

It Is Finished

John 19:16-30

B.I. All of redemptive history had been pressing toward this one moment in time - the day Christ bore sins curse in His body on the cross.

LTS: Psalm 70

When we talk about the gospel of Jesus Christ here at Calvary Bible Church we often speak about it in the light of one profound and revelatory text which came from the Pen of the apostle Paul. In 2 Cor. 5:21 we read, "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

On the cross God made His righteous, sinless, innocent, holy, majestic, praise-worthy, beloved Son the object of His eternal wrath against sin. He treated Jesus as if He were the very personification of sin in the world. He treated Him as if He had lived my wicked, vile, self-centered, fleshly, God-belittling, degenerate, idolatrous life. In the words of the Prophet Isaiah, God "Crushed" His Son. Or as Paul would say, God "did not spare His own Son, but delivered him up for us all." As Moses said, God permitted the serpent to bruise His heel. As the Gospel authors said, God permitted Judas to betray Him. He permitted the Sanhedrin to falsely condemn Him. He Permitted Pilate to sentence Him. He permitted the soldiers to mock and torture Him. He permitted his apostles to abandon and deny Him. And the sum of it all is that He treated Jesus as if He had become the very substance of sin itself - unleashing the full fury of His wrath upon Him. Why? Paul explains, it was "so that we might become the righteousness of God.

This morning we turn to John chap. 19 where we will read about Jesus' final hours. This is the end to which He had been pressing and striving since the day His ministry began. All of redemptive history had been speeding toward this one moment in time - the day Christ bore sins curse in His body on the cross. Today we are privileged to read and mediate upon John's inspired record of Jesus crucifixion by which we have been saved.

Before we read this text let me ask you first to take a moment right there in the quiet recesses of your heart to invite the H.S. to speak to you through His word. Open yourself fully to His sanctifying intrusion into your life so that He might have full sway over the affections of your heart on the thoughts of your mind... for His great glory and your own God-besotted joy.

Read John 19:16-30

In this passage I see Jesus suffering in four different ways:

He Suffered Excruciating Execution:

He Suffered Vengeful Humiliation:

He Suffered Demoralizing Deprivation

He Suffered Crushing Separation:

He Suffered Demoralizing Deprivation:
He Suffered Crushing Separation:
He Suffered to the Final Culmination:

Jesus Suffered Excruciating Execution: (16-18)

1. The previous section ends with the words (16), "So they delivered Him over to be crucified." After all the drama that went into Jesus' betrayal, arrest, accusations, interrogations, being shuttled around from the Jews to Pilate, to Herod, back to Pilate, to the scourging post, and back to Pilate again, the scene ends with Pilate reluctantly sentences Jesus to death. "So they delivered him over to be crucified."
2. From the very beginning of our discussion today, however, I need to remind you that Jesus didn't go to the cross simply because Pilate sent Him there. The word for "delivered Him over" is actually a term that is repeatedly used with reference to Jesus' crucifixion, But in Rom. 8:32 Paul writes about the God who "did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all..."
3. If there is ever any question about whether or not God the Father loves sinners we need only to look at John 19 for confirmation. It was the Father who delivered Him over for crucifixion. (16) "So they took Jesus and went out..." The other three gospel accounts say that they "led Jesus away" which suggests that Jesus went with them willingly and without any resistance. Just as Isaiah had prophesied 400 years earlier, the Messiah went to His death "like a lamb that is led to slaughter" (Isa. 53:7).
4. Where did they take Him? They took Him to a well-known place of execution. Locally, it is known as Golgatha which means "cranium." Literally it was "The place of the skull." In Latin, it's Calvaria (from which we get Calvary). It may have received such a title simply because it was the place of execution. We don't know for certain where the crucifixion happened but we do know that crucifixion itself was a detestable and horrifying form of execution.
5. John doesn't say much about the agony of the cross. He merely remarks (18), "there they crucified him." John assumes his readers understand implicitly all that was involved in that horrific display of human depravity. But it's not as intuitive for us, so let me take just a moment to help us imagine what it must have been like.
6. Of Crucifixion Tom Constable writes,

It was a deliberately long and excruciating form of death that humiliated the sufferer as well as torturing him. Its purpose was to discourage others from rebelling against Rome.
7. Kostenberger adds: "In ancient times, crucifixion was synonymous with horror and shame, a death inflicted on slaves, bandits, and revolutionaries."
8. D.A Carson drills deeper still when he says,

