle during the ministry of Jesus Christ. He is opposed. Think of his opponents in his ministry. And Jesus says to them, “Ye are of your father the devil, his works ye do.” And that is what they were doing. Satan was coming against Christ.

And now when Jesus says:

“It is finished.”<sup>7</sup>

He speaks that word as a word of conquest to the devil. Now, at first, as we look at it, it might not appear to be a word of victory and conquest. In the cross of Jesus Christ it seems that Satan is having his day. Just look at what you see, Jesus hanging on the cross, weak and bleeding and dying and forsaken of all his disciples who maybe could have helped him. He is alone.

Listen to what you hear and the crowds crying, “Away with him, crucify him.” The earthly judge condemning him to death, “Take him. Do with him as you please. Crucify him.” The mocking and the jeering of the multitudes, the whip searing his skin, the hammer pounding the nails into his hand.

And do you see? Do you hear anything from heaven? There is no voice from heaven. Christ cries out in his suffering:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”<sup>8</sup>

And God doesn’t speak a word of approval. The angels don’t come to his assistance. He seems defeated in death.

When Queen Elizabeth I of England died it is reported that on her death bed she said, “It is over. I have come to the end. To have only one life and to have done with it, to have lived and loved and triumphed and now it is over. One may defy everything else but this.”

Doesn’t it seem that that is what Christ is saying? A cry of despair, a cry of defeat, a cry of a worn out life? It is finished. But, beloved, it is not so. For look again and listen again. Listen to the words of Jesus Christ.

---

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 12:3-4.

<sup>7</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>8</sup> Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

He said to the Jewish leaders in John 10:

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.”<sup>9</sup>

Before the judgment seat of Pilate he said something very similar.

“Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.”<sup>10</sup>

When Christ is in the garden and they come to arrest him he says, “Whom seek ye?”

“Jesus of Nazareth.”

“I am he.”

Children know what happened. They fell flat back flat on their backs at the power of the presence of the Son of God.

There is no defeat in this word. Why does he not answer Pilate? Why does he give his back to the smiters? Why does he not come down from the cross? Why does not call a legion of angels to his assistance? Because he chooses not to. This is the voluntary suffering of Jesus Christ. And his enemies here, we read it over and over in the accounts of the death of Jesus Christ. His enemies here are doing his will. They did it. They said it. They shouted it. They jeered. They nailed him to the cross. They fed him vinegar on a reed that the Scripture might be fulfilled. God was determining what they would do to his Son. There is no defeat. There is victory in this cry of Jesus.

Perhaps an illustration, a biblical illustration, will help us. You children know the story of the defeat of the city of Ai with Joshua as leader. They set an ambush. The soldiers came against the city and then they turned and they ran as though they were afraid and defeated. And they drew out the whole city and then the ambush rose and they destroyed the city. Jesus here is drawing out Satan, drawing out his enemies that he may crush the head of the serpent.

That is the meaning of this cry. Jesus says himself in John 12 verse 31, as he goes to the cross:

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world [the devil] be cast out.”<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> John 10:17-18.

<sup>10</sup> John 19:10-11.

<sup>11</sup> John 12:31.

All the enemies of Christ are defeated in this word.

“It is finished.”<sup>12</sup>

Satan is finished. Sin is finished. Death is finished. The curse is finished.

“It is finished.”<sup>13</sup>

This week in men’s Bible study we read Revelation 20 and we asked this question about Revelation 20. When did this happen? Listen.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more.<sup>14</sup>

When does God send this angel from heaven to bind the devil? Right here when Jesus says:

“It is finished.”<sup>15</sup>

Satan’s power is finished. He is bound that he may deceive the nations no more.

You might say, “Well, that doesn’t seem like it is finished. Jesus still has to go into the grave. And Jesus’ work surely isn’t finished. After the grave he rises and he ascends into heaven and he rules still from heaven. And there is much sin and much trouble and much resistance that has yet to be overcome by Jesus Christ at God’s right hand. Is it finished?”

And Jesus is saying here, “The redemptive work is finished. The price for sin is paid. His people are redeemed, ransomed from the grip of the devil. The curse of sin is removed. The guilt of sin is paid.”

“It is finished.”<sup>16</sup>

Now this is all what we see, the continuing work of Christ, the working out of what he accomplished on the cross. A word of conquest.

Hebrews 2:14 puts it this way:

---

<sup>12</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Revelation 20:1-3.

<sup>15</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

“...that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”<sup>17</sup>

There is an irony in the work of Jesus Christ. He comes to destroy death. He comes to destroy the devil who has the power of death. And he does it by himself being subjected to death and the power of the devil so that he may overcome. And he does.

