

It is Finished

I. God Has Always Had a Plan

When Jesus spoke to the Father from the cross about those that had crucified Him, He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Jesus told the thief hanging next to Him on the cross that He would see him in paradise. While on the cross, Jesus also gave the keeping of His mother over to John’s care.

Acts 2

vs. 22 *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:*

vs. 23 *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*

vs. 24 *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be held by it.*

Acts 2:22-24 is a portion of the sermon Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost. These verses point out the fact that what man does cannot stop the plan of God. His plan is bigger than anything man can do. It seemed the worst happened when man took the Son of God, nailed Him to the cross, and crucified Him. But God took what man intended for destruction and raised Jesus from the dead! Even in death on the cross, Jesus was fulfilling the will of God.

II. Jesus’ Example of Love

The first thing Jesus spoke from the cross was in behalf of those who were responsible for His crucifixion. He said, “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*” Even though He was in excruciating pain, Jesus prayed for others. He set an example for us today. We may be experiencing tremendous pain in our own lives, yet the greatest thing we can do during this time is pray for the needs of other people. There is a spiritual principle of love operating when we put the needs of others above our own. When we do this, God will also meet our needs.

III. The Final Two Statements from Jesus on the Cross

John 19

vs. 30 *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar (or wine), he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

Luke 23

vs. 46 *...Father, into thy hands I commend (dismiss) my spirit.*

John and Luke record the final two statements made by Jesus from the cross. He said, *"It is finished...into thy hands I commend my spirit."* These last statements differed from other statements made by Jesus because they were statements of faith. In prior statements He was praying for others, telling the men He was thirsty, wondering if God had forsaken Him, but the final two statements were statements of faith and triumph. When Jesus cried, "It is finished," He was referring to His work on earth because the work of redemption was not yet complete.

Romans 4

vs. 22 *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

vs. 23 *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;*

vs. 24 *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

vs. 25 *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

Verse 25 literally says, "Who was delivered because of our offenses and was raised again because of our justification." Jesus went to the cross because of our sin, but He was raised from the dead for our justification. Our justification was not complete until Jesus was raised from the dead. Once He was resurrected, the plan of redemption was complete.

IV. The Meaning of "It is Finished"

We need to examine what Jesus meant when He said, “*It is finished.*”

In the Greek, this phrase is actually one word. It is the word *teleo* and comes from the word *teleos*, meaning “*to finish or complete*”. Again, the plan of redemption was not complete until three days after His death on the cross when Jesus was raised from the dead.

A. The Requirements of the Law Fulfilled

The first meaning of “It is finished” was a reference to the law. When Jesus made this statement, He was referring to all the works, all the promises, and all the commandments of the law. The law was divided into two areas: the law of the commandments and the sacrifices.

Jesus completed and fulfilled the law during His lifetime. He told His disciples that He had not come to destroy the law rather He had come to fulfill it. Jesus walked through His entire lifetime as a man without sin. Even on the cross He did not sin. He could have become angry with those who crucified Him. He could have cursed them and told them how wrong they were. But even if He had cried out for man to deliver Him, it would have been sin because it was the will of God for Him to go to the cross. Jesus could have even called for legions of angels to come and deliver Him, but in this He would also be sinning because the Father’s will was for Jesus to go from the cross to death. At this point, Jesus had fulfilled every prophecy that had been written about Him.

B. An Acceptable Sacrifice

By going to the cross, shedding His blood for us, taking our sins, our sicknesses, and the curse that was upon us, Jesus fulfilled the sacrificial requirements of the law. When Jesus said, “*It is finished,*” He meant both the law and the sacrifices. The shedding of His blood ended the requirement of the law to sacrifice the blood of bulls and goats for the sins of the people. Jesus was the sacrificial Lamb of God who became sin and shed His blood that we might become the righteousness of God in Him!

C. The Fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecies

Jesus was also referring to the fulfillment of all of the Old Testament prophecies concerning His life and crucifixion. The

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phrase, “*that it might be fulfilled...*” is used numerous times in reference to Jesus’ life and ministry on earth and His fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Many prophecies were fulfilled in the crucifixion of Jesus. The parting of His garments, the casting of lots for those garments, the nails in His hands and feet, the wailing of the people, the action of the guards ...all were the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

V. Scriptures Yet to be Fulfilled

Just as redemption was not complete until Jesus was raised from the dead, other scriptures that were not fulfilled until after the death of Jesus on the cross. Isaiah 53:12 prophesied that Jesus would face physical death. The piercing of His side with a spear was prophesied in Zechariah 12 verse ten. Psalm 34:20 prophesied that none of Jesus’ bones would be broken. Isaiah 53:9 prophesied Jesus would be buried with the rich men. And so, He was put in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. All of these things were yet to be fulfilled but Jesus said, “*It is finished*”. The reason Jesus said, “*It is finished*” is because He had done everything *He* could do. After His death, there were things that would be done to Him, which were previously prophesied Even though redemption was not complete, Jesus had done everything He could possibly do when He said, “*It is finished*”.

Jesus understood there was a will of God that only He could complete. From the point Jesus said, “*It is finished*”, all other prophecies related to Jesus’ life would be fulfilled through the lives of others. Others would remove His body from the cross. Others would pierce His side. Others would choose not to break His bones. Others would place Him in the tomb.

VI. What Looks Like Defeat is not Always Defeat

Again, in Luke 23 verse 46 Jesus said, “*...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*” then He “*... gave up the ghost.*”

If we were strictly looking at the death of Jesus from a natural perspective, it would appear that He died in defeat. But nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus died in triumph. Regardless of what circumstances may appear to be, if we have done what God has asked us to do, it is victory. God does not always do things the way man thinks He should. He often works behind the scenes and what often looks like a defeat from our natural human

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perspective is actually a victory from God's perspective. When Jesus died on the cross, it looked like Satan had the victory; it looked like man had prevailed against Him. But just three days and three nights later, God said, "I have the victory!"