...crucifixion "was so brutal that no Roman citizen could be crucified without the sanction of the Emperor. Stripped naked and beaten to pulpy weakness..., the victim could hang in the hot sun for hours, even days. To breathe, it was necessary to push with the legs and pull with the arms to keep the chest cavity open and functioning. Terrible muscle spasms wracked the entire body; but since collapse meant asphyxiation, the strain went on and on.
9. Tenny concludes that "Crucifixion was probably the most diabolical form of death ever invented."
10. Nevertheless, explaining the agony of the cross was not John's object. And that's true of all four Gospel authors. The death of Jesus for sinners was their concern. They wanted us to see that God made Jesus a curse for us. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us."
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10. What John does tell us about the crucifixion is that (17), Jesus went out "bearing His cross." On the way to the place of execution the condemned person was usually forced to carry his own cross - or at least the upper beam of the cross. As Isaac carried the wood for his own sacrifice, so Jesus carried His own cross. Jesus suffered an Excruciating Execution

II. Jesus suffered Vengeful Humiliation: (18-22)

1. In the narrative leading up to Jesus' crucifixion we know that Pilate resisted the Jew's demand that He sentence Jesus to death. Over and over Pilate said, "I find no guilt in Him." but in the end he found himself blackmailed into condemning the most righteous, innocent man who ever walked the face of the earth. The sentence was unjust and undeserved but if he was going to condemn Jesus He had to make it official.

2. Normally the judge of a person sentenced to crucifixion would order that a placard (Lat. Titulus), with "an inscription" identifying his crime, would accompany him to the place of his execution. It would inform onlookers of who the criminal was, and why he was suffering such a terrible fate. The soldiers would then affix it to criminal's cross to make a public spectacle of him. This was certainly the case with Jesus.

3. All four gospel accounts report about the plaque with its inscription so it must have been important. We should be careful not to miss the irony here that while Pilate had proven to be weak when it came to the all-important question of Jesus' worthiness of execution, on the seemingly insignificant matter of how to formulate the wording of the Placard he was resolved and absolutely inflexible.

4. It's important to note that Pilate chose not to indicate any charge against Jesus. Rather he ordered that the plaque should contain a title instead. The title was simple, "King of the Jews." And he had it written in three languages, Latin (the official language of the government), Aramaic (the language of the Jews of Palestine), and Greek (the world language of commerce and culture). Pilate was determined to make sure everyone who passed by - no matter what their nationality - would be able to read what he had written.

5. No doubt Pilate's intention was to take a little revenge on the Jewish leaders for forcing him to do what he knew was unjust. Giving Jesus the public title "King of the Jews" was his way of insulting them. It declared to the whole world that the highest ranking Jew in Israel, their great hero and only sovereign was nothing more than a criminal from Nazareth whose throne is a crucifixion stake, whose crown is of bloody thorns, whose robe is his scourged, disfigured, and naked body, and whose court consisted of two guilty criminals who were hung one on left side and one on His right.

6. No wonder the Jewish leaders were irate. They came to Pilate demanding He change the inscription (21), "Do not write, 'Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews' but that He said He was king of the Jews." But Pilate was unmoved: "What I have written I have written."

7. The inscription, however, was not only insulting to the nation, it ranked among the most vile acts of personal humiliation ever inflicted on a single human being. Jesus suffered horrific Public humiliation. But it must also be noted that what Pilate intended for evil, God meant for good.

8. In this scene Pilate is portrayed as an unwilling prophet proclaiming to the nations the pure word of God: "This is Jesus of Nazareth - King of the Jews. King of the World." And two days from now He would prove His royal authority even over death when He rises again from the tomb. In the mean time, Jesus must suffer an Excruciating Execution and a Public Humiliation.

III. Jesus suffered Demoralizing Deprivation: (23-24)

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1. When the Romans crucified a criminal there was usually a team of four soldiers responsible for the whole undertaking, and it was common for them to divide up his personal belongings of the condemned.

2. As mentioned before, criminals who face crucifixion were first completely stripped of their clothing and left naked on the cross. Here is total depravation. Here is the depriving of a human being even the smallest modicum of personal dignity – they took his clothes. And not only that, but they added to the indignity by dividing his belongings between them right there at the foot of His cross. To the one hanging on the cross the message is clear. There is no hope of your survival. All is lost. Even your clothing already belongs to other people. You will soon die in utter ignominy and complete deprivation.

3. For Jesus this means the soldiers bartered for his robe, sandals, belt and head covering. But there was also a 5th garment, His tunic. But since that garment was seamless and there were only four soldiers, they decided to cast lots to see who would get it. And they did it all in the full view of Jesus and His loved ones. As J.C. Ryle puts it, “The Lord was treated just like all common criminals – stripped naked and His clothes sold under His eyes, as one dead already and cast aside by men.”

4. And yet, even in this John shows that God sovereignly ruled over it all. John writes (24), This was to fulfill the Scriptures which says, ‘They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.’” This is a direct fulfillment of Psalm 22:18.

You see, beloved, from the beginning of time God had every detail of your redemption perfectly planned. The Savior of the world was to die in naked deprivation so that we could be clothed in perfect righteousness and glory.

