***6: "It is finished."

7LW-003.2***

The sixth word is found in John 19:30. "When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said 'It is finished!' And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit." The most dramatic, greatest words ever spoken to the ears of humanity. The Greek word looks like this; teleo. This word means "to accomplish, to bring to an end." It connotes fulfilling a certain process. It is one of those words that we find used repeatedly in records that we have left from the New Testament World, business records. When somebody paid his taxes, the tax collector took his pen and he wrote across it "teleo," paid. That means paid in full. So everybody in the Greek world knew what this word meant. It meant paid for something. It meant putting an end to something; it meant that something had been accomplished.

Now, it is also in the Greek language in that perfect tense. In the Greek language, tenses do not simply apply to time, present, past, future, the way we think. It does have that, but it has a primary connotation of the kind of an action; so that Greek tense you have to think about kind of action. So every time we see something in the present tense, for example, in Greek, we know that the kind of action means something that goes on. It just goes on. It's a continuous action.

There's an imperfect tense. We know when we see that, that it is something that repeatedly happens in the past.

Up, down, up, down. We have an aorist tense. The aorist tense is a past tense. Bingo. It happens. Bingo. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved. Bingo. It's a stated deal. But then there is a tense called the perfect tense. It can be illustrated like this with a circle. This dot that I put here, which is the point at which the action begins, then the action goes on forever. Never stops. That is so significant. When the Greek read that and he read here, Jesus saying "it is finished" and it's in a perfect tense, they said, "my goodness, He is saying that 'the whole process of human redemption and the suffering and the payment for moral guilt of all mankind is completed forever.'" You understand what that means? I mean, there's nothing to add to it. The job is done. And you cannot interrupt this. You cannot say I'm guilty of adultery and interrupt it. You cannot say now I became a thief and interrupt this. You cannot interrupt the perfect tense. It goes on forever.

That's a lot more meaningful for you to look at those 3 magnificent words of Christ on the cross. The sixth word, "It is finished," that's what he was saying. "I've completed the job. It's a done deed, and you will never undo it."

It is also in the passive voice. That's always important in Greek grammar. The passive voice tells us that it had to be done by somebody else. It is finished, for you, by someone else.

It isn't something that you're going to help finish. You are not going to do something now to complete your salvation. Roman Catholics say yes. Christ died on the cross. He paid for your moral guilt. But you must pay for your temporal sins. You must have temporal suffering to cover your sin as well.

So you go to the priest and the priest says, here's the penance for what you have confessed to me. You must do this. You must do this. And you never cease having to do something more. So finally, you go out, as most Catholics do, with a great uncertainty and a great agony of soul, because you don't know how long you're going to be in purgatory. You will know one thing for sure. You will not be in heaven. You're going to go to purgatory to continue suffering so that you have suffered enough yourself to cover your sins.

But Jesus said, "I already told you that's not true. I said 'it is finished,' and I said it in the passive voice, which means that nobody can do it for himself."

You have to let God do it for you. That's the whole point of our salvation. Let me see if I can put this in simple terms. A person who is spiritually dead cannot die spiritually. Is that hard to understand?

Well, let's put it the other way. For a person who is physically dead, he cannot die. Think that through. That's very difficult. A person who is physically dead cannot die physically.

That's what we're saying. Because you are spiritually dead, you cannot pay the price to satisfy the justice of God, which is to die spiritually.

So in comes Jesus Christ, who is spiritually alive because He was virgin born. Therefore, He did not have a human father because the old sin nature is transmitted through the genetic structure of the father. Bingo. Here comes into the human race a baby boy who is back where Adam was, absolutely sinless and no sin nature. Now because that was true, for 3 hours, He bore on Himself all the sins of mankind, past, present and future.

And as a result of that, He could finally say "teleo," paid in full, teleo, it is paid in full, and you cannot interrupt or disrupt what I have done.

You can not accept it. You can thumb your nose at it. You must believe this. You must receive Christ. You must receive what I have done. But you won't break what I have done, and you can't help me do it. It all has to be done for you. And I've done it for you. Passive. It's a statement of fact.

John 19:28 tells us that Jesus knew when His mission was fulfilled. "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, said, 'I am thirsty.'" His mission was to now declare that it was all accomplished, that it was done.