John 5

vs. 36 *But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do (will do), bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.*

The word "finish" in this verse is the same word Jesus used when He said "*It is finished*". The difference is that in this verse "finish" is in the future tense. What Jesus prophesied He would do, He completed. In saying "It is finished" at the end of His life on earth, Jesus was saying "I have completed what God has asked me to do."

VII. Finishing Our Course

2 Timothy 4

vs. 6 *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

vs. 7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*

Again, the word "finished" is the same word Jesus used on the cross, but in this verse the Greek word *teleos* is in the past tense. The difference is when Jesus said, "It is finished", He was actually completing God's will at that moment. Paul was looking back on his life and was saying, "I finished God's will a few days ago. I finished my course." The greatest thing any Christian can do in his or her service to God is to come to the end of their life and say, "I have done the will of God in my life."

It did not look like Paul died in triumph. He was beheaded, but prior to his death he in essence said, "It doesn't matter what it looks like to you. It may look like man has won out. Circumstances may say that I was defeated. I don't care what it looks like, I have completed my course and done what God has asked me to do."

VIII. No One is Exempt from Mistakes

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Some people begin thinking, "I really want to complete what God has called me to do in my life, but I have made so many mistakes. In fact, I have messed up my entire life!" Moses did not get started fulfilling God's will until he was eighty. Paul was persecuting the church and even killing Christians and did not begin his course until later in life. No human on earth, with the exception of Jesus, has ever lived his life without failing in some way. But we can all come to the end of our lives and still say, "I have done what God has asked me to do for Him." At one point Paul even said of his life, "Forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God." Paul died without regrets. Regrets does not mean you have never made a mistake; it means that when you made a mistake you asked God to forgive you and continued on in fulfilling His plan for your life.

It didn't look like Jesus died in triumph. It didn't look like Paul died in triumph. It didn't look like Moses died in triumph, but the story is not over. "*It is finished*" did not mean the entire plan of God was complete. The plan continues and will continue into eternity. God has the last word!

IX. Having Done All to Stand, Stand

Even on the cross, Jesus left us an example to follow.

Ephesians 6

vs. 10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

vs. 11 *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

vs. 12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

vs. 13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.*

vs. 14 *Stand...*

Although we are to live a life of faith, part of the Christian life is "doing". Jesus reached a point where He had done all He could do in His life. He crossed every "t" and dotted every "i". So often,

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Christians quote the Word, pray, praise God, and worship God but finally reach a point where it looks like the circumstances are not changing. This is usually the point where frustration enters. But verses 13 and 14 tell us “*Having done all to stand, stand...*” This means even after we have done all that we know to do, the answer may still not be manifested, but we must keep standing.

How often do Christian parents stand for rebellious children. We find promises to stand on, we believe God, confess scriptures daily, rejoice and praise God for His promises and still, it looks like nothing has happened. Then the tendency is to become discouraged. We check ourselves for unforgiveness but find none. This is when we totally commit the situation into the Lord’s hands and just stand, knowing we will see the deliverance of the Lord.

X. Commit it Into the Father’s Hands

I Peter 2

vs. 21 *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

vs. 22 *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:*

vs. 23 *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously;*

In the midst of persecution, Jesus did all He could do and then committed himself over to God’s keeping. Jesus is our example. On the cross He was our example. In the beatings and sufferings He was our example.

I Peter 3:1 continues, “Likewise, ye wives...” Notice, in chapter 2 a great spiritual truth is revealed and in chapter 3 that truth is applied to every day life.

I Peter 3

vs. 1 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;*

Vs. 2 *While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.*

Peter transitions immediately from a great discourse on Jesus to making sandwiches and ironing clothes. Even though these verses are addressing wives, it could be directly speaking to husbands or parents or born again children whose parents are not born again. These verses are saying that Jesus is our example. Once we have done everything we can, we consign it over to God the Father.

Jesus faced the same thing on the cross. Even when He died on the cross, He did not see a change but even at the point of death, He committed everything to God and said, "It is finished". Some Christians need to say to God, "My struggle is over. I consign it into your hands. It is finished. Into your hands I dismiss my husband. Into your hands I dismiss my child. Into your hands I dismiss my entire financial situation. I've stood, confessed, quoted, and praised. I've done all that I know to do. Father, into Your hands I dismiss the entire situation."

You may think, "Well, after Jesus died, things got better", but they did not get better; they got worse! For three days following His death, things got worse! But it did not matter how it appeared to the natural eye, the resurrection was still to come!

The time comes when we finally say, "I've done all I can do. I've witnessed, talked, prayed. I've done everything I can do in behalf of my unsaved relatives. I've quoted scriptures to them, prayed until I thought my knees would wear out. It is finished. Into your hands I commend those people. I am going to stand still and see the deliverance of the Lord!"

God did not say, "Don't do anything." We should do everything we can and then stand.

XI. Between the Will of God and the Promise: Patience

Hebrews 10

vs. 35 *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.*

vs. 36 *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

Between the will of God and the manifestation of the promise is patience. The greatest statement of patience in the entire Word of God is "It is finished. Father, into Your hands I commend

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(dismiss) my spirit. I have done all I can. Father, it is totally in Your hands.” Three days later, Jesus was raised from the dead.

Resurrection is coming for your family, your finances, your children, your health, and for you. Having done all, consign it to the Lord and say, “Father, into Your hands I commend this individual, this circumstance.” Resurrection is on the way!