

It is Finished

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[0 : 00] When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished!

! And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.! It is finished! According to other accounts, Jesus cried with a loud voice, It is finished!

This was no sigh or groan of defeat. It was a shout of triumph, of victory.

It marks the crowning glory of our Lord's life, of his work on earth, the ultimate defining event of history, the amazing feat of the cross.

From the cross he cried, It is finished! Mission accomplished! It is fulfilled! Everything that the scriptures had foretold of the cross was accomplished.

[1 : 10] The types of the Old Testament, the pictures in preview of his coming, of his dying for us. Everything pointed to that moment.

It is finished! Everything had been done. Our Lord had completed a number of things here. He'd completed God's own work of salvation. Finished!

Complete! Saved us from God's wrath! Absolutely! Absolutely! Vented out on him for us. He paid the full redemption price for us.

Paid in full. God's plan, God's program, God's purpose was fully completed. The curse of the law was gone. Cursed was everyone that died on a tree.

He took the curse of sin. The penalty was paid. Satan was defeated. And our Lord had conquered death. He'd taken upon himself punishment that was due to us.

[2 : 15] The pain of separation from the Father that was due to us. In this one act of humiliation and sacrifice, he finished all the requirements that had to be made.

He disarmed all the forces arrayed against us. He reconciled us to God the Father. And he glorified himself. If we can but grasp the offence of the cross.

The meaning of the cross. The wonder of it. The awesome majesty of what he has done. What he has done. In that he that was guilty of no sin.

Suffered. In effect. For all sin. For man's sin. The last Adam. Suffered. For man's sin.

Jesus Christ was a finisher. A finisher. And the grammar here, I'm told, is perfect tense. Now I'm not much of a scholar in these things.

[3 : 20] But I'm told what it means is, perfect tense means the action was completed in the past with the results continuing in the present.

It was completed in the past. It's effective in the present. It was finished at a point in time and it's still in effect. It's forever done.

It's forever done. Forever finished. A turning point in history. The Lord Jesus finished the work that day. And that finished work is still in effect now.

Here and now. This very moment. It is finished. For time and eternity. It's one word. Again, I'm not a Greek scholar, but the word I'm told is tetelestai.

I know it's been preached on here before. One word in the original from which we are translating it is finished. And it can be understood as an accounting term.

[4 : 24] Meaning the debt has been paid in full. So a merchant would use this term to define that the price is all paid.

It's fully paid. It's also used in the context of the prisons of the day. When a Roman citizen was convicted of a crime, the law of the day was that a notice would be pinned to the prisoner's door.

To the cell door. And it was called a certificate of debt. And on this certificate of debt was written all the crimes that the man had committed. And it was nailed to his cell door for all to see.

And it remained nailed to the cell door to assure people that he served his full sentence. And when the sentence was served, they stamped paid in full.

Or this same word. The debt owed was paid for all his crimes. The same word that our Lord shouted out from the cross. It is finished. The debt was paid.

[5 : 37] The penalty was fully vented. Fully resulted. And when the Lord Jesus shouted out this same word, it was the same word that was stamped on that certificate of debt.

The criminal's sentence had been completed. It means literally paid in full across the certificate. And likewise too, our Lord has paid in full for everything that we deserve punishment for.

Another preacher, Oswald Sanders, remarks of this word. He says a number of things that you could see the same word used. That we see translated here.

It is finished. Or tetelestai in the Greek. He says it was a farmer's word. The farmer, when he had an animal born into the herd that was so shapely, so free of defects, so faultless, the farmer would gaze upon this animal and exclaim, tetelestai.

It was faultless. It was an artist's word. Where an artist would paint a picture, a masterpiece, and apply the final touches to the painting.

[6 : 57] And then he would stand back and admire the work. And there was nothing more that could be done. It was finished. It was finished. There was nothing that could be improved upon it.

It was nothing that needed correction. It was finished. It was perfect. It was a priestly word.

