

It Is Finished

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If you will this morning, turn with me to our text. John 19:30 as the Lord Jesus Christ spoke the Gospel from the cross. John 19:30,

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished:
and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, how glorious thou art. I pray, O Lord, this day that you would indeed have me to be in thy Spirit this day, on this thy Lord's day, the Lord's day. O Lord, may you call us away from this world, may you bring us to thy feet, may you give us the mind of thy Son that we may know, that we may experience the power of the Gospel in this text today when Jesus said, "It is finished." O Lord, may you lead us to the depth of this subject for, Lord, thou knowest I am insufficient and weak and in need of thy strength to glorify your name, to praise your name, to exalt your name. And Lord, may that name be lifted up this hour to the praise and glory of thee. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

I want to begin this morning by telling you about a covenant that was entered into by the Triune God long before there was ever a world, long before there was ever you and I, a Triune God made a covenant of grace, a covenant of peace, a covenant of redemption, the new covenant, all of these interchangeable terms to speak of what was done in eternity when the Triune Lord made this covenant together, when eternal salvation was agreed upon for all of those whom the Father would elect and the Son stood forward and said, "I will go in time. I will go in a body that has been prepared for me. I will go and I will lay down my life for those, Father, that you have elected." And the Holy Spirit said, "I will seal them. I will seal all of the work that this Lord, that this Triune God has done and they will be eternally kept, and they will be sealed until that day until we reach that heavenly place to be with this Triune Lord." And it is that covenant that the Lord Jesus Christ when he came in time, when he came to save his people from their sins, when he came to lay down his life, it is in these words in our text today, "It is finished," it is an establishment of this everlasting kingdom, it is a putting away of sin for all time. It is the glorious Gospel to the people of God.

And I know as I prayed this morning, I am insufficient to take you to the cross. I am insufficient to speak to your soul the depth of the words, "It is finished." I asked Stephanie to play that song this morning because he was lifted up to die. He came in time to die because, you see, the Lord Jesus Christ would be perfectly obedient but there was more required than perfect obedience, it was obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, for surely, those sins must be paid for.

We all in this room are all sinners. We deserve hell. That's a Gospel truth. He came to save sinners. We owe a debt that we cannot pay. We have all the duty that is spoken of in these words that we cannot do and all of the duty and all of the debt was laid upon him and he paid the debt perfectly and performed every duty that you and I could never do and never want to do. This obedience, the Lord Jesus Christ came and did, was a fulfillment.

Galatians 3:10 says, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." We are under a curse. That curse is the anger of God against sin. And make no mistake about it, the Triune God hates sin, abhors sin, cannot look upon sin. And this one, this second person of the Trinity, came in time and was made sin, that abhorrent thing, for his people to stand in their place, to put himself under this curse.

Galatians 4:4 tells us when the fulness of the time came, when the fullness of time came, that in that covenant that Jesus said, "I will come. I will come down from heaven. I will be made flesh. I will dwell with my people and I will save them from their sins in this great work of redemption." "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." The same law that you and I live under. The same law that you and I were born under. It is a broken law by us. We break it daily.

This is our state. We stand in need of a Savior but what are we saved from? What did he finish? And as you and I sit here today, is that a truth in your soul that it truly is finished? There are so many religious people in this world today who live under a code or a law by putting themselves under something that the Lord Jesus Christ came here and suffered under for his people and fulfilled it perfectly and what an abomination it is to tell the God/man, to tell the Triune God, "What you finished is not good enough, that I have something more to do. I have something to add to it."

What does, "It is finished," mean to you today? Finished means accomplished and when the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished all that the Father sent him to do, the Triune God and you have an instance in all three passages in the word of God, that the Holy Spirit raised him from the dead; that the Father raised him from the dead; that the Son raised himself from the dead. The power of God to raise Jesus Christ from the dead, that he would defeat all of his enemies, the world, our flesh, sin, death, all of them put under his feet, and he would then ascend up to heaven and reign where he is reigning today in this kingdom that he has set up. And if we be in him and if he has finished all things for us, we live in that kingdom. It's not a kingdom of law. It's not a kingdom of have-to. It's not a kingdom of sin. It's a kingdom of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He came, as I mentioned earlier, in all the duties. We all can sit right now and think of all the duties that we have to do. Thousands today will congregate in buildings and they'll be told all the things they have to do. God requires this obedience of you. God says go out and do these things. Do them because I live in you. Go and do them and you'll make me happy. That's not the Gospel. That's bondage. That's bondage. That's not grace. That's Arminianism. That's works. To sit and to believe and to practice a life that testifies that you are working for a kingdom that's already been established and finished in Christ Jesus with a King that's ruling, a King, a powerful King that has defeated all of his enemies.

