

It is Finished!

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 April 2014

[0 : 00] We have to complete the race. We have to cross the finish line. We have to run the race and keep on going until we come to the end. And in a sense, I don't mean this in any flippant way, but in a sense, the cross is the finishing line of the work of Christ in paying the debt of our sin.

Good Friday is the finish line. And from what we've just heard read, it's hard to know why they call it good. We've seen that it's been anything good so far.

Jesus has been arrested. He's been cruelly treated. He's been beaten and mercilessly mocked. And now we see him hanging on the cross and nearing death.

And he cries out almost the last thing he says, not quite the last thing he says, but almost the last thing he says. He cries out that it is finished. It is finished.

I want to, as I say, answer the question of what is finished. It is finished. These are the words of our text. It's the last thing, as I say, that Jesus said before he died and committed his spirit into the hands of his father.

[1 : 19] And we need to put some groundwork in here before we can answer the question of what is finished. Because something has to be begun before it can be finished.

And so, two things. What was begun that is now finished? And how is it finished? Always has to have a beginning.

And this beginning was, we might say, far, far back in time. And no, not a long time ago in a faraway galaxy. It was before any galaxy even existed.

It began in a place called eternity in the heart of God, whereby he purposed to make a people for himself, to make you for himself. I think that's quite an amazing thought, don't you think, that somewhere in the eternity of God, he planned, always knew, never a time when he didn't know. He planned me, he planned my salvation, he planned you. If you're a Christian, he planned your salvation. If you're not a Christian, he planned that you would be here this morning and maybe you will find salvation.

[2 : 37] In the eternity, a place called eternity, in the heart of God, he purposed to make a people for himself. And indeed, he did make them.

And in a sense, the problem that he's faced is that when mankind was first made, he chose to rebel against God. But in his eternal majesty, in his love and majesty, in his all-seeing nature, in his purpose, he not only knew this would happen, he planned even for that.

From the beginning of time and throughout all of history, it has always been purpose that Jesus would die. It says in the revelation that he's the Lamb of God slain at the foundation of the world. When time began, it was always purpose that Jesus would die. And I know that can be hard for us to grasp. We are very much bound by time. But it tells us just how great and glorious God is. How wonderful he is. Throughout history and up until the point of the cross, this picture that is before us of what happened to the Lord Jesus, there's always been pictures of God's plan put forth.

[3 : 58] The temple sacrifices being amongst them, the offering of the Lamb of the Passover. They did not, they could not, they will never be able to satisfy God's holy demands on our lives.

They were pictures, they were pointers. But they were not the solution. They pointed to the solution. And that's what we have before us, the solution.

Their purpose was to show the seriousness of sin. Remember when you read of Adam and Eve in the garden after the fall, the first thing that God did was to slay an animal.

The first thing that sin brought upon the world was death. Their purpose is to show the seriousness of sin and that it brought death.

We're told that it is the nature that we're born with. I'm going to tell you just what sin is in a moment. But we're told that it's the nature we're born with, all that have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

[5 : 05] Told that it has a cost, the wages of sin is death. Demands upon our life is death. The eternal dying of the undying soul.

And so God, in his grace and in his mercy and in his love, God preached a gospel message throughout the whole of time to save a people for himself.

all have sinned. But some are rescued by the life, death, of the cross.

It's like a lifeboat that carries us to the safety of the ark of Jesus. And the all and majesty of God is revealed in creation, but his love, his love, his love is seen in Jesus.

John 3.16 tells us, for God so loved the world, he loved us, that he gave his only begotten son. As we see here on the cross, he gave him to die for our sins.

[6 : 10] And so when he began his ministry here on earth, John the Baptist cried out, behold the Lamb of God, the Lamb who would be slain in our place for our sin, the Lamb of sacrifice that would satisfy God's holiness, the Lamb coming in the fullness of time to fulfill, to do, to complete that which was begun before even time began.

The final Lamb, the finishing Lamb. And it all points to this one glorious moment in history. The cross upon which Jesus was purposed to die.

There was no mistake, no certain catastrophe in the plan of God, whoops, something's gone wrong, it was, it is purpose from the beginning. God, the Son, would become a man.

I just want you to think about that for a moment. God's the maker of heaven and earth. We start with the earth, we have the solar system, we have our galaxy, we have the universe, we know very little about it, and then we have God who upholds all of this simply by the word of his power, who made it all just by speaking, and yet, he cares about you.