When some devout worshipper offered a lamb at the temple in gratitude for God's mercies and presented the pride of the flock, the very pride of the flock, the priest who may have at times been accustomed to seeing less perfect animals offered, he would admiringly look at that creature and say, tetelestai.

It was perfect. And back at the cross we see the lamb of God. The lamb of God offered, flawless, faultless, spotless, perfect.

And as our Lord cried, it is finished. It was complete. It was absolute. It was done.

[8 : 14] It was perfected. Salvation was fully accomplished. And John's gospel contains the same theme of our Lord finishing the Father's will, coming to complete God's work.

For example, we see a like word used in John 4, verse 34. For Jesus saith unto them, My meat or my food is to do the will of God, to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish this work.

My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work. It was likewise used of a servant who accomplished the task that he was given to do.

And John 5, verse 36, in part it says, The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me.

The works the Father has given me to finish. He had that in mind back in John 4, in John 5. In John 17, 4, the Lord says, I have glorified thee on earth.

[9 : 34] As he was praying to the Father, I have finished, there's that word again, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. The Lord Jesus came with a work to do.

He was committed to completing that work. The work that God the Father had sent him to do, that he was willing to do. And he came not just as a priest, but as the very sacrifice for our sin.

The actual sacrifice. And this work only could he do. For he was the God-man. Not some good man.

Not some good prophet. Not even the best prophet. He was God manifest in the flesh. The only sinless human being.

The only perfect one. The only flawless one. The only faultless one. He was the only one who could take our sin and be that perfect sacrifice for sin.

[10 : 39] The only one who could perfectly appease God's wrath against our sin. Who only could honour God the Father through such a thing.

And this work was only that which he could do. We could not do this work. We could never do this work. Even the best of us.

And our best efforts fall short. They fall short. There's a hymn that says, There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.

He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in. He only. Only him. Only Jesus. And so when the Bible tells us of Christ coming to complete the work he was sent to do, it was not just to be some preacher, some prophet, some healer, but to be that supreme sacrifice, the absolute perfect sacrifice that he only could do and no one else.

And he had to finish that work. Now some might think of our Lord that being God, perhaps it was easy for him. Perhaps it was not so difficult for him.

[11 : 58] And yet, as some have commented, really, it was likely harder for him. Because at any instant he could have summoned legions of angels to come to his aid.

He could have wiped out his enemies with one word. He could have freed himself from the cross. It wasn't the nails that held him there, really.

He did not deserve to die. He was sinless. If anyone had a right to say, Oh, it's not my fault. He could have had such a right, couldn't he?

Because it wasn't his fault. It was ours. It was yours and mine. He was going to take upon him the sin. Of the world.

You know, one of the worst things, the hardest things that we can experience is to be unjustly accused. To be unjustly accused of something we never did.

[12:57] And all this was heaped upon our Lord. Everything that he never did was heaped upon him. All the vileness, the sinfulness of our sin.

And as he worked through the misunderstanding, the hurts, the woundings, the whipping, the betrayals, and the most painful death, in the midst of it, there was the separation from his father. As he cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? It was immensely difficult for our Lord. It was no easy task.

His sweat was like, as it were, drops of blood falling to the ground. Even before they started laying into him. If it be possible, may this cup pass from me.

It was hard. We can never know the agonies that our Lord suffered. But he didn't quit.

[14:08] He didn't quit. He finished the work. He finished the work. You know, he could have made it easier somehow. He could have, you know, if there was a way, he could have made it easier.

But no, he didn't. He finished the work that he was sent to do. He completed it. He did not rest until his last breath.

It is finished. And friends, if he had not finished it, salvation would still be insecure. Our eternal safety would not be certain.

The power of the devil and of death as the last enemy would still be undefeated. But friends, it is finished.

It is finished. It was a shout of triumph. Of victory. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

[15:07] 1 Corinthians 15. 3. Friends, we can rest on that finished work. It is a doctrine of the work. The finished work of Christ.

The finished work of his atoning power. You know, there's some yet who can't see it. They think they've got to reenact it in the mass or go through some ritual or sacrament or some religious devotion to achieve it.

