

It is Finished

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[0 : 0 0] now as the Lord enables us let us turn back to this portion of scripture we've read together from the gospel according to John and chapter 19 and focusing our attention in particular from the words on verse 30 chapter 19 at verse 30 when Jesus therefore had received the vinegar he said it is finished and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost particularly these three words in the middle of that verse 30 it is finished the Lord spoke seven times from the cross of shame and as far as we can understand this is the sixth of these seven words from the cross the seventh the last word from the cross we have in the gospel of Luke when Jesus said father into thine hands I commend my spirit and then that he gave up the ghost it's believed that this what we have in verse 30 in John 19 is the sixth of the Lord's words from the cross it is finished and in the original Greek this is just one word it is one word translated into three words in English and also three words in Gaelic it is finished and in the Greek it is a word that is in the perfect tense that means that once whatever the Lord has finished has been finished it forever continues in that way it cannot be undone the work that the Lord

Jesus Christ finished on the cross it cannot forevermore be unfinished nothing can be added to it nothing can be taken from it and Jesus here says it is finished and I was thinking about this this afternoon and my mind went to this sort of way of thinking when a project is finished or a building is finished the people issue a completion certificate a certificate a certificate to prove that the building work has been carried out in accordance with building regulations and therefore the building is safe and legally safe and when I read up about this this comment was also added once a completion certificate has been issued issued to you it's advised that you keep it in a safe place possibly with the deeds of your property now that's something to do with the completion of a building or a building project it's important that the completion certificate be issued and that building certificate is proof to you that the building has been built according to the regulations well thinking of that little picture from worldly buildings to what we have here

Jesus says it is finished and under three headings I'd like to see a few words first of all who is speaking who is saying it is finished secondly what is finished what is he talking about using this one word in the Greek three words in the Gaelic and three words in the English it is finished what is finished and thirdly what lessons are to be found in this section of scripture for ourselves the fact that Jesus has finished this work what lessons are left for us to glean from that first of all then one or two words on who it is who is speaking here

Jesus therefore when he had received the vinegar he said it is finished Jesus is the one who speaks who was Jesus who is Jesus well Jesus is the second person of the glorious trinity in human nature you remember that there are three persons in the Godhead the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit these three are one God the same in substance equal in power and in glory but the second person of the trinity came to take human nature to himself and the angel said to Mary when the angel came to announce to her that she was going to have a son he said to her his name shall be called

Jesus because he shall save his people from their sins Jesus the second person of the trinity the saviour of sinners is the one who is speaking and he says it is finished one more thing before we go on who is speaking this same second person of the trinity trinity is the creator of all things it says that he created all things by the word of his power the scripture says about Jesus Christ that without him there was not anything made that was made he knows the number of the stars he names them everyone he keeps the whole universe that he has created in being and when you think of the universe within ourselves every fibre of our being physically he made it and he sustains it this is the one who is speaking here the almighty one the all knowing one the one in whose hand our life is and he says it is finished but the more important thing

[8 : 04] I think for us to think in this particular context is that the one who is speaking he is the mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus he certainly is the second person of the trinity he is the great creator and sustainer of everything but he is the mediator of God's elect he is the one appointed to save God's elect people from their sins and now when he speaks here he says it is finished I have finished it he comes and he says all that's been entrusted to me I have completed that's the first thing the one who's speaking but secondly and we could go on on each of these points at greater length but just touching on these things we ask having asked who it is who's speaking now we ask what has he finished what has he finished he says it is finished what is it when was this shall I say building project going back to our completion certificate picture a little picture but when was this great project in the planning well you must remember that it was in the planning from all eternity in the council of peace between the persons of the trinity before the world was that's where this plan if I can use the words took shape it's difficult to say these things reminding ourselves that God is an eternal being without beginning and without ending nevertheless the scripture encourages us to think of this picture that before the world was the persons of the trinity agreed on this plan of salvation and at the center of that plan of salvation was that the second person would come and take human nature to himself and in human nature that he would come and work a work that would secure the salvation of God's elect people what is finished well something that was planned from all eternity secondly something that was prophesied about from the very beginning of the scriptures all the way through man

I mean very early in the scripture we find after the fall of man the promise being given that they would come from the seed of the woman the one who was going to bruise the head of the serpent and when Jesus here says it is finished that is one of the things that he means he has bruised the head of the serpent Satan he has destroyed his power but having been prophesied in Genesis about the coming redeemer we come to the prophecy of Isaiah and it gives us another angle on this great work that Jesus has completed and that is that he will magnify the law and make it honorable he will elevate the law as it were by his own involvement with it he was born of a woman he was made under the law and he came into this world as one who loved