In John 19:30, we have the word "It is finished." Everything completed. Everything accomplished. Mission fulfilled. "After this, Jesus knowing that all things already had been accomplished." It's the same word, teleo. Everything was accomplished. Then in verse 30, He says outright on the cross, "It's finished." So at a certain point on the cross, He knew that all that was necessary for Him to do as the Lamb of God, to satisfy the justice of God against human sin was accomplished. "It is finished." It was done, paid in full.

There were some things yet to be finished, completed, but they were as good as done. He did have to die physically to complete the picture of death, and that was to come. But it was as good as done. Sometimes the Lord spoke like this. For example, in John 17:4, this is what we call the high priestly prayer of Jesus Christ. Jesus said "I have glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou has given Me to do." Wait a minute! This is the night before He's crucified. How could He say I have accomplished the work which You have given Me to do" It wasn't accomplished. It wasn't done. But here again, it's that work that is as good as done.

Nothing can interfere. The process is in motion and it will be completed.

And so in the sixth word, Jesus Christ is declaring that His mission of bringing redemption, providing the basis of redemption for mankind, has now been completed. He has suffered for the sins of the world. He has paid the wages of spiritual death for their sins. He is about to yield up His physical life as the last demand of God's justice against human sin.

His physical life was necessary. There are some Christians that want to say no, it was only the spiritual death. 1 Peter 2:24 gives us a better insight, though. 1 Peter 2:24, says, "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to the sin nature and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." Those wounds were not in His human spirit, those wounds were in His physical body. So His body was involved in the suffering for sin, as was His spiritual death. So His imminent physical death is an absolute certainty. And that's why He could say it is finished, though, He did have to die physically and is treated as an accomplished fact as He often spoke in that language.

These are the greatest words of victory ever pronounced to the human race since the fall of Adam. While the world viewed the death of Jesus Christ as an enormously great defeat, it was, in truth, a total triumph over Satan and Satan's authority over death. Jesus Christ moistened His mouth and His throat with the cheap vinegar wine that they gave Him, and then He shouted His victory message of Mission Accomplished. In John 19:28, He said, "I am thirsty." Then He continued in verse 29, "A jar full of sour wine," vinegar, "was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop," That was interesting that they should use the hyssop as a pole, as a stick on which to get the sponge up to His mouth so He could moisten His lips, because the hyssop was part of what was used in the Passover feast. This was the Passover feast. Jesus Christ was fulfilling the final Passover lamb to be sacrificed for the sins of the world. So interestingly enough, they used a branch of hyssop. They brought it up to His mouth. "When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished.'"

Psalm 22 is a description of Christ on the cross. Amazing because it was written 800 years before there was any knowledge of the means of execution such as crucifixion. Yet one has only to read the Psalm and recognize it as crucifixion. The Jews did not crucify people, they stoned them. But here was a method of crucifixion, not even yet invented. Yet the Bible, always predicting what's ahead, in Psalm 22:15 we read, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and Thou dost lay me in the dust of death." Here again, Christ indicating His intense thirst. Then, as we have seen in Psalm 69:21, "They gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." You've seen it in the Old Testament. Eight hundred years later, you've seen it fulfilled in the New Testament.

So the moment of victory over sin was the fulfillment of the commitment of Jesus Christ that had been made in the Council of the Godhead. An eternity passed when He volunteered to take on a human body, a sinless body, and to die for the sins of mankind as required by the Father. And in Psalm 40:8 Christ says, I do Thy will always O God.

So the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world had infinite value, because He was a sinless God man.

What a sense of exhilaration possessed Jesus Christ as He finally was able to utter these words of mission accomplished. Because He could have failed at any point, broken down and taking that suffering and humanity, that separation from God the Father. But He fulfilled His mission. The full significance then, of the sixth word is He announced full forgiveness of all our sins and the imputation to us of absolute righteousness.

Please remember that salvation is those 2 things. Your sins are forgiven. That's not enough to take you to heaven. You have to have the positive. You have to be as good as Jesus Christ. You have to have His absolute righteousness imputed to you. The sixth word declares that no one can add anything for his personal salvation to what Jesus Christ has done on the cross. Ephesians 2:8:9, The great and dramatic declaration of Salvation by an act of God on the behalf of a believing sinner, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that," that salvation, "not of yourselves; it is a gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast." The Book of Titus stresses the same principle that it is an act of God, and human beings have nothing to do with providing salvation. Titus 3:5-6 "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior."

