

It is Finished

Radio Broadcast

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Welcome to the Grace Abounding broadcast, brought to you by the Shreveport Grace Church that meets at 2970 Baird Road in Shreveport, Louisiana. My name is Ken Wimer and it is my privilege to bring to you today a message that seeks to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious person and finished work of salvation accomplished for sinners at the cross. Please stay tuned.

If you have ever had a house built for you and been through the whole process of the planning and then the construction and then waiting to be able to enter in and enjoy living in that house, you know that the three most important words that you can hear the contractor tell you when he calls you up are, "It is finished."

In Scripture we find these to be the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as he hung there on the cross. Now there were many who observed him that day who had followed his ministry over the years and questioned and wondered what his mission was all about, but to those that the Lord has taught, to those whom God has revealed in their heart the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, there are no more three important words than what we find here in John 19 and verse 30 where he cried from the cross, "It is finished." In fact, these are the last words that our Lord spoke from the cross before it says here that he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. That word bowed is the word pillowed. He pillowed his head and gave up the ghost.

To me, as I read this, it is an indication that no man took Christ's life from him. It wasn't an accident, his death. I hear some mourning and saying, "Well, if men had just believed on him, then he would not have had to die."

Dear friends, that speaks of the ignorance of men's hearts and minds. This is the reason the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, that he should be delivered up on the cross and why? Because he came as the Savior. He came as the sin bearer of a people that God purposed to save from all eternity and it was necessary that he lay down his life. This was not a fluke death. God required the death of his Son that he might be the just justifier of that people that he came to save. Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke of this in John chapter 10 verse 18 in no uncertain terms. He said:

“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. This commandment have I received of my Father.”¹

So you can see this was not an option of his being able to come and live the life that he did without dying. And the reason is because in order for God to be just and save sinners, his law had to be satisfied and the Scriptures say:

“...the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”²

And so there was no other way conceivable that sin could be put away other than through death. And so God ordained the death of his only begotten Son that he might justly forgive and save everyone for whom Christ died.

You remember back in the creation story when God saw all that he had done he saw that it was very good and he rested the seventh day. But we are thousands of years later, the very same creator of the heavens and the earth who in six days laid the foundation of the earth and then rested now thousands of years later by saying, “It is finished,” he is giving notice that the foundation of the new creation was laid here at Calvary and it is finished. All of the years of preparation throughout the Old Testament, all the types and pictures and promises and foretelling of this day now have been fulfilled. And the chief cornerstone has been laid in Zion with this exclamation, “It is finished.”

So I want to consider with you in the time that I have this finished redemption. This is a unique message that I know you don’t hear often preached by those who open the book, the Bible and preach from it, but, dear friend, the message of the gospel is one of a finished redemption. You will hear some speaking of the redemption that is a partial payment. They say that Christ laid down his life to try to save everybody, but, alas, only those are saved who believe on him.

What does that say about their redemption? It is an unfinished redemption. It is made to be contingent yet upon something that the sinner does. And even worse, it has those in hell for whom Christ died. That is not only an unfinished redemption, it is an unsuccessful redemption to preach Christ’s death in such a manner.

The Scriptures know no such death. These words, “It is finished,” I pray might not only ring in your ears, dear friend, but, by the Spirit of God be brought home to your very heart to know and understand what the Lord Jesus Christ is come and accomplished. It is finished. This saying of the Son of God is a very striking one and one that I pray will enable you to understand something of the magnitude of the work that he accomplished on the cross and that it will not fail to make that strong impression by the Spirit of God upon your mind.

This is not the language of a mere victim. Christ did not hang there on the cross in weakness. No, the Scriptures when it says there he said, “It is finished,” he cried it with a

¹ John 10:18.

² Ezekiel 18:20.

loud voice is the way it is described in one of the other gospels. And so not a cry of defeat, but a cry of victory.