“It is finished.”<sup>18</sup>

Now, in the second place, we should think of this word of Jesus Christ as a word that he speaks to God. And then we see it as a cry of completion. This is a word that Jesus speaks to God in John chapter 17 verse four. He says:

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”<sup>19</sup>

And, again, this is even before he goes to the cross. He says:

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.”<sup>20</sup>

In Hebrews chapter 10 you see, again, that this is a word that Jesus speaks unto God. Hebrews chapter 10 we read:

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”<sup>21</sup>

He is speaking to God. And as he speaks to God you see, first of all, completion in this, that he fulfills all of the Scripture, everything that is written about him. In a little while the veil of the temple will be rent in two. What does that mean? It means God is done with the temple. God is done with the types. They have served their purpose. They have come to their final manifestation in Jesus Christ. Everything in all the types is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is finished with the holy practices. He is finished with the offices of the temple.

Again in Hebrews chapter 10:

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Hebrews 2:14.

<sup>18</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>19</sup> John 17:4.

<sup>20</sup> John 17:6.

<sup>21</sup> Hebrews 10:5.

<sup>22</sup> Hebrews 10:11-12.

What does that mean? Think of what it means. These priests did it every morning and every evening. They made the sacrifices again and again and again and again. Every year they had the Passover feast and they killed a lamb over and over. Every year the great day of atonement and the two goats, one that was sent out into the wilderness, the other that was killed for the people. And every time they knew it, they knew they had to do it again the next morning, the next year, over and over. But not anymore. Christ came and he did it once for all time, in one day. In six hours he did what all those others couldn't do with their repeated sacrifices over thousands of years in one day.

“It is finished.”<sup>23</sup>

This fulfillment in these words of Christ of all the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures. Again and again you see that in the narratives of Jesus Christ in the circumstances related to his birth, in the things surrounding his death that the Scripture might be fulfilled. He comes to do the will of God, the will of God that God had laid out for him in the Old Testament Scripture. He knew the will of the Father. He studied the Scripture. He knew what God had for him. And he fulfilled it to the last detail.

In verse 28 which we looked at last week we read:

“Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled...”<sup>24</sup>

He knew. And as he looks to God and has his eye on God, he says, “Father, I come to do thy will, to fulfill thy will for me.” He has come in the flesh. He has made known through his ministry who he is. He has organized a group of disciples who will be the foundation of the New Testament Church and carry on his witness. He has gone to the cross. He suffered the agonies of the cross not only the persecution of men, but the darkness and the agony of the pit of hell. He has cried out from the pit of hell in utter forsakenness. And now he says:

“It is finished.”<sup>25</sup>

He has obeyed perfectly the will of God for him.

But there is more here in this word as he speaks to God. It is finished, is a word that he speaks not only in the setting of the cross and Calvary, it is a word that he speaks not only in the setting of his life and ministry, it is a word that he speaks not only in the setting of the history of this world, so that all of the world centers on this word, but it is a word that he speaks in the setting of eternity. This is the eternal Father, the eternal Son speaking to the eternal Father and saying, “Father, it... our counsel, our eternal counsel and plan is finished.”

---

<sup>23</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>24</sup> John 19:28.

<sup>25</sup> John 19:30.

In Acts chapter two the apostle Peter hints at this when he says that it was by the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God that the wicked Jews took and killed Jesus Christ. And the same apostle calls him the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. And now there is a conversation between him and God and he is saying, "It is finished." He is referring to their eternal counsel concerning the redemption of mankind. They have an eternal plan and purpose for all things in the history of this world. The Father and the Son and the Spirit saith, "Let us do, let us make man, let us..." And everything that we see is a fruit of them saying, "Let us do this."

And they had one purpose, one goal in all this. God's glory in the salvation of a people to himself. And that plan included everything that everything, every fine detail of the life of this world and this universe. It included all the great things, the creation, the fall of the devil, the fall of mankind into sin and the dark hour of man's running from God. All that was there. And that was because God had this beautiful plan of salvation to redeem from fallen humanity a people to himself to come to them and rescue them in his grace from the darkness of their sin and the curse. And God in that plan determined to send his Son as Savior to the cross. This is central to the plan of God. And Jesus is saying to the Father:

"It is finished."<sup>26</sup>

The cross, the center piece of history planted not only or not first on Calvary, but planted in eternal counsel of God, planted in the eternal counsel of God and planned before all else, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, Christ who is before all things and by whom all things were and for whom all things were made now says to the Father:

"It is finished."<sup>27</sup>

The work that accomplishes, that makes possible every detail of our beautiful master plan for the history of this world is finished in the cross.

This is a cry of satisfaction.

An architect draws a blueprint. A builder takes the blueprint and he builds a house according to the blueprint. And when he is done, when everything is done, it is all landscaped. It all looks very good. Maybe before the owner sees it, he walks around and says, "It is finished." Perhaps he shows the architect it is finished. It is good. This is what God said in the beginning. He created the heavens and the earth and we read over and over again God saw what he made and behold it was very good. Jesus is looking now at what he has done and he is saying, "It is finished." And when God says something is good, it is not like when we say something is good. It is perfect in every detail, the work of Christ is done.

