

It is finished

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 00] Now friends, shall we turn to the portion of scripture that we have read together. The Gospel by John chapter 19, and we might read again from verse 28.

John chapter 19, and reading from verse 28. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar, and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

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

And especially these words in verse 30, it is finished. This is the most remarkable of the seven sayings of the cross.

[1 : 17] When he had received the vinegar, he bowed his head, and said, it is finished.

It is finished. Instinctively, we feel that there is a depth about these words that no man can fathom. Robert Murray McChain said, I feel like a sailor who is casting the lead at sea, but it does not reach the bottom.

The ocean is so vast that it cannot be measured. And as we seek to meditate on these words, we would remind ourselves that the place whereon we stand is holy ground.

It is finished. Now we would notice in these words that we have, first of all, a cry of triumph.

[2 : 35] It is a cry of triumph. Now this is surely a remarkable expression. It is finished.

In the English of the authorized version, three words are necessary to record the meaning.

But in the original, there is only a single word. And the same word that is translated finished is in the verse 28 rendered accomplished.

The writers of the other three Gospels record one fact which John omits. They tell us that when our Lord was ready to dismiss his spirit, he cried with a loud voice.

He cried with a loud voice. It is finished. The late Professor R.A. Thunderson, in his book, *The Cross and the Experience of Our Lord*, says that with ordinary men, this is not the case.

[4 : 12] We have to bend low to catch the last low whisper of our friend. But he cried with a loud voice.

It is finished. And this underlines the truth of his own words concerning his life. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.

This commandment have I received of my Father. He dismissed his spirit. It is a triumphant cry.

It is finished. A.W. Pink said, It is not the despairing cry of a helpless martyr.

Nor is it the expression of satisfaction at the termination of his sufferings. Nor is it the last gasp of a worn out life.

[5 : 29] No, rather, it was the declaration on the part of the Divine Redeemer, that all that for which he had come from heaven to earth to do was now done.

That all that was needed to reveal the full character of God had now been accomplished. That all that was required by the law, by the divine law, in order that sinners might be saved, had now been performed.

That the full price of our redemption had been paid. He cried with a loud voice, It is finished.

Cecil Rhodes, who was the founder of Rhodesia, said in his last hours, There is so little done, and so much to do.

Our weakness and our sinfulness prevent us from doing all that we ought to do in a day or in a year, so that at the end of our lives, we have to confess that there are things that we have left undone, but of all men.

[7 : 12] Our Lord Jesus Christ alone could say, It is finished. It is finished. And we might ask, What was finished?

Well, For one thing, all the promises and the prophecies of the Old Testament were accomplished in him.

The predictions of the prophets concerning the Messiah, that he would be born of a virgin, that he would come of David's line, that his birthplace would be the town of Bethlehem, that he would be despised and rejected of men, that there would be one going before him as a forerunner to prepare the way of the Lord.

And then there are these moving words. In the 69th Psalm, They hated me without a cause.

They pierced my hands and my feet. In Christ, All the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled to the letter.

[8 : 51] And then too, All the types and the sacrifices were abolished, as well as explained.

The offerings of the temple, the blood of bulls and of goats, of lambs and turtle doves, and young pigeons.

Ah, with that death on Calvary, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom.

The way into the holiest was opened for sinful men. It was rent from top to bottom, not from side to side, but from top to bottom, as if torn by the divine hand.

The way of access for sinners into the presence of a holy God. And then too, friends, God's determinate counsel had been fulfilled concerning the death of Christ.

[10 : 13] God's counsel had now been accomplished and fulfilled. And also, the perfect obedience of Christ was complete.

The perfect obedience of Christ. Christ. It was necessary in order that man might be saved that the law of God must be kept.

The law of God must be perfectly obeyed. For no man can see God's face except he is made perfect in righteousness.

And Christ undertook to obey the law on behalf of his people, to obey its every mandate and to preserve its every statute intact.

He magnified the law and made it honorable. The theologians speak of the passive and the active obedience of Christ.

[11 : 43] And by the passive obedience they mean his sinless life, his perfect example. how in all things he obeyed the law he could say to his adversaries which of you convinces me of sin.

At the devil's approach he said to his disciples the prince of this world cometh and has nothing in me.

He has nothing in me. There is no foothold on which he can gain entrance to the soul. Oh, he has plenty in you and in me.

But on the sinless one he hath nothing in me. He obeyed the law perfectly. perfectly.