So what was finished? Well, first of all the sufferings of Christ are ended. Never again would he be persecuted from city to city as he was and maligned as being an imposter or even called a servant of Satan. The religious men of his day referred to him as the son of Belial, the servant of Satan. But never again would he be subjected to such humiliation by sinful men. No, it is finished. Never again would he say, as he did in Matthew 26 and verse 38:

“My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”³

Never again would he agonize in the garden and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. It doesn't say that great drops of blood were sweat, but as it were. It is a way of describing how he in view of the cross, the just one, was weighed down with the burden of sin of the people that he came to save. And, therefore, in the garden looked to his Father to uphold him through the entire process of trial and death that was before him. But never again would he be insulted by men in power. He being the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only reason they were able to insult him was because God had purposed to subject him to their insults as part of the suffering of sin. That suffering at the hands of men was an evidence of just how depraved the heart is when deprived of the grace of God. And, certainly, any one of us must see ourselves as just as evil as those who cried, “Crucify him, crucify him.” But never again would he cry those words:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,”⁴

....that we find recorded in Psalm 22.

And let me just say there that this cry of the Lord, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,” was not a cry of complaint as some men would preach it. No, when he cried, “My God, my God, why...” that word why can also be translated wherefore or for this reason. It was a statement. For this reason hast thou forsaken me.

“Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?”⁵

He is answering the question in verse three of the same chapter:

“But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.”⁶

The reason why God the Father left him in that state to hang and to die was because he was holy and just. And that was necessary for Christ as the substitute to die in such a manner that God might justly declare righteous those he came to save. So, “It is

³ Matthew 26:38.

⁴ Psalm 22:1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Psalm 22:3.

finished,” was a declaration that the sufferings of Christ were ended. There was nothing more that was necessary than his death in order to satisfy God’s law and justice.

And so that brings me to the second reason why, “It is finished,” that declaration is important. And that is because all of the predictions of his death are now fulfilled. You see, the prophets of the Old Testament had spoken of his crucifixion many hundreds and thousands of years before his birth. They foresaw this one who was to come forth from Bethlehem and they foresaw the babe in the manger as that one whose goings forth, it says in Micah, art from old, even from everlasting. And so all of the Old Testament predicted his coming and his living and his dying. And all of these things had to be fulfilled.

You remember on the day of Christ’s resurrection the Lord Jesus Christ was walking on the road to Emmaus and there were two walking there who were discussing with one another the events of the preceding days and lamenting the fact that this one in whom they had trusted was now dead and gone. And so the Lord comes to them and their eyes being not yet opened they did not see plainly or clearly yet the whole significance of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. And yet as the Lord walked with them and explained to them the reason for his death and his coming, it says later on in the chapter:

“These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”⁷

So you can see when Christ said, “It is finished,” he was declaring that all those thing that were written had to be fulfilled and were fulfilled. And it says in verse 45:

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:⁸

So you can see all of the predictions of his death are fulfilled. And, dear friend, that is exactly what the Scriptures set forth, the glory of Christ in his person, not only as the creator, of this world, but the Savior for sinners whom God the Father has set forth from all eternity to come. A body was prepared for him. Why? Because it required death in order for him to save a people. So that cry, “It is finished” assures us that everything that was ever written concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and his death are fulfilled.

Thirdly, “It is finished,” tells us the great sacrifice for sin is accomplished. Christ did not die a martyr. He did not die as an example for us to follow. No, he died as the sin bearer and for him to cry, “It is finished,” assures us that the great sacrifice for sin is accomplished. That is why Christ came into the world. He is the appointed high priest, the very elect of the Father that God sent forth to do this work and he alone who was in the bosom of the Father from eternity could offer a sacrifice of sufficient merit to put

⁷ Luke 24:44.