He cares about me, he so loved me that he gave his life for me, he so loved me that he sent his Son for me. And it all, his love all points to this one glorious moment in history, the cross, upon which Jesus was purposed to die.

[7 : 56] No mistake, no certain catastrophe, it was purposed, God the Son would become a man, God the Son would share our nature, God would take our sin, God would pay its debt on the cross, and there was no forcing him, no cajoling him, no persuading him, there was no discussion in the Godhead saying, look, you really must go and save these people, but I really don't want to go, look, it's the best thing you can do, well okay, I'll do it for you, there was none of that.

It was willing and loving, no forcing, no cajoling, no persuading, God in his own will. Now just remember what we've been looking at.

What was involved in the cross, God in his own will and purpose chose to die for our sin, for your sin.

And it's the only way that we can be set free from its guilt because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin is not all that wickedness you see out there, that is the fruit of sin.

That is like if you have a daffodil, the bulb has all the energy as it were and the flower is just the fruit, it lasts a brief time but the heart of the plant is in the bulb.

[9 : 20] Well, the heart of sin is in the heart of man, the things we see, they're just the fruit and sin is what? It's everything we do against God, everything we fail to do for God and so all have sinned, all have come short of his glory.

So, what's good about Good Friday? Well, it's the end of the beginning of God's winning for us an eternal hope in Jesus.

It's the finishing line that pays for our sin. It's the moment in time when sin is laid upon the body of Jesus and paid for in full for you, for me, for all who have sinned and come to Jesus to have their sins paid for on the cross and you can come to him today if you have not already come to him.

They can come because Jesus has done everything that is needed to make us fit for heaven and to make us right with God. He was born without sin.

Even Pilate said that, didn't he? I find no sin in this man. He was born without sin formed in the womb of Mary by a miracle of God the only one to be born without sin.

[10 : 54] Adam was created without sin but chose sin but Jesus was born without sin the only one and he lived without sin and always always doing and being what his father expects of him.

He lived without sin always doing what is good always doing what is right before his father and the evidence of this being Easter Sunday when he rose from the grave I'm sure you'll hear of that on Sunday but just think how good is that?

How good is that? and how incredible is it that God should even notice me let alone love me like this? Sometimes we forget who he is.

Sometimes we can get so wrapped up in who we are we can forget who it is that loves us. Just stop and think for a moment. You've just heard about the cross you've heard how terrible it was but think about it.

it's not just words on a page it's not just an historic account it is what Jesus it's what God the Son it's what God went through for you he went through it for you it's what I deserve for my sin it's what you deserve for your sin and yet Jesus took it he carried my sin upon his own body and took it to its just end the wages of sin is death and Jesus died my shame my doubts my rebellious actions against his holy ways but Jesus bore them and as he hung there upon the cross and just before he dies he says it is finished the debt is paid righteousness is achieved and redemption is made and recompense for sin is paid and satisfied it's finished the Messiah dies

[13:01] God in flesh pays the debt of men and women in sin how good is that? how gracious is God that knowing my rebellious nature against himself still he came to pay my debt how good is that?

still he came to deliver me from sin from shame from separation from his love by sending his son to die for me for you for us still Jesus came as a willing sacrifice to live a holy life and to die what we can only describe as a horrible death and to do it all for me and to do it in my place he paid every debt that I owe to God and achieved all the righteousness that I need to see God a perfect righteousness in a loving saviour who willingly died to save my sinful soul a perfect righteousness from a willing saviour who willingly died to save your sinful soul and in dying for my sin for your sin he finished the course of life that I need to live to go to heaven and what's more by faith in him he gives this life to me hallelujah what a saviour what love well that's what's finished everything I need to be saved is finished in Jesus but how is it finished well of course we've covered some of the issues relating to the how but I think the question always comes down to this how can I be saved or how can I get to heaven or how can I know that what I'm trusting he will get me to heaven any and all of these questions and any number of other ways that these questions might be asked how can I know God how can I know it's finished well the truth is that you can only know God by coming to him in by through