In some measure by themselves. An old time preacher, Ryle said, We rest our souls on a finished work. A finished work.

If we rest them on the work of Jesus Christ the Lord. We do not fear that either Satan, sin or the law shall condemn us at the last day.

We may lean back on the thought that we have a saviour who has done all, paid all, accomplished all, performed all that is necessary for our salvation.

[16:13] You know, we can have the true Sabbath. The true Sabbath. You know, some make a big fuss about a particular day of the week. But we have the Sabbath.

It means rest. We have rest from our own works because of his finished work. We have a complete rest in the everlasting arms that hold us.

Those same hands that were crucified hold us and secure us. And we may take up the challenge of the Apostle. Who is he that condemns?

It is Christ that died. Yea, he is risen again. Even now, he's at the right hand of God. Interceding. Praying for you. For me. What can we do?

There was a Sunday school teacher telling the story. Explaining the truth of the cross. And she asked the class, as she completed her lesson, she asked them something to make sure she'd driven the point home.

[17:25] She'd made it clear enough about the cross to these youngsters. And there was a little boy who was just waiting to answer the question. And this was the question.

Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin? What can you do to obtain forgiveness of sin?

What can you do? The little boy put up his hand at the back of the class and he said, Sin. What can we do?

Sin. Realise you sinned. Realise your sin. Realise that he is the saviour. The only hope. And then you can trust his forgiveness of your sin.
You know, the boy had it right. We can do nothing but sin. And yet, we can trust the saviour's work. That finished work.

[18 : 26] Where he says it is done. It is complete. It is perfect. It is secured. And friends, we must come to see that finished work.

Realise that finished work. It's a vital, vital truth for life, for eternity. To realise the finished work. The finished work of Christ.

A missionary, Hudson Taylor, had a Christian home growing up. A Christian mother praying for him. Praying that he would trust Christ for his salvation.

Praying for Hudson that he would trust Jesus Christ and come to him for salvation. And for a long time, Hudson, young Hudson resisted his mother's prayers.

He resisted the call of the gospel. He resisted until finally one day, someone gave him a tract. They gave him a leaflet. And on this leaflet it said an expression.

[19 : 26] It is finished. It said it is finished. It troubled Hudson a great deal. It troubled him. He didn't understand exactly what it meant.

It troubled his conscience. And he went one day to a quiet place. To a hayloft.

And Hudson went there with this leaflet and meditated upon it is finished. And finally he came out of that place having experienced the conviction of his own salvation.

And he puts it this way. He said, Since the whole work was finished.

Since the whole debt was paid. There was nothing for me to do. But to come to my knees. There is nothing for you to do.

[20 : 44] Nothing you can do. Nothing can save you. But his saving grace. That's what it is to be saved. To realise that Christ has paid it all.

Hudson says, Upon a life I did not live. Upon a death I did not die. Another's life. Another's death. I stake my whole eternity. And upon this Hudson rested.

For time and eternity. Upon the merits of the blood of Christ. And God used him to the saving of many thousands of people. It is finished. There is no unfinished business.

There is no further work. The Lord Jesus has accomplished everything for you. Everything for your salvation. It is complete. Nothing can be added to what our Lord did.

He finished the work. He completed the task. He did what he came to do. Now imagine with me. If you were to travel to a famous art gallery.

[21 : 49] The Louvre in Paris. Imagine going to the famous art gallery. Where hangs the masterpiece. The Mona Lisa.

The Mona Lisa. Imagine if you were approaching this masterpiece. The Mona Lisa. By Leonardo da Vinci. Where do you think of taking a palette.

And some brushes. And touching up the painting. You know it is pretty old. It might need a bit of touching up. Maybe you could add a little bit of colour to the cheeks. Or just tidy up the nose a little bit.

That's ridiculous you would say. For nearly 500 years. The Mona Lisa. Has been considered one of the greatest artistic works.

Of all time. How absurd. It would be to think. Of adding anything to this masterpiece. Yet that's what many people.