5. So Jesus suffered an Excruciating Execution, Public Humiliation, Absolute deprivation...

IV. Jesus Suffered Crushing Separation: (25-27)

1. The Gospel authors don't reveal a great deal about Mary, Jesus' mother, but it seems clear from this passage that He loved her deeply and that He was careful to take care of her. She was probably a widow in her mid-fifties by now and without any means of support except what her oldest Son provided for her.

2. Jesus addresses His mother by saying, “Dear woman.” This was an affectionate and respectful way of speaking to her. It's truly amazing, is it not, that even on the cross of His execution, hanging there in excruciating pain, His concern is not for Himself but for His mother. This was the end. Soon He would be dead and someone else was going to have to take care of her. For both mother and son this was going to be a painful and profound separation. But Jesus wasn't going to allow it to just happen. He was going to make sure that His mother was cared for.

3. Constable points out that the language used here was legal and quite similar to the terms used commonly in ancient adoption proceedings. Her husband, Joseph, had no doubt long-since died and her other sons are still unbelievers, so Jesus puts her in the care of the disciple whom He loved; namely, John. And from that very hour, John writes (27), Mary lived in his home.

4. To be sure, this was a heart-breaking separation, but being separated from His earthly mother was nothing compared to the coming Separation from His heavenly Father.

5. John doesn't record it for us here but Matthew and Mark tell us that (Mat. 27:45–46)

Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶
About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “ELI, ELI, LAMA
SABACHTHANI?” that is, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

6. Here was the worst part of the crucifixion for Jesus. The Scourging of His back and the crown of thorns did not cause Him to cry out in anguish of soul! He endured His betrayal, bitter mocking, and physical beating without a word. Not even the nails in His feet and hands could cause Him to plead for anything except that His executioners might be forgiven. But at this moment on the cross something so dreadfully appalling occurred that

hands could cause Him to plead for anything except that His executioners might be forgiven. But at this moment on the cross something so dreadfully appalling occurred that it cause Jesus to cry out in tormented agony, “My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?” This was the only occasion in all eternity when the Father ever broke fellowship with the Son. He not only broke fellowship with Him, He turned His back on Him as if to say, “My Son, you are nothing but the worthless, guilty criminal these men claim you to be. I condemn you. I curse You. Be damned!

7. The point of the crucifixion is that Jesus was cursed by God on our behalf. You may remember that passage in Lev. 24:14 where a man was angry and blasphemed. So God instructed Moses, that man it is be taken outside the camp and stoned to death. Why? Because He was under God’s curse. So the author of Hebrews writes (Heb. 13:11–12),

“For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.”

8. Jesus was taken outside the camp where the carcasses of animals are burned and where blasphemers are stoned to suffer and die on the cross under the curse of God.

9. Paul makes this explicit in Galatians 3 where He writes (3:10),

For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.”

(3:13) “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE”—

10. This is what Paul meant when He said, “God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf...” It means that in order to save sinners God had to treat His Son as the worst of sinners. In order to save ME, He had to treat Jesus AS IF HE WERE ME! He had to say to His Son, “Depart from you cursed one! Leave me and enter into eternal darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth!

11. Oh my friend, do you see now what it cost Jesus to pay for your sin! Can you comprehend something of the wickedness of the sin that you claim is but a small thing? Do you feel something of how deep the Son’s love for sinners must be that He should become the object of God’s damning curse on your behalf? Do you see the love of the Father for you that He is not willing that you should perish for your crimes against Him but that instead you should come to repentance?

12. Jesus suffered an Excruciating Execution, Public Humiliation, Absolute deprivation, and Heart-breaking Separation. Nevertheless...

V. He Suffered to the Final Culmination: (28-30)

1. Once again, John points out that things were going exactly as planned, even to the a detail so minute as Jesus declaring his thirst. John sees this statement as another fulfillment of prophetic Scripture. Psalm 22:15 presents the suffering Messiah as thirsty, and Psalm 69:21 speaks of his being given sour wine to drink. This is exactly what Jesus did – not because He was attempting to artificially fulfill Scripture but because the Scriptures foretold what He would experience.

2. In all of this we see the magnificent sovereignty of God over Jesus suffering at the hands of men. For redemption to take place Jesus had to bear the horrible curse of sin. Here is also the ultimate display of the love of God for sinners, that Christ would be willing to suffer burning thirst so that His people might drink freely of the soul-satisfying living water.

3. And then, when all of His crosswork was complete He cried out, “It is finished!” “Paid in Full!” Then He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

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Conclusion:

1. Oh beloved, do you understand the significance of the Cross? As a sinner you stand under the curse of Almighty God! But Jesus, because of the great love with which He loved us even when we were dead in our sin, offered Himself as the sufficient object of God's curse on our behalf.
2. Paul explains in Col. 2:14 that "God made us alive together, having forgiven all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us... By nailing it to His cross."
3. Romans 5:21 "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so tht we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

"It is Finished!"

B.I. All of redemptive history had been pressing toward this one moment in time - the day Christ bore sins curse in His body on the cross.