And there is his active obedience. His active obedience was his self-denial. When he was reviled he reviled not again.

[12 : 58] When he suffered he threatened not but committed himself unto him that judgeth righteously. His active obedience obedience when he was led as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her sheareth is dumb so he openeth not his mouth.

His active obedience the sufferings the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ it is finished and that cry meant also that his sufferings were now finished.

We are told in the gospel record that when our Lord was upon the cross there was darkness over all the earth the sun refused to shine upon that sight and the apostle Paul tells us you remember that in that mysterious darkness he was wrestling wrestling with the adversary that he was grappling the foe on the cross says Paul he vanquished the principalities and the powers of hell and he made a show of them openly he vanquished them on the cross ah the new testament David had met the champion of hell and he despoiled him of his armor and he robbed him of his power and now his intense suffering as the bearer of our sin at

Gethsemane and at Calvary were at an end the storm was past the worst was over he cried in triumph it is finished the cup of his suffering the cup that should have been ours had been drained to its last drain it is the cry of victory it is finished it is said that at the battle of Trafalgar when Nelson fell mortally wounded on the quarter deck he said thank God I have done my duty and when General Wolfe with his highland regiment stormed the fortress of

Quebec and the heights of Abraham he was three times wounded and in his last moments he heard the cry of victory and he said I die contented but ah the greatest victor of them all cried in the end he cried with a loud voice it is finished it is finished but then friends we see therefore in the text the good news of the gospel the good news of the gospel it is finished for this word assures us that if all our hope for eternity rests on the finished work of christ we need of no fear of condemnation at the great day for we have a savior who has done all we have a savior who has accomplished all who has paid all who has performed all that was necessary for your salvation and mine it is finished spurgeon said that god as much accepts a sinner who has believed in christ only five minutes ago as the godly man who has known him for many years because he does not accept us for anything that we do or that we feel but only for what christ did and that is finished it is finished and so we can take up the challenge of the great apostle who is he that condemneth it is christ that died yea rather who is risen again who is now at the right hand of god who also maketh intercession for us it is finished that was both it is finished we might well be ashamed of our own imperfections ah but when we look at the finished work of christ we have peace he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ah yes the law of god the divine law has been eternally satisfied justice has been done god will not ransom twice demand first at my bleeding saviour's hand and then again at mine horatius boner wrote done is the work that saves once and forever done finished the righteousness that clothes the unrighteous one the love that blesses us below is freely flowing

[20 : 03] to us now ah yes believer you are complete in him you are complete in him this cry brings good news to the believing sinner it is finished it is finished and therefore friend we have a testimony to bear to our fellow men we have to tell them concerning the work of Christ on behalf of his people it is finished it is finished look at that poor heathen man who is torturing himself who is going through periods of long fasting and self denial how we can call him to cease cease from these vain attempts after salvation we can say to him it is finished we can point to

Christ point to the atoning sacrifice and say the law the law of God is eternally satisfied for God God is the justifier of everyone that believeth on Jesus and then too friend we can go to that Romanist highest that Romanist who pins all his hope in the sacrifice of the mass who worships there with a priest who turns his back to the people and makes his pretended sacrifice and we can tell him that God neither asks nor accepts any other sacrifice but that which our Lord Jesus Christ offered once for all upon the cross it is finished that sacrifice that so called sacrifice is a blasphemy it detracts from the glory of God from the work of Christ it is finished this work of salvation it is once and forever done and we can go to that person who thinks that he can satisfy God by his own good works by his religious observances by his efforts to keep all the commandments of the law and we can say to him it is finished it is finished why why should you attempt to improve on that which is finished why why should you seek to add to that which is complete it is finished and then friend we have a word of hope for the despairing soul ah for that person who has been so burdened with her sense of sin who has been undergoing the threatenings of the law the man who says my sins have gone over my head what can

I give to God as a recompense for my transgressions he says with Habakkuk shall I give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul will the Lord be pleased with sacrifices of fat rams or with thousands of rivers of oil and we can say to him it is finished it is finished the recompense has been made already he cried with a loud voice it is finished ah friend this means that if you trust in Christ alone for salvation you are saved saved with an eternal salvation ah but then you may say I am so conscious of my unworthiness I feel such a sense of imperfection ah yes and so we should but yet what of that for God does not look upon our imperfections but he covers them with the righteousness of