[22 : 48] Try to do. With Christ's masterpiece. Salvation. Salvation. They try to add. Something to it. As if they could improve upon it.

By their own works. But that masterpiece. It is finished. The cross.

We can't add nothing to it. The work of redemption was done. When he rose from the dead. Yet we know.

Our Lord has shown the world. He's demonstrated his love towards us. In that while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us. You don't have to do anything.

To merit God's grace. That's the amazing reality. Of salvation. It sounds too good to be true.

[23 : 46] It sounds too good to be true. Doesn't it? What an offer. There's nothing you can do to earn it. You can't add anything to it.

The masterpiece is complete. Jesus paid it all. God's wrath was satisfied at the cross. We can't really conceive of it.

Can we? Friends. I just want to encourage each one. Here today. I know. There's many that trust Christ here. Consider.

the cross. When he said, it is finished. I wonder whether, I wonder whether despite the pain, whether he had some joy in his face, you know.

Because it says for the joy that was set before him. The joy that was set before him. He endured the cross, despising the shame. For the joy that was set before him.

[24 : 51] You know it's a joyful thing when someone becomes a Christian. It's a joyful thing. It's a rejoicing. And it says, the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents.

Friends, I wonder whether he said, it is finished. He was thinking about your salvation. When he said, it is finished, he was thinking, the joy that you would trust him.

The joy that you would receive him. The joy of your salvation. Friends, the joy that was set before him. As he removed sin's barrier. As he removed every roadblock for your salvation.

As he removed every separating force of sin. The sins that separate us from the Father. As he tore the curtain, as it were, and made the holy place open so we could enter in.

Nothing can be added. Nothing can be added. We can make the mistake of thinking we can add something. Friends, it's true. Many religious people think they can add something.

[25 : 59] They think they've got to do something instead of trusting that it's been done. And there's a story I read of a little old lady. A little old lady.

She came to the insurance office and she said, she said this, I can't pay this insurance policy any longer. My husband died five years ago and I just don't have the money to keep up the payments. She didn't understand the need to pay was over. The policy was all paid up because her husband had died. Some treat salvation like that. They think, I've got to keep doing, doing, doing, doing, doing.

Good works, good works, good works. I've got to maintain my salvation. I've got to prove my salvation by my works.

I've got to answer the cross. It's Jesus plus my works. It's faith plus my works. No, it's not. It's faith in Christ. It's the finished work.

[27 : 01] It's his finished work. We mustn't add to it. We must just trust what he has done. And friends, what about you today? How can you finish well?

Our Lord finished well. Our Lord finished. He did that which he was given to do. The work that he was called to do. Now, I look at today's culture and there's often a lack of follow through.

Isn't there? There's a lack of people who follow through. I know, I've heard it said of a friend.

They're a great person but they're not good at finishing things.

You know, I know some people in my life that have been like that. You know, they get halfway through making a kitchen or doing a job and they don't finish it. It's just sitting there kind of not finished.

Will you finish well? Finish well. When you go through the trials of life and you go through the tests at times, I challenge you to be a good finisher.

[28 : 03] Paul was like that. He says, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. In Acts 20, he talked about how it was prophesied that there would be bonds and affliction facing him in every city.

This is Acts 20, verse 23. But he says, But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy.

And the ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. He says, None of these things move me. I'm going to finish my course. Are you going to be a finisher? Are you going to finish well?

We need to finish the race. Paul speaks of fighting the fight of finishing the race. We want to finish well and hear our Lord's well done. Now, some, it seems like they flag and falter just as they get close to the finishing line.

Let's finish well. Finish well. I know there's a man, a man of God. I've mentioned him in part before. I rebuked this older man one day because he believed what I would consider a false doctrine, British Israelism.

[29 : 16] I rebuked him quite strongly and severely and as I thought afterwards that it was not appropriate how I did that. As much as that, he was a man who loved the Lord Jesus and he was a man committed to loving people and serving the Lord and he served him kneels on wheels right till