God's law in what way does he demonstrate that in his life well you can think of law under three headings the civil law the ceremonial law and the moral law and when you think of Jesus Christ in his life in the world he was submissive to the civil law he was fulfilling every aspect of the civil law and when you think also of the ceremonial law the ceremonial law down through the centuries was speaking of something that was to be realized in the person and in the life of Jesus Christ the mediator I mean all these sacrifices that were given up all the blood that was shed by way of sacrifice all the oblations that were offered at the temple at the tabernacle down through the years well when

Jesus Christ came there was no more need for any of these things he fulfilled in himself every aspect of the sacrificial system and it says here it is finished this was the problem that many people to whom the apostle is writing in the epistle to the Hebrews that they just weren't able to get over they couldn't understand how they had to turn their back upon the sacrificial system of the temple and the apostle says that Jesus Christ with one sacrifice has forever perfected those who are sanctifying it is finished he says every aspect of Jesus' life was submissive to the law civil law ceremonial law and the moral law you think of the place it mentions

Jesus coming to Nazareth and he was submissive to Joseph and his mother Mary he lived as a young lad submissive to the family rules he lived as one who loved God's law and magnified God's law and when you think of who he was he wasn't just doing all of these things as a private citizen he was doing it as the mediator of his people in their room and in their place and when he gave himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice he did it for his people on whose behalf he came into this world he says it is finished and another angle on this is this when you read in the book of

[16 : 14] Genesis at the very end of the chapter the account we have of the fall of man the chapter finishes with this very strong word that the Lord ejected Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden they were cast forth out of the garden and they were denied access to the tree of life because the Lord had placed cherubim and a flaming fire guarding the way to the tree of life in other words Adam representing his own lineage he was denied access to the tree of life unless he met up with the sword of God's anger and justice life and that's where

Jesus comes in when he says it is finished this is part of what he says that he has come in the room and stead of God's elect people and that he has faced up to the sword of God's justice in their room and in their place.

What does the father say in the prophecy of Zechariah? Awake, O sword, against my fellow, against my shepherd, the man who is my fellow.

And the sword of God's justice was awakened and plunged into the experience of the God-man mediator. And you hear what he says on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

One of the old ministers quoted this and he said, The sword of his justice was plunged right up to the hilt into the experience of God's only son.

[18 : 38] Because not one inch of the sword of God's justice was spared. Justice had to receive all its requirements.

The law must be magnified in every aspect and justice must be given all it desires and requires.

And then it says here, It is finished. Oh, there's a sense in which this is assuming everything else that will take place.

I mean, he has still to die. He still has to be buried. He still has to rise from the dead.

He still has to arise into heaven after 40 days. He still has to sit at the right hand of God the Father. But when he says it is finished here, he assumes and knows that all of these things are to happen.

[19 : 54] Do you know that the burial of Jesus was part of his humiliation? And the Catechism puts it this way, that he continued under the power of death for a time.

He must abide in the tomb for that time so that his humiliation would be complete. And when he says here, it is finished, he knows all these things that must still take place to secure the eternal salvation of his people so that God will be reconciled.

God is our enemy as we are by nature. Isn't this what it says in the letter to the Romans on chapter 5? And I think it's verse 10.

Verse 10. Verse 10. Verse 10. Verse 10. If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

When we were enemies, that doesn't particularly speak of our enmity towards God because we're sinners. It speaks particularly of God's attitude to us because of our sin.

[21 : 39] And when Jesus Christ came, he satisfied the demands of God's justice and righteousness by taking the place of his people and experiencing in their womb and in their place all that was necessary for God to be reconciled.

And it says in Romans again, there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

God is reconciled to sinners on whose behalf Jesus has died. What is finished?

The work of salvation is finished. There was no other place in heaven or on earth or in hell where that place, where that work could have been finished except where Jesus was.

and the focus of God's anger and wrath was on the cross at Calvary and on the head of him who was there crucified in the room instead of his people.

[23 : 11] And that's the cross from which these words were spoken. It is finished. Thirdly and finally, some lessons for ourselves.

When it says here, it is finished. That was an arduous commitment by our Lord Jesus in our room and in our stead.

He gave himself. And that's what he asks of us in response to him having finished the work the Father gave him to do.

He asks us to give ourselves to him in faith, in love, in loving service every day of life.

Do you remember what the prophet says? He has taught you, O man, what is right and what is good to do justly, to love mercy and walk humbly with your God.

[24 : 30] Jesus walked humbly in the room instead of his people. He did justly and he loved mercy and he asks of us in our own capacity and by his grace to follow his example in that way.