⁸ Luke 24:45-46.

away the sin of his people. You see, God cannot die. It took a man to die. And yet a mere man could not satisfy a holy God. It took God to satisfy God. And so this one who hung on the cross was none other than the God man. And it was necessary that he should have, as a high priest, just like the Old Testament, somewhat to offer. But rather than offering the blood of bulls and goats he offered his own precious blood and, therefore, a body was prepared for him. He assumed the seed of Abraham and suffered in the flesh. Now this was a sacrifice of infinite value and was sanctified by the altar of his divinity on which it was offered. So just picture his humanity as being the body, the sacrifice, but offered on the altar of his divinity, being God. And so all of the ceremonial sacrifices of the Old Testament foresaw this one body and this one death, this one great sacrifice for sin.

The Scriptures tell us plainly that all of those ceremonial sacrifices could not put away sin. They were merely what are called an atonement, a covering. Now it took the Lord in Jesus Christ to come and buy that one offering it says in Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 10, forever sanctified his people, paying the whole debt. He took it unto himself and the handwriting that was against his people, the Scriptures say, were nailed to his cross. And when driving the last nail, he cried, "It is finished." For those for whom Christ died he is not today the sin bearer. No, it is finished. That is what that means. The great sacrifice for sin is accomplished.

And then, fourthly, it is finished means the satisfaction of divine justice is completed. I know we have a tendency to look at the importance of Christ's death with regard to our sin in speaking of his death and yet there is a matter of far greater importance and that is the very justice of God. In order for God to love sinners, in order for God to put away their sin, in order for God to forgive them, there had to be just satisfaction. You see, the law that was violated had to be vindicated. God cannot show mercy at the expense of his law. And so when Christ cried, "It is finished," here is the assurance for needy sinners, otherwise guilty and wretched sinners that they deserved penalty was borne by the Lord Jesus Christ. And God is satisfied.

You see, that is what salvation is, God providing himself a lamb, God satisfying himself through the just death of his own Son. He died the just for the unjust.

Peter spoke of this in his epistle in 1 Peter chapter two and verse 24 where he wrote of Christ having borne our sin in his own body on the tree. Paul wrote of it in 2 Corinthians chapter five and verse 21 where we read he was made a curse for us who knew no sin. He was made to be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now when it says that he was made to be sin, it doesn't mean that he was made sinful. No, that could not be. The sacrifice had to be pure. The sacrifice had to be spotless, but he was made sin by imputation. In other words, God the Father put to his account the merit or the guilt of the sin of his people. And in return put to the account of his people Christ's very righteous obedience. There was no other way by which the honor of God and the dignity of his law could be sustained. And so the Scriptures say in Isaiah 53:

"...the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."⁹

⁹ Isaiah 53:6.

He died unto sin once, not merely for sin, but enduring his punishment in the place of those for whom he died. Therefore it is said that he made an end of sin. That is found over in Daniel chapter nine and verse 24. He destroyed its condemning and tormenting power or curse on behalf of those that the Father has chosen. His sufferings were equal to the claims of justice and therefore his dying cry was the voice of justice himself proclaiming that satisfaction, "It is finished."

And so here it is that even the dying thief, the persecutor of the holy one, his sin was laid upon the substitute. And the whole load of his guilt was found on Christ. And that is why Christ could say to that one thief, "Today you shall be with me in paradise."

But a fifth matter that I would have you consider with regard to this statement, "It is finished," is that by this finished redemption, the new and living way to God has been consecrated. There are a lot of congregations and religious organizations that continue to try to impose the law or some aspect of it or keeping of it or some imitation of it as a way of access to God. But if you will listen as I read from Hebrews chapter 10 we read because of the death of Christ in verse 17 it says:

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.¹⁰

So complete and full was the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and that sin being put away on behalf of his people, that there is no more need for an offering for sin. Remission is complete. The sin has been put away. And then verse 19 says:

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;¹¹

So you can see the new and living way has to do with how we come to God. It is not through earthly praise. It is not through man made ceremonies and ordinances. No, it is freely through the Lord Jesus Christ in that death that he has accomplished, this new and living way. That veil that once stood between the holy place and the holiest of holies has been rent in two. And the Lord Jesus Christ, the high priest has entered in. You see, in the old tabernacle, none could enter in but the high priest and that only once a year and then with fear and trembling, taking that bowl of blood shed for one of the animals and offering upon the ark of the covenant. But our great high priest the Lord Jesus Christ has made an end of sacrifice by the one offering of himself. And he has taken in not the blood of bulls and goats, but his own blood and entered into heaven itself there to appear in the presence of God on behalf of his people. Oh, what a blessed truth this is to be able to come to God as it says here:

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."¹²

¹⁰ Hebrews 10:17.

