

"It Is Finished"

John 19:17-30

Good Friday, April 14, 2017

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Broadlands

And so the final voice of the passion of our Lord is the Lord Himself. He has the final word on all things. He says, "It is finished."

And so it is, down the last detail. From the cosmic to the personal it is finished. From His mission to His message, it is finished. From the beginning of time to its end, it is finished. It is all finished on a Friday before the Sabbath begins.

Jesus sees His mother standing alongside His cross.

Our Lord is the oldest son of His mother. He is responsible for her care after her husband has died. Jesus will be unable to care for her after He has died. He is responsible for her care and must make provision for her before He dies. Whether it is because His brothers are not present or because Jesus is the only Son of Mary and His brothers are half brothers is not stated. What is stated is that Jesus fulfills His duty. He sees the disciple whom He loved standing near her and He commits His mother into his home. He says to His mother, "Behold, your son," in regards to the disciple whom He loved. To the disciple whom He loved He says, "Behold, your mother," in regards to His mother. With these words Jesus turns over the responsibility for the care of His mother to the disciple whom He loved. Once Jesus has done this His responsibility as the oldest son of Mary has been discharged.

Even in His own earthly details Jesus does the will of the Law. Even in His personal life, it is finished.

It is also finished in regards to the Scriptures.

Once Jesus suffers and dies all of the Scriptures are fulfilled. The Scripture which designates the Lamb of God is fulfilled. The Scripture which says that God Himself will shepherd His people is fulfilled. The Scripture which describes the death of Jesus is fulfilled. The Scripture which says that God will forsake Him is fulfilled. On and on it goes Scripture after Scripture is fulfilled by Jesus.

The Scripture is fulfilled also in the details. Even when the Scripture says that they will divide My garments among them is fulfilled. The soldiers divide the garments of Jesus and then in further fulfillment, they cast lots over His clothing. Even when the Scripture says something innocuous like, "I thirst," which you would not think would need to be fulfilled in order for the Scriptures to be fulfilled is fulfilled. Jesus fulfills it and announces that He thirsts.

All of the Scriptures are fulfilled the day Jesus dies. There is not one Scripture of the Old Testament that remains outstanding when Jesus dies. That is why 2Corinthians, chapter one, proclaims that as many promises as God has made they find their "yes" in Him and there is an "Amen" from the people of God.

Therefore there are no promises of God that remain to be fulfilled. There are no Scriptures that remain to be fulfilled. There is not something that has to take place in human history in order for the Scriptures to find their complete fulfillment. They have found their complete fulfillment in Him. There are no political arrangements that have to be made in the world order in order for the Scripture to be fulfilled. He is reigning over history even as I speak. There are no military movements or wars that need to be fought in order for the Scriptures to be fulfilled. They are already fulfilled either in the Old Testament itself, in Him or in both, in a smaller way in the Old Testament and in a greater way in Him.

There is nothing that you can do or need to do in order to bring the Scriptures to their fulfillment. Your Lord has already done that.

So when it comes to the Scriptures, "It is finished."

Our interest in the cross is not merely academic or historic. It does not really matter to us what some Jewish scriptures says. We are Gentiles after all. Abraham is not our father by blood nor are we his children by blood. Moses is not our lawgiver by nationality nor were our ancestors at Mount Sinai to receive the Law. Our ancestors were running around the forests of Europe engaging in violence and licentiousness until the message of the Gospel came to them.

Our interest in the cross is also not literary. We are not interested in the crafting of the characters and their personal pursuits. Although the Scriptures are a masterpiece of literature and the world would have preserved them anyway for that reason, that is not what our interest is in them. We are not interested in an ancient Jew fulfilling His family responsibilities however noble a theme that may be.

We are interested in our salvation. We Gentiles wake up and take notice when anybody claims that His Kingdom is an everlasting one. We really take notice when such a claim is delivered by the guy's angel prior to His own birth to His own mother. We take notice when He goes about establishing this kingdom and telling everyone even the blood sons of Abraham to repent of their sins. We take notice when He forgives sins. We take notice when He heals the sick. We take notice when He gives sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. We take notice when He purifies lepers and makes the lame to walk. We take notice when He forgives sins.

We take notice because we have lepers in our midst. We have the blind and the deaf and the mute in our midst. We have the sick in our midst. We are sinners. We are dying. And so we take notice when someone comes along and begins to raise the dead. We take note of His promises. We take note of His heritage. We take note of His words and of His life.

And in regards to our salvation when He is crucified He says that it is finished.

It is all completed. It is all done. There is no left over for you or someone else to do. He has done it all. It is finished.

There are people who say that Jesus has done His part and you must do yours. In other words they say that when it comes to your everlasting salvation and the forgiveness of all of your sins, Jesus has done His part when He dies on the cross, now you must do yours. They say that Jesus has done 99.99% of what is necessary for your salvation and now you must do the last 1/100 of a percent in order to be saved. Such people are eager to tell you what you need to do in order to do your part in order to be saved. Some of them say that you must pray the sinner's prayer and they will be glad to teach it to you. Some of them say that you must accept Jesus as your Savior and they urge you to do so usually by prayer. Some of them say that you must choose to follow Jesus or that you must decide to take Jesus as your savior or however it is that they put it. All of them agree that you have to do something in order to be saved. But then if you have to do something in order to be saved, then it is not finished when Jesus dies on the cross. You must do your part too and they make the Lord into a liar. I do not wish to stand with them in judgment.

Ask any of these people what it means to accept Jesus as your Savior or to choose Jesus as your Savior or to decide to follow Jesus and they will have a list of things that you must do. Some of them have short lists like exhorting you to pray the sinner's prayer. Some of them have long lists of good deeds and the kind of life that you must live in order to be a follower of Jesus and be saved. Once some of these people get done with you it feels like you have to do 25% or even 75% of the work in order to be saved.

But whether 35% or 85% or even 99% if you have to do something anything in order to be saved, then you are saved by your works and Jesus is a liar, because Jesus says, "It is finished."

It is finished. Your salvation is completed. Jesus has died. Furthermore we know what happens next. Jesus rose from the dead. It is all finished then. The only thing that remains is for our Lord to return to grant the fulfillment of the salvation that He has already completed and granted to us.

Jesus has died. Atonement for your sins is completed. It is finished. If you want to pray and ask for that forgiveness, great, but it is finished whether you pray for it or not.

Jesus has died. Your everlasting salvation is yours. If you think that you need to have a special feeling or experience to get it, then you are looking to yourself and not to Him. Your salvation is yours. It is finished.

So when you doubt your salvation and wonder whether or not God favors you or will take you to Himself once you die, if in the face of the terrible things that you have done, you doubt whether or not God will forgive you or take you as His own, if in the face of those who would question whether or not any of this religion stuff is worth anything or not, let the words of Christ sink into your hearts, "It is finished."

Your forgiveness is finished.

The favor of God is finished.

Your everlasting salvation is finished.

It is finished. It is finished. It is finished. He has died. He has said it. It is finished.

In the Name of Jesus. Amen.