Love God. Keep his commandment. That's what he asks of us. because it says here he has finished the work and it's a watertight certificate he gives to us.

Absolutely guaranteed. Nothing can ever go wrong with the provision that God has made in Christ Jesus for sinners like we are.

Nothing can possibly ever go wrong because it is finished because it is finished. Every detail of it has been fulfilled and he says now look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is none else.

you remember what the the young man who went to the far country there he wasted his life with riotous living but he came to himself eventually and he went back to his father and he was greeted with the most lavish expressions of love that he could ever have hoped to have received.

[26 : 21] His father kissed him repeatedly. His father wouldn't listen to the things that he was saying. He was going to say make me as one of your servants but the father interjected and said get the best robe and put it on a ring for his finger and shoes for his feet this my son was dead but is alive again.

That is what Jesus says about his own provision for us. All is ready he said just like the man who had made the great feast and some people started rejecting the invitations.

One said I have bought a piece of land I cannot come I have married a wife I cannot come I have bought some oxen I cannot come go out and see to the highways and the hedges and begin the poor and the blind and the maimed those who cannot repay me because the provision is here and you come because the provision is lavish the provision is a glorious blessed provision it gives us to know eternal life when we close in with the free offer of the gospel.

Jesus said it is finished and if it is finished and it is may each of us know the power of that provision for ourselves and may we be under its influence every day of our lives when the apostle is writing to the Hebrews he says to them this is the way you ought to live you ought to run your race with patience looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of faith here he says it is finished the apostle points us to him as the one who is the one who finished all that needed to be done for our salvation these three points then who is speaking what is finished and some lessons for ourselves to embrace the wonderful provision that he has made

Allah's Lord you lead us in prayer O Lord dear God we are thankful O Lord that we are we desire to be under thy word we thank thee O Lord for thy grace which helps us each and every day and that draws us and helps us to understand the need that sinners have the need that we have as sinners we thank thee we thank thee O Lord for the provision that thou hast made we thank thee for the understanding heart and the willing heart that we have to be seeking thy grace we thank thee O Lord for the awareness that we have of the sin that there is within us the corruption the corruption the putrefying soul that continually erupts within our being we thank thee O Lord we thank thee O Lord for the awareness we have of a righteous way and we thank thee O Lord for the one who was only able to fulfil that righteous way we thank thee O Lord for the provision that was sent out from all eternity for the fall of man and we thank thee O Lord that thou hast shone light into darkness and into the darkness of our hearts and that thou hast revealed to us the Lord Jesus Christ that thou hast showed to us our need and there are many

[30 : 42] O Lord in this world who are unaware of this need or disregard this need yet we thank thee O Lord that we can see Jesus as our own Lord and Saviour we praise thee O Lord for this we pray O Lord that many more would be able to see their sinful state before a holy and just God and we pray O Lord that they might themselves come under the shed blood of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world and we pray O Lord for thy blessing upon our own communities within this island a blessed place that has received many blessings from thyself over time and that we can now sadly see being rejected by the people we pray O Lord that thou would have mercy on us as a people that thou would bless us and keep us help us O Lord and witness as believers we pray O Lord that thou would bless the church as it seeks to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to our people we pray that many more would come under it we ask that thou would bless the preaching of thy word this night and the singing of thy praises that thou continue with us throughout this week and in St. Jesus' name and for his sake we ask it

Amen We can bring our worship to a close now singing from Psalm 22 Psalm 22 at verse 22 I will show forth thy name unto those that my brethren are amidst the congregation thy praise I will declare Praise ye the Lord who do him fear Him glorify all ye the seed of Jacob Fear him all that Israel's children be But he despised not nor abhor the afflicted's misery Not from him hid his face But heard when he to him did cry Within the congregation great my praise shall be of thee My vows before them that him fear shall be performed by me The meek shall eat and shall be filled

They also praise shall give unto the Lord that do him seek Your heart shall ever live Psalm 22 verses 22 to 26 To God's praise I will show forth thy name and to those that my brethren are Amidst the congregation Thy praise I will declare Lift ye the Lord who do him fear And glorify your ear

The seed of Jacob He called us For ye ages He despised the guard on our port, Thou fifted its misery, Nor from him did his face pert, When he to him did die.

Within the calm he cares, My praise shall be for thee, My love's faithful and dark and fear,
Shall be performed by me.

[35 : 55] The name shall be and shall be filled, They also praise shall give, And to the Lord that you
them see, His heart shall ever live.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, The love of God the Father, The fellowship of the
Holy Spirit, Rest upon and abide with you all, Now and forevermore. Amen.