¹¹ Hebrews 10:19-20.

That boldness does not mean presumption. No matter how many years have gone by since the Lord Jesus Christ has finished the work, we still come in the way that God has ordained and prescribed in his Word. It is through the high priest. But Christ is that high priest. It is through the sacrifice that he gave of himself once for all in his shed blood, but, nonetheless, it does require that sacrifice. That is where the sinner looks who comes to God in the way that he has ordained in his Word, looking to Christ and his shed blood alone. There is an altar, but it is not something that is built before men to be able to see before men's eyes as you see in some places of worship today, what they call an altar. No, Christ is that altar. And, therefore, we come boldly into God's presence through him. And we are exhorted to come boldly to what? The throne of grace. So you can see that it is in Christ alone and he is that new and living way to God.

And then a sixth point that I would bring out to you here with regard to this statement, "It is finished," is this, that when Christ cried, "It is finished," he was signaling the conquest of the powers of darkness and that Satan who had long sought to defeat him was now himself defeated. When their hour was come, the prince of his host were on the alert to accomplish the destruction of the Son of God. That is Satan sought in every way to defeat the Lord Jesus Christ and yet here we find Christ himself declaring the victory, "It is finished." Satan instigated Judas. It says that Satan entered into him as a means of calling him to betray the Lord Jesus Christ and to deny him and yet through all of this the Lord Jesus Christ reigned victorious.

There are many other ways that we could look at the principalities of darkness that were at work through all that was taking place, the Roman soldiers who mocked him in his sufferings and nailed him to the cross and all of these things we can see the darkness of Satan and his power itself at work. And yet the Lord said:

"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹³

And here is that victorious statement, "It is finished."

Satan described as the great dragon in Scripture and his host now in retreat howling from the cross. The prince of our salvation turned back all of their artillery on themselves and all of their strategies became their ruin. Back in Genesis chapter three and verse 15 this was predicted where it says there that the seed of the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman and yet the seed of the woman, that is the Lord Jesus Christ, would crush the serpent's head. What is in the serpent's head but venom? And the Lord Jesus Christ dealt the death blow and accomplished the victory over Satan, over sin, over the powers of darkness. This dying cry of the Lord Jesus Christ shook the very dominions of death so that the bodies of many that slept arose and, if you will, rang through all the depths of hell and recorded there, "It is finished." Satan was defeated.

¹² Hebrews 10:19.

¹³ Matthew 16:18.

And so it is that he was foiled in his schemes, much like with Samson the men of Gaza when they locked up Samson at night thinking to kill him in the morning but awoke to find that he was gone and the gates of the city upon his shoulders or when the Philistines caught Samson and brought him to their temple to make sport for them. They never dreamed of the disaster in which it would result, never dreamed that their triumph over this poor, blind captive would be the occasion of their own destruction.

And so Christ on Calvary while the powers of darkness lauded their own victory, so they thought, over their victim, yet the Lord Jesus Christ, so to speak, seized the main pillars of sin and death and brought down the temple of Satan upon its occupants. And on the morning of the third day he left them all in the ruins where they will remain forever. And so it was that he accomplished the victory. Oh, what a blessed redemption it is. And I pray that the Lord would so point you, dear sinner, to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are one that God has chosen and for whom Christ has died, certainly he will in his time by his Spirit show you the fullness of that redemption, the finality of it, that Christ accomplished on behalf of sinners such as we are.

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