Christ he sees no iniquity in Jacob nor any perverseness in Israel the righteousness of Christ Robert Murray McChain said that the righteousness of Christ is more valuable than that which sinless angels wear for although the angels have a God given righteousness it was not purchased for them at such a tremendous cost ye were redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot and my friend the gospel brings the message of good news even to those who are away in the far country it brings a message of hope ah yes the good shepherd goes in search of the sheep to remember the parable to remember how that younger son went away from home he was tired of the father's discipline he was fed up with the family regulations and he went away and he went deep into the mire of sin but oh grace reached out grace reached out through affliction through the terrible famine

he was brought to himself and at last he said

[27 : 49] I will arise and go to my father I will say to him father I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son and oh you can picture him on the way home debauched in appearance dressed in rags hungry and forlorn he was rehearsing his petition over and over again father I have sinned he said against heaven and before thee but did remember how the father interrupted him he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him and he said bring forth the best robe and put it on him the best robe ah you could hear someone say the best robe the best robe for him yes yes friend that is amazing grace the robes of the righteousness of

Christ for a deep dyed sinner bring forth the best robe ah what a fool one would be to refuse the offer to despise the gospel provision the best robe and put a ring on his finger yes the symbol of belonging to the family he is a son of the house put the ring on his finger the ring of the covenant engagement and put shoes on his feet put shoes on his feet for it is only the slave that goes barefooted put shoes on his feet because he is no longer going to walk in the mighty ways of sin no hence forth hence forth he is going to walk in the way of holiness he is the father's child he is to bear the marks of the family resemblance he is to live among men as one who has been bought with a price even with the precious blood of

Christ ah yes friend it is finished it is a message of salvation the call of mercy comes to everyone that thirst oh everyone thirst come ye to the water come to the water he that hath no money he that hath no money who else would make an offering like that who is a pardoning god like thee who else has grace so rich and free he that hath no money come ye come buy wine and milk without money and without price though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool what an offer of grace and it is all based on the finished work of Christ and you remember how on the last day of the feast when the multitudes were dispersing that Jesus stood on a prominent place and he cried out saying if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink let him come unto me ah yes to the fountain to the fountain of living water and so my friend this word says to us today look look to Calvary look to the one who hung and suffered there oh seek that the spirit would reveal to you the beauty and the perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ the completeness of the atoning sacrifice the infinite efficacy of the shed blood ah you may say is there nothing to pay is there nothing to pay nothing nothing sinner knows for

Jesus paid it all long long ago when Jesus had received the vinegar he said it is finished and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost may the Lord bless our meditation on his word let us pray oh Lord we pray that thou would give us to understand the meaning of the cross and oh grant Lord that as we search the scriptures that we might be like those noble Bereans of whom it is said that they searched the scriptures daily to see if these things were so oh give us

[34 : 06] Lord a delight in thy word and grant that thy Holy Spirit may reveal Christ to us in the word that we may see the King in his beauty oh that our hearts may be drawn to him with the cords of love and oh grant Lord that we may put away all thought of going about to establish our own righteousness which is of the law that we may realize how vain are our attempts to satisfy thee by our personal Mary and oh give us to see the worth the value the infinite efficacy of the saviour's finished work and grant Lord that we may be brought to rest upon him alone for salvation and that this may be our plea with the psalmist

I will make mention of thy righteousness even of thine only Lord make thy word to abide in our hearts and may bring forth fruit in our lives to the glory of thy name and Lord we seek thy guidance in the further part of our service that all things may be done in accordance with thy will and we would remember the other part of the congregation worshipping in the other language and we pray Lord that thy presence may be with them and that they will give to thy servant who ministers word and sacrament the upholding of the spirit and oh Lord draw near draw near and speak to thy people oh may thy banner over them be love and may their fellowship be sweet fellowship with the father and with

Jesus Christ his son and with one another and oh do thou grant gracious Lord that there may be those in our midst today who will have the good desire implanted in their hearts to be associated with thy people and to be numbered with those that openly confess thy name now Lord graciously pardon us our shortcomings in thy service oh give us give us a present sense of acceptance in the beloved and Lord take away every distracting thought that Christ may be the center of our gaze and that we may know the joy of peace in believing hear us graciously love us freely and look upon us not as we are in ourselves but as thou seest us in the face of thine own anointed one even the

Lord Jesus in whom thou shalt have the glory evermore Amen