But I never want you to understand the law as being evil. When you read this book in the Old Testament, you see how holy God is because of his law. You see how he can't be approached because of sin. We are so engulfed in this life by trying to explain away how bad we are and trying to make it sound good. "Oh, you're not that bad. Oh, it's not that, sin's not that bad. God wouldn't have made you that way." I've heard all these things all my life but the truth of the matter is we are that bad. We are the pig that will go back to the wallow. We are the dog that will return back to the vomit. And we will do so without the presence of Christ and without the power of Christ and without the power of the Holy Ghost.

But this law and the word of God, when I read it, it shows me, the Holy Spirit reveals to me how holy he is. You and I know nothing of holiness. We live in a world that tells us what truth and lies are and we have to make up our own mind what they are because we've caught every side lying and every side, we don't know what truth is. But the truth of the matter is the Holy Spirit reveals to the child of God that Christ Jesus came to save sinners. Are you chief? Are you a chief of sinners today? Because of that law, that law tells me I'm a sinner.

That passage I read to you, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of law to do them," if we don't continue in them, we live under a curse. That's all of man is under the curse, the anger of God, and that anger must be appeased and justice must be fulfilled and brought in and you and I can't do it. It must be one far more righteous than we are and that's the understatement of this sermon because we are not righteous. No, not one.

Christ came to fulfill the law and he did it perfectly. He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy but to fulfill." He didn't destroy it. You and I don't look at God's law today and say, "Oh, it's evil. It's wicked." I hope that the Holy Spirit takes you to see what you can't do and what he's done.

Isaiah put it this way in 42:21, he said, "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable." That's what he did by being perfectly obedient. And all those things that we now have in our life and we read the Bible and we see when the Holy Spirit shows you you're the man, you haven't kept this, you haven't done that, that same Spirit will testify of what Christ has done in your place,

the greatest substitution ever. He stood in my place and because of that perfect obedience, because of what he has done, the law cannot say to you and I today, "You owe me." It can't because he's paid it. He's paid the debt.

Hebrews 5:8 tells us, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Do you know how he suffered first? He left heaven. He had to learn obedience because he's God. As a man, what would, I mean as God, what would he have to obey? He's perfect. He's without sin. He was tempted in every way and yet he was perfectly obedient. He didn't learn obedience like you and I learn things. It was new to him because he's God and as he became man, he put himself under the very law that condemns you and I so that he could fulfill it perfectly; that that obedience would be perfect.

But as I said earlier, that still wasn't good enough because God the Father said, "I demand justice. I demand payment." And that payment had to be made for all the sins that his people will do past, present and future, and they had to be atoned for and only a perfect sacrifice, only a lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world that shows us the eternity of this sacrifice, that shows us the power of it to come. And when the Lord Jesus came and he absorbed the wrath of the Father in his perfect propitiatory work and the Father...you know, when Christ was in the garden of Gethsemane and he sweat those drops of blood, you and I entertained foolish thoughts about that. Foolish like, "Oh, well, you know, he knew the weight of the hour. Oh, oh, he knew he was going to be separated from the Father. Oh, oh, maybe he didn't want to go and he was trying to talk the Father out of it." That's all foolish. He was about to be made sin, the very thing that he, the Father and the Holy Ghost will have nothing of. It is so foreign to them, it is hated by them because they are so perfectly holy and righteous. You and I don't understand that because we're plagued by sin every day.

It is finished. And when the Father had poured his wrath out upon the Son and the Son right before he said these words, he said, "I thirst." In the powers of hell being poured out upon him, the powers of fire and everything, the Lord said, "I thirst." And then when he had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished." What does it mean to you today? Do you understand the depth that he was made sin for us? Made sin who knew no sin.

He had to experience the bitterness of sin and there is no way you can convince me today, especially right now in this hour, there is no way you can convince me that anything you ever go through, that this Lord hasn't gone through first perfectly; that he will succor all of his people in all their temptations, in all of their failings, in all of their shortcomings, because what he has done, he has done out of the greatest love for sinful wretches like you and I.

All, everything now is finished. It's finished. This plan of redemption is finished. I wish I could persuade you of that Gospel truth. I wish I could make you rest in that Gospel truth because that is the rest that remains for the people of God. It is finished.

Jesus said in 8:29, "He that sent me is with me. The Father has not left me alone for I do always those things that please him." Without sin. He always did those things that pleased the Father. Eternal covenant. The new covenant. The covenant established. It is finished. He came in time, he had to. He came to save his people from their sins.

I don't know how precious that is to you today but I know one thing: he is the end of the law. He's the fulfillment of it. Paul said in Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Faith. The gift of faith to see and to rest in what he's done. That's what I was just saying a minute ago. I wish, there are days I wish I could give that to my wife, to my children, to myself, to all of you that are so dear to me in this room, to give you some kind of rest from the things I hear that come up in your life and you say, "Oh, it's such a troublesome time." Yes, but it is finished.

