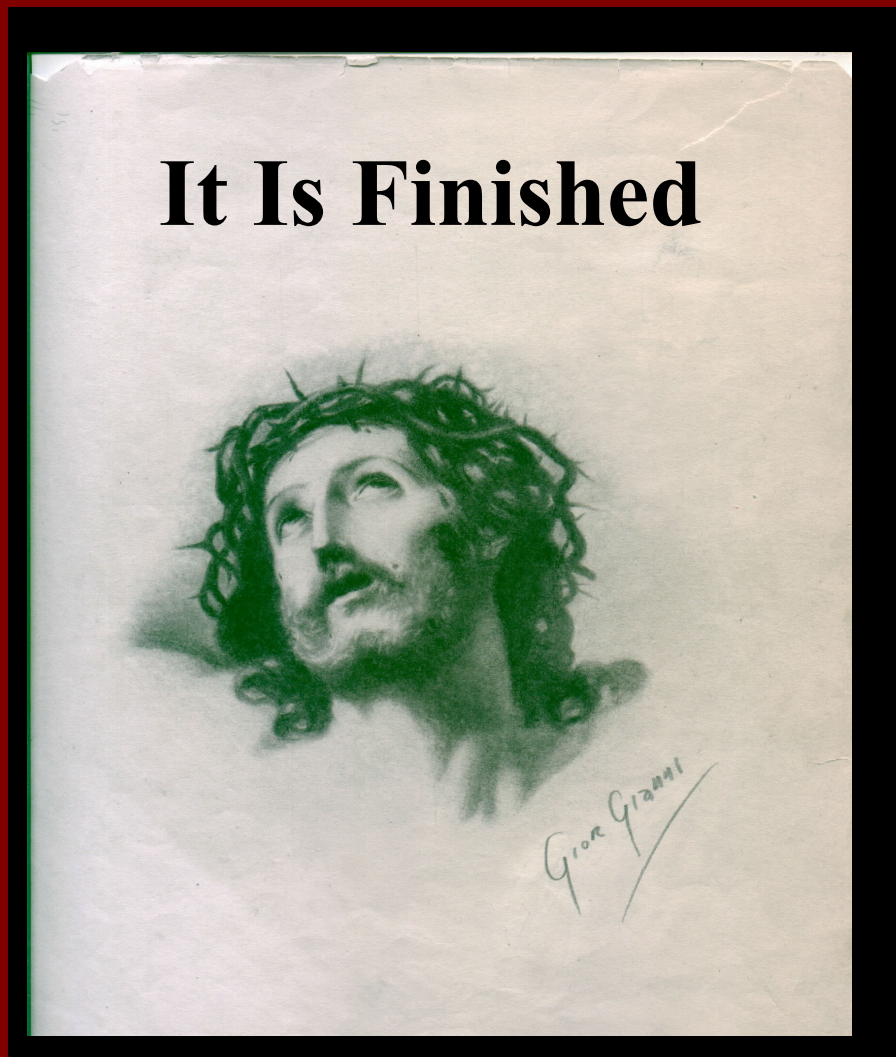


The Finished Work of Jesus Christ



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Introduction

You'll remember that when Jesus was on the cross, he said, "It is finished." **John 19:30** "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." These three words forever changed the way God deals with mankind.

"What did Jesus mean when He said, 'It is finished'?"

GotQuestions.org offers the answer to this question... Of the last sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more important or more poignant than, "It is finished." Found only in the Gospel of John, the Greek word translated "it is finished" is *tetelestai*, an accounting term that means "**paid in full.**" When Jesus uttered those words, He was declaring the debt owed to His Father was wiped away completely and forever. Not that Jesus wiped away any debt that *He* owed to the Father; rather, Jesus eliminated the debt owed by mankind—the debt of sin.

Just prior to His arrest by the Romans, Jesus prayed His last public prayer, asking the Father to glorify Him, just as Jesus had glorified the Father on earth, having "finished the work you have given me to do" (**John 17:4**). The

work Jesus was sent to do was to “seek and save that which is lost” (**Luke 19:10**), to provide atonement for the sins of all who would ever believe in Him (Romans 3:23-25), and to reconcile sinful men to a holy God. “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation” (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**). None other but God in the flesh could accomplish such a task.

Also completed was the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies, symbols, and foreshadowings of the coming Messiah. From Genesis to Malachi, there are over 300 specific prophecies detailing the coming of the Anointed One, all fulfilled by Jesus. From the “seed” who would crush the serpent’s head (**Genesis 3:15**), to the Suffering Servant of **Isaiah 53**, to the prediction of the “messenger” of the Lord (John the Baptist) who would “prepare the way” for the Messiah, all prophecies of Jesus’ life, ministry, and death were fulfilled and finished at the cross.