---

<sup>26</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.



Third, we should think of these words as words that Christ speaks to us who are believers. And then we see them as was word of comfort.

All that the work of Jesus Christ meant, all the work that Jesus Christ did is brought into view in this word:

“It is finished.”<sup>28</sup>

All of God’s perfect plan for salvation, all of the foundation of our righteousness before God and our being accepted before him is finished. Sin, its payment is finished. Sin and the breaking of its power, it is finished. All the blessings of salvation which come to the believer, which come to the Church through the Holy Spirit are secured in this Word, it is finished. Christ in the cross lays the foundation for every blessing, for every comfort, for every promise that he makes to his own.

Now it is true. We still are in the midst of sin and there is a struggle with sin that continues and there is still in our lives a sense of guilt that often weighs on us, but exactly here is the point of comfort. Christ has accomplished all for us. We need not fear. We need not be afraid. We need not be overcome with the weight and the guilt of our sin. Christ has paid, Christ has broken the power of sin. Even as he goes to the grave, the grave cannot hold him. It has no power over him.

What an `{?}` for us when we die. We die and then we stand before the judge. Christ dies and he has already stood before the judge and he has made the payment so that as he goes into the grave, death and the curse of death has no power on him. It is finished. It is finished for every one of his children.

Is that important to you, beloved? Don’t you see this is the central word of the most important word that is ever spoken? And it is a word that gives the essence of the cross of Jesus Christ. This is what he did. This is what is so important about what he did. All of God’s purposes and all of God’s plan and all of the power of God that comes into the world of man is there in this one word:

“It is finished.”<sup>29</sup>

That means, beloved, that the cross of Christ ought to have an effect on us and our lives and even our affections and our thoughts. The apostle Paul in Galatians six verse 14 puts it this way:

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>30</sup>

And he means this is my boast. This is the center. This is the center of my spiritual life, the cross, this is the center of my living. I have nothing else on which to pin my hopes

---

<sup>28</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Galatians 6:14.

and my confidence, nothing else that will bring me glory but this, the cross of Jesus Christ.

You think of the cross. Does it enter into your meditations? Does it bear on your daily life? We are Christians. We talk about a lot of things and we think about a lot of things. Funny things, things related to our daily lives, our work, our school, our children, our dress, spiritual things, too, conversations about the Bible and doctrine, all kinds of thing, the responsibilities that we have as believers, the education of our children, good things. But what about the cross? Is the cross there?

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross.”<sup>31</sup>

Paul means this is central to my life. Jesus says:

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”<sup>32</sup>

The cross of Christ casts a shadow over all of our life. The cross of Christ is the power, the victory of all our life. It ought to affect our thoughts, our emotions, our affections.

Paul says that the cross changes his life, changes his relationship to everything else in this life. In Galatians six and verse 14 he continues with this thought. Concerning the cross he says:

“...by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”<sup>33</sup>

And he means by that the cross of Jesus Christ changes everything about me and my life in this world. We have talked about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ for a number of weeks, but there is nothing pleasant about it, nothing nice about it. A man has nails driven through his hand and feet and hangs by those nails. And the birds of the air come and they pick at his flesh and he is bleeding and his agonizing cries and insects and flies begin to crawl over it. It is a grotesque sight.

That is what Paul is saying here. I am crucified to the world and the world to me. Because the cross is central to my life, the world looks at me differently. Because the cross is central to my life, the world is crucified to me so that I look at the world differently. It is repulsive to me. I don't want it. My affections change and I change so that the world doesn't want me.

The cross, the cross of Christ, we are to have that bearing on our lives.

Our hope is not in temporal things, but our hope is in eternal things, the eternal things that Christ speaks of when he says, “It is finished.” Our hope is in what God has eternally

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Luke 9:23.

<sup>33</sup> Galatians 6:14.

decreed. Our hope is in the eternal things that God has promised to give us. The best that the world can give, a big meal and a full stomach and also bring horrible effects in our life.

And, beloved, this is what Christ is saying. It is finished. You can't add anything to it. It is finished. It isn't what you do. It isn't what you say. It isn't what you think. It isn't what you believe. It isn't how well you educate your children. It isn't all those things. But it is what he has done. We are his disciples. We follow his command and we trust him and his finished work. Amen.

*Father, we thank you, for what Christ has done for the completeness of his work, for the payment, for the victory, for the comfort. We pray, Lord, that we may live in the knowledge of the cross and that it may also bear on our lives and change us to live to him and to live apart from, dead to this world. For Jesus' sake. Amen.*