All the types and ceremonies that pointed to him to come, all of those pictures and shadows we look at in the Old Testament, the ark, the sacrifice, the tabernacle, all the pieces in the tabernacle, finished. They have the fulfillment in Christ Jesus. We don't look to those things. We don't look to the temple now. We don't look to any of these things as being future events. Finished.

Daniel said it this way in Daniel 9:24, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression." Do you see your sin finished of him on the cross? Do you see it finished? Paid for? Put away?

"To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins." To make an end of it. He atoned for them. He paid for them. He sat under the wrath of the Father. He paid for them. Do you see what I'm saying, what an abomination it is to sit in a place today and sit in here and go, "Yes, there's something left for me to do." Is this not a perfect sacrifice to you?

"And to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." The Lord is called the Lord our righteousness. But do you want to hear something beautiful? Jeremiah 33:16 calls us the Lord our righteousness. He called her, he called the church the Lord our righteousness because the church is the body of Christ. It is the beautiful union that we have in Christ. He is the Lord our righteousness. The church is called the Lord our righteousness. Do you see it? Righteousness, that perfect robe of righteousness because he's perfect. Perfect in every way.

Does anybody in here think they're perfect? No. I hope not. I hope our heads hang down and we say, "No, don't look at me." Absolutely not. But in Christ because it is finished, we are perfect in him. Nothing you ever do, nothing you ever desire, no duty you ever perform will make you more righteous and could add any righteousness to you. Your righteousness if you be in Christ, is the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness.

Do you want to hear the depth of grace? He freely gives that to his people. We are freely justified by him. Freely. Freely in the sense that you and I will never do anything, but yes, there was a great cost and that's what we're talking about today. It is finished.

"I will go. I will die for my people. I will incur the penalty. Even in the perfectness of my obedience." You see, that's the thing, why did he have to be made sin? Because under heaven, under God's law, you cannot be punished for being sinless. You can't. He doesn't punish sinlessness, if you can even imagine that. Sin must be punished. Holiness is not punished.

He had to be made sin. When I hear these words, "It is finished," and the Holy Spirit takes them with power and shows me what does that mean, what did he do, that's what 2 Corinthians tells us, 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That's that union. That's what Jeremiah was talking about. She is the Lord our righteousness. She, the church.

To finish Daniel 9:24, "to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." That's what happened. He came.

There were times in my younger life and I'll be honest with you, when Satan comes in power, there are times I doubt. I doubt that Christ came. It's a shameful thing for me to say but when those thoughts come and I'm in that questioning thing again, my mind just wreaking havoc and it's going all over the place and I'm just sitting there and wallowing in my sin saying, "Is this even real?"

I've said it many times from up here, sometimes I'll watch these movies with my kids and there are these alternate realities and things and my carnal mind, fallen mind, will get polluted by that and I start to go, "Well, is this real?" And I'm going to tell you something, I'll stay there. You and I will stay there without the Holy Spirit. He must testify of what Christ has done. He must testify of this covenant. He must testify that he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made, made the righteousness of God. We don't have it in ourselves. We don't have even a little bit that he builds on or he works with. No, there is none righteous, no, not one.

One of the things that the Lord has always used in my life to humble me has been the disciples and how they followed Christ everywhere and they said they believed all and they would do all this and in the moment of this time when Christ would go to the cross, they all deserted him, and I would too, and you would too, because the desire to preserve self is far greater than to follow Christ. Without him, we can do nothing. Without the power of God, we can do nothing. I don't care how good your intentions are. I do believe Peter's intentions were very good but he denied Christ three times. You and I would too. You and I have.

He must look upon us. He must look into our souls by his faith and by his faith we receive him. By the power of the Holy Ghost, he illuminates us to know him, to understand what he has done in the measure that he reveals it. He has readied this church. Ephesians 5:27 tells us, "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot." When you hear things like that, do you feel ashamed? I've got to admit to you, when I hear that, not having spot, immediately I think of myself and I'm full of spots.

That's how great grace is. That's how powerful this robe of righteousness. That's how powerful the blood is to wash me and make me clean.

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." I sure don't see myself that way but in him, when he shows me I'm in him, what else could I be? I have to be holy. I have to be without blame because of his righteousness because it is finished.

Turn with me just a little bit over to John 3. Let's begin in verse 14. You notice these words are in red. These are the words of Christ. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." It is finished. He must finish it. That's what Daniel told us. He will finish. Daniel told us the time, the Holy Spirit told us the time, the Holy Spirit, it was all fulfilled in this time.