Although the redemption of mankind is the most important finished task, many other things were also finished at the cross.

1. The sufferings Jesus endured while on the earth, and especially in His last hours, were at last over.
2. God’s will for Jesus was accomplished in His perfect obedience to the Father (**John 5:30; 6:38**).
3. Most importantly, the power of sin and Satan was finished.
4. No longer would mankind have to suffer the “flaming arrows of the evil one” (**Ephesians 6:16**).
5. By raising the “shield of faith” in the One who completed the work of redemption and salvation, we can, by faith, live as new creations in Christ.

Jesus’ finished work on the cross was the beginning of new life for all who were once “dead in trespasses and sins” but who are now made “alive with Christ” (**Ephesians 2:1, 5**).

Lies & The Truth

Folks have taken several different summations as to what the words actually meant when Jesus said, **“It Is Finished”**. Some say He meant all past sins but not current or future sins. Others hold to the belief that finished means for those alive at the time. Yet others say it had no relevance to religious thought or life.

When Jesus cried out "It is finished," he meant, "It was finished," past, present, and future. It was and always will be a finished work of grace. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"
I Peter 3:18

According To The Plan

The death of Jesus on the cross is the very fulfillment of the plan of God in history. It was not a tragic incident that should not have happened. It was not a historic martyrdom where Jesus died at the hands of an evil enemy. It was not a suicide.

"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken my life away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again" (John 10:17-18)

If one or all of these things were so, it would contradict the revealed truth of God that has been set down in history from before the beginning of creation.

Jesus was the slain Lamb of God, from before the foundation of the world. Hear what the scripture says...Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who died for the sins of the world (**John 1:29**). Jesus mission became clear to mankind only after He had been crucified on the cross. Yet the scripture reveals in **Revelations 13:8** that "the Lamb was slain from the creation of the world"

Any other viewpoint is heresy. It is a lie that seeks to cloud over the truth. ***“It is finished.”*** In these words is the essence of all of God’s Word because we see:

1. **The Redemption Of Mankind.**– *“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:14*
2. **True Reconciliation Between God And Man.** - *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” Colossians 1:20-22*
3. **The Defeat Of Satan, The Devil And All Evil Forces.** *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:15*
4. **The Beginning Of A New Race Of Believers In God.** *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he (Jesus) might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:29*
5. **The Ability Of Man To Overcome Evil.** *“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11*
6. **The Healing Of The Body.** *“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” I Peter 2:24*
7. **The Butterfly Affect, (A New Creature In Christ.)** *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. II Corinthians 5:17*
8. **Free Access Into The Presence Of God.** *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16*

9. **The Love Of God Shed Abroad In Our Hearts.** *“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”* **Romans 5:5**

10. **The Promise Of Eternal Life.** *“And this is the witness, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. I* **John 5:11**

There are certainly many more but this will give you a portrait of what is in His last words on earth.

The Danger of Unbelief

If we believe what Jesus said, then why are we not resting in His Word? If it is really finished, we ought to be resting in the reality of that work. However, many Christians fall short of their trust in Jesus due to unbelief. Read what Paul tells the Christian community as recorded in Hebrews. Brian Williams of CBN tells us the story.

Hebrews 3:19 tells us why the children of Israel did not enter into the Promised Land. Their problem was the same thing that keeps children of God today from enjoying the full benefits of their salvation: **unbelief**. I point this out not to condemn; rather, my desire is to see the children of God fully possess all of their benefits in Christ.

Hebrews 4 begins with a sober warning. The very first verse tells us to fear coming short of entering into His rest. In an analogous sense, this harkens back to the days of the ancient Israelites, to whom God promised a land flowing with milk and honey; a land with homes already built and awaiting their occupancy; a land with large water wells already dug for them; a land of extraordinary vegetation; and the list goes on and on. All they had to do was to go in and rest in the "finished work".

According to **Hebrews 4:3**, these "...works were finished from the foundation of the world." It was always God's will to lavish the Israelites with this finished work, but as **Hebrews 3:19** makes clear, they did not enter in because of unbelief.

In a far grander manner, **Revelation 13:8** tells us that Jesus, the Lamb, was slain from the foundation of the world. It has always been the Father's will for Born Again Christian's to rest in the finished work of His Son, Jesus, the

Lamb. Tragically, like the Israelites of old, many of God's children today never fully enter into this blessed rest of the Son's finished work because of their unbelief.