Jesus Christ his son and the reason for this is the that only Jesus has lived a life fit for heaven and died a death fit to pay for your sin only he is able to make you to give you a righteousness that is good enough for you to approach God you need both of these things if you're going to go to heaven you need a holy life that is free from even the smallest sin debt good enough to live a good life to go to heaven you need a perfect life you need the life that Jesus lived and you need his death you need his death to meet your need in life to meet to be the meat for your life your whole hope in heaven does not lie in religion it doesn't lie in priests it doesn't lie in ceremonies it doesn't lie in coming to church it doesn't lie in reading the bible though both of those things are things you should be doing it doesn't lie in prayer many people in the world pray to many different things with many different expectations your whole hope in heaven doesn't lie in religion in priests in ceremonies it lies in Jesus see it always comes back to Jesus the cross is like the pivotal point of creation the appointed time the fullness of time it all comes back to Jesus it has to be a life that is well pleasing to God and that satisfies all of his laws demands and holiness as some of you will know your bibles you know that long before the cross not long before the cross

Jesus went through an experience which is called the mount of transfiguration he met Moses he met Elijah there and the purpose well it was more extensive than this but in brief the purpose was twofold firstly to see that if he had accomplished all the necessary prophecies if you like we can just imagine Elijah coming and with a checklist of the prophecies and saying well yeah yeah yeah yeah secondly to see if he had accomplished all of the law of Moses if he had kept it perfectly Moses representing the law as I say it's more but that's in its simplest Jesus had to satisfy all of the prophecies and keep God's commandments perfectly to win for us righteousness and acceptable salvation a perfect obedience to every action foretold and every law's demand every lawful demand of God's holy law is accomplished by Jesus and on the cross he took my sin and he gave me his accomplished righteousness just as he does for all Christians just as he does for all of you here who have come to faith on the cross he took my sin and gave me his life he does it for every believer be they from the Old Testament or the New or from every day since then it's all about Jesus it's finished in him now how good is that by faith

I'm attached to him and his holy life is accounted to me my sin is paid for in him and that is what's finished that is what's finished the complete and perfect redeeming of God's people by the life and death of Jesus Christ our Lord our Saviour and as we heard our King it's finished because he lived a life fit for heaven and willingly gives it to all who ask it's finished because he's paid the wages of sin and carrying our sin and dying on the cross it's finished for me it's finished for every Christian who has ever been who will ever be but there's a very important question that you need to answer this morning is it finished for you is it finished for you do you know that if you put your faith in Jesus that he is enough to save you forever no additions no ceremonial actions nothing to be added or removed it's all in him finished in him we can't add to the work of the cross because it's finished [20 : 09] Jesus has finished it he says so we can't take away from his work or we step back from the finish it's the finishing line for salvation all that we could grasp the full extent of the love of God in sending his son Jesus to die for us and all that we could grasp the extent of the love of Jesus who came in willingness to die for us to finish the work that began in eternity and will go on for eternity for all who avail themselves of it it is finished it is finished nothing to add nothing to leave out it's finished in Jesus now how good just how good is that everything we could possibly need to make us right with God to give us a standing before him that we will stand forever and bring us safely into heaven into its haven everything that is good and right and needful for us to be saved from sin and stand forever in the glory of heaven everything is finished everything is found in Jesus it's found nowhere else it's the goodness of Good Friday that is made manifestly available to each one of us it is finished in Jesus nothing to add nothing to take away no religious ceremonies no priests only Jesus our great high priest the Lamb of God who is God the Lamb who came from heaven

God who came from heaven to make a way back for us to God and in the blackness in the darkness at darkened hours our sin my sin the sin of every believer in all of history and all of time yet to come sin was poured out upon Jesus until it was finished so is it finished for you is it finished for you it can be today it can be finished for you today if you cast your all upon Jesus trusting only him only he is enough only he has run the whole race only he has crossed the finishing line bringing us hope we're not fit for the race only he is able to run it for us and faith in him makes his race our race and Good Friday was a dark day for mankind we saw it the wickedness and the evil that was involved and the hatred against he who is so lovely it was a dark day for mankind it exhibited our sin as Jesus died at the hands of his creation but it was good it was good for all who have come to Jesus to confess their sin in the knowledge that we are far short of God's glory that we need lifting up by his own hand that the grace of God and the love of God a manifest made clearly clearly seen in the cross and how it is vividly painted in the face of his son now how good is that he is the good of Good Friday in the day he died to save us from our sin how great is God he's as great as he is good because Jesus rose again from the dead he overcame death he overcame hell to give us eternal life in heaven his life born of his glory born of his love sealed by that love as Jesus died the sinner's death upon the cross a death that is enough a death that satisfies his own justice a death that pays for our just judgment so how good is it it's finished on the cross of Calvary it is finished but is it finished for you it can be today if you come to Jesus amen a death