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Notice that, eternal life. We started this by talking about eternal covenant. That life we have is eternal. And it seems just like Christ came in time, we have to be shown in time, that that life is eternal. You who were dead in sins and trespasses have been quickened, brought to life by him, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

"For God so loved the world." How can we be talking about the whole world? Well, we're not. We're talking about those he died for.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world." You see, that's what Romans 8:1 tells us, there's no condemnation, and that's beautiful where that is seated because right after Romans 7, we identify with Paul that the things that we desire or we want to do because of the seed of Christ in us, we can't do it because we can't perform it in our own self and we're dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ. "O wretched man that I am, who can save me from this body of death?" Who? And just as we're feeling all down and depressed, "I thank God." He thanks God because it is the Lord Jesus Christ who has wrought out this perfect salvation and therefore because of him, because it is finished, there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." How ridiculous that is to make an argument for a world when we have a hell full of people, but I guarantee you one thing, heaven will be full of all of the elect and there won't be one that's lost or plucked from his hand because he will save all of the world of the elect. It's a guarantee and a surety. From the moment he raised his hand and he said, "I will go and I will die for all of them that you, Father, have elected," they were all safe and eternally secure in this Triune Lord.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." We see that every day, don't we? Men love darkness more than light. Your carnal nature loves darkness. It will never love light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." Do you see that? We won't come to the light. The wicked never come to the light. The wicked part of us will never come to the light but praise be to God, that light that is in us is the light and is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's where we come, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest." You look at that and you sit there and you stop, "Oh, it stops right there. That his deeds may be manifest." But look at it, "that they are wrought in God." For we are his workmanship. It's all of him.

I pray to God you see that. I pray to God this morning, it is finished, is written on your soul; that there is a communion with you now in this hour with this Lord who has finished all things. David said, "He's performed all things for me." All the saints of old cried out to this Lord, "Undertake for me, Lord." What about you and I?

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

1 Corinthians 1:30 tells us, "But of him." I love that. The Holy Spirit is so faithful as God, he's so faithful to the Triune Lord. There is not a mixture of words. Oh, man will come and look at dialects, he'll look at all kind of languages and he'll say, "Oh, what could this mean? Let's twist it this way. Let's try to find man in all of this." But for the child of God and only the child of God, the Holy Spirit speaks truth of him.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus," no other way, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." We've touched on some of those today. We've even touched on the wisdom that was from the foundation of the world, this perfect plan of salvation that had no man in it whatsoever. No creature, all God.

And because it is finished, because he has finished it all, the people of God, the believers in Christ, the church, could stand with the Apostle Paul under the power of the Holy Ghost and say, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." That is the reality of, "It is finished." It is the life of Christ in the soul of the believer, that he makes us to lie down in the green pastures of his finished work, that what he did, he did in the place of his people, for his people, for the glory of this Triune God alone.

The last point I want to make is the end of our text, "he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." He dismissed his spirit. This saying of, "It is finished," was actually almost the last one. There was one more and that one came from Luke 23:46, "when Jesus had cried

with a loud voice," and that's why I mention this, the Lord Jesus Christ cried with a loud voice. Do you know what that tells me? By the Holy Spirit it tells me he had full power. His strength was not diminished at all. After being on the cross for nine hours, his strength had not abated at all. He cried with a loud voice. Pilate would wonder later when Jesus was dead, he couldn't believe because Jesus didn't last as long as other men did and everybody looked at that and, "Oh well, you know, maybe he was weaker." No, it's because he's more powerful. No man can take his life. "I lay down my life."

And in the power of his life, in the time of great power, he cried with a loud voice and he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." He dismissed his spirit. He did. On his terms. And for you and I today, if he would have died naturally on the cross like every other man did, it would have no power in it because many other men were crucified but this one said, "I will die on my terms. I will dismiss my life because it's my life to dismiss and no man can sit and say you will die now."

He cried with a loud voice. This shows the power of our Savior to do exactly what he accomplished to say that he would. "Greater love hath no man than a man lay down his life," and he lay down his life perfectly and in great power. And that power is the same power, you and I will never be able to tell when we pass from this life, that's ordained in the time, in the mind of the Lord, but this power that the Lord has from on high to declare the time that he would pass from this life, that he would dismiss his spirit at that moment, is the same power he gives us to believe. It's the same power to come up out of the grave. It is the same power that is necessary to keep us daily. You and I can compare power because of our strength being abated every day of our life but his never is.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." May the Lord impress upon you the power of "it is finished."

Dear heavenly Father, come with power. Reveal to thy people thy finished redemptive work. Show us, Lord, that we are safe and kept and secure in your power, by your love, kept in your covenant. Make us, Lord, to bow before thee in humble submission for you truly are Lord and you truly are worthy. To you be all glory, honor and praise for thou art worthy. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.