We have an amazing salvation folks! **Romans 1:16** tells us that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. The word for "salvation" in the original Greek text is closely related to the Greek word "sozo", which includes being saved, rescued, delivered, healed, and much more!

The gospel of Christ is a glorious gospel of grace wherein the power of God is available to you in whatever area of your life you are willing to believe for. Now that's AMAZING GRACE! If you're only willing to believe for being saved from hell, then be it unto you according to your faith. But know this, the Lord wants you to experience so much more. Take a look at Psalm 103, where the psalmist enumerates some of the glorious benefits of the child of God. The psalmist advises us to "...forget not all His benefits".

Likewise, **Hebrews 4:9** tells us that a rest remains today for the people of God. Verse 11 even tells us to labor to enter into that rest. Then, immediately in verse 12 the Holy Spirit informs us that the Word of God is quick, powerful, sharp, and piercing. The placement of this verse (right after verse 11) is absolutely deliberate because the Word of God is the antidote that utterly destroys the unbelief that will keep you from entering into and resting in the finished work of Jesus.

Don't be destroyed for a lack of knowledge (**Hosea 4:6**). Fully believe that it is always God's will for you to be healed, prospered, delivered, favored, and blessed beyond measure. It's all in His finished work for you. Just believe and receive.

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." – **First Timothy 4:15**

Hidden Pillars of The Finished Work of Christ

We have emphasized the cross because it represents the sacrifice of Jesus for payment in full to redeem us from sin and death. However, there are hidden pillars that support this truth and make it real. Consider these underlying truths.

A Perfect Life

Jesus was not like us but was like us. He was born of a virgin. There was a reason for that. If He had been the son of Mary and Joseph by blood line, He would have been a sinner from birth and could not have been God's perfect Lamb. His sacrifice would have been an abomination to God.

However, He came through Mary but was born of the Holy Spirit from birth. This made Him innocent, without sin. Read Romans Chapter five for a full explanation. In Brief, here's what it says,

*"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." **Romans 5:12-14***

Death passed from Adam to all of his descendants. We all are sinners in need of a Savior. Jesus, being the innocent one had to earn the right to be the captain of our salvation.

- *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." **(Hebrews 2:9-10)***
- *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" **Hebrews 5:8***

- *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”* **Philippians 2:5-8**

A Willing Sacrifice

The reason we call it “Amazing Grace” is because it is. Listen to what John recorded Jesus saying to Nicodemus, a religious leader of His day.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16 Here are a few other scriptures:

- *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* **Romans 5:6**
- *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised”* **Luke 4:18**
- *“The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”* **(Hebrews 9:13-14)**
- *“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken my life away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again”* **(John 10:17-18)**

A Divine Destiny

Jesus had a divine destiny. He was destined, by His own will, to become man, to live as a man, defeat the enemies of God as a man and overcome sin, death and hell. He was to fulfill all that the Father wanted for man. Here are a few scriptures to support the premise.

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His destiny was to live the life we could not live because of sin and to die the death we should have died because of sin. Consider these:

- *“For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.”*
Luke 19:10 (Adam lost the Spirit of God, Jesus gave it back)
- *”But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”* **Romans 5:8-9**

The Debt Is Paid In Full

I'd like to leave you with this theological thought. Jesus paid the debt but to whom did he pay it? It surely wasn't Satan. He gained nothing from the paid debt. In fact, he lost the power of man that he stole from Adam.

God's justice demanded that the debt be paid. "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." **Ezekiel 18:4**

Paul tells us that, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **Romans 3:23.**" He also says, "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." **Romans 6:23**

God's justice was met in the death of His only Son, Jesus, The Christ, as the penalty for sin. This was and still is the greatest expression of love ever seen. God became a man to suffer death on our behalf to satisfy His own justice that we might become the righteousness of God in His Son.

"For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." **II Corinthians 5:21**

Conclusion

The work of Christ was to restore the image and likeness of God in Mankind. He so loved us that He willingly sacrificed Himself as the penalty for our sins. His destiny was to do so. His life was given for this purpose. His perfect life, as a man, made it possible. "For 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." **Romans 5:10**

We can surely **R-E-S-T** in the finished work of Christ, knowing that it is really finished. We do not need to struggle, fret, worry or be anxious in any way. Our salvation and destiny is already secured in Him. Our effort is only to believe and trust in Jesus for to see it accomplished in our daily lives.

It Truly Is An “Amazing Grace”

This finished work that Jesus did was for you. He so loved you that He did all of this...so you could enjoy Him and His kingdom for all of eternity. What will be your response to so great a love?

Try this on for size...”if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” **Romans 10:9-10**

It's never too late to follow Jesus.