There's an enormous movement all over the world today upon millions and millions of Catholics who are turning to the Virgin Mary in great adoration, and in great prayer, and in great expectation, that she might bring them through the confrontation with the Son who is viewed as being an angry God. When indeed He has covered sin and it is not an issue. But here the Word of God says "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness." But the Roman Catholic Church and many religious groups say, yes, you have to do something to be saved. You have to add something to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. These people do not realize millions of them as religious as they could be, that the devil has deceived them.

So what's so good about you and me? Why is it that you sit here? No explanation but the sovereign choice of God to bring you into enlightenment.

That is always true. Nobody ever comes into Berean Church except by a divine act of God as suddenly He leads them here, and suddenly they wake up and realize there is something in the Bible far beyond the rinky tink surface things that have always been associated with religious experience. Suddenly they realize I can't live without the Word of God. That is my food. Matthew 4:4 is right! Man cannot live by bread alone! He has to have a spiritual feeding or he will break down.

So therefore, if all of this is true, it is finished and it's perfectly done, and it cannot be revised by anybody, trying to add religious rituals, personal penance or good deeds to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is an act of blasphemy. It is man trying to act as his own God. The pagan Roman Catholic mass re-sacrifices Jesus Christ on the cross. That is the height of blasphemy. It is an insult to God the Father. And where does such an idea come from? Like most of Catholicism, it is a hybrid with Christianity and Nimrod's religion. Nimrod, the leader at the Tower of Babel, who created his own religion. The religion that came out of Babylon, the Babylonianism, and we have all the ancient records of how that religion conducted itself. And it had a Pontifex Maximus, which was Nimrod, the highest of all the priests; that's the Pope now, he bears that very title. And they performed a ceremony where they ate their God by using bread and wine, representing the body of their God and the blood of their God. And they had the ceremony of eating their God. That has been taken over in the Roman Catholicism as the mass. That is the number one way by which a person pays for his temporal sins by attending the mass and supposedly Christ being transformed, those elements of bread and wine transformed into His body again.

Put that all up against re-sacrificing Christ, His having to die again, and again. You having to make a provision again and again for your salvation. Compare that to just the book of Hebrews alone.

Hebrews 7:26-27. "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest," as Jesus, "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because He did once for all when He offered up Himself." Jesus doesn't have to repeat the sacrifices like the Aaronic priests did, because those were animal sacrifices which were a temporary covering. His sacrifice was once for all. He doesn't have to be sacrificed again on the altars of the Roman Catholic Church.

Hebrews 9:11-12, "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;" Christ did not deal with the earthly tabernacle. He dealt with the reality of that tabernacle in heaven, "and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Hebrews 9:24-26 "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one," the one in heaven, "but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year, with blood not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Once for all... Hebrews 9:28, "so Christ also, having been offered once for all to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, and to those who eagerly await Him." He's coming back in the rapture for us, to fulfill, make our salvation a reality in our experience as it is now in our position.

How about Hebrews Chapter 10:10-13? This is a great one. "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." He was involved physically in the death for our sins. Every priest stands daily, ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. "But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."

That is a significant statement. No priest of the Old Testament Aaronic order could ever sit down. He always had to be on his feet, making one more sacrifice, one more sacrifice.

But Jesus, His was once for all. How dare Catholicism say you must add your works to complete what the Scripture says in the perfect tense He did once for all. It goes on forever and cannot be interrupted.

In 1 Peter 3:18-19, this is well placed together. 1 Peter 3:18:19 "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in order to bring us to God." See the passive voice again. Not you bring yourself to God, active voice. He brings us to God. Otherwise you wouldn't come. Continuing, "Having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison." After his crucifixion, before his resurrection, He went and spoke to all those people who are in Hades, in Abraham's bosom or the paradise part, where all the saved people were kept in Hades. Why? Because God said I'm giving you eternal life on credit. I can't take you into heaven because the price for your salvation has not been paid. My justice has not been satisfied. Then He went to these people and said "have I got good news for you folks. I have paid the price. 72 hours I'm going to be in the grave, 72 hours to the very hour, to the very minute, then I will rise back up. My Father is going to bring Me back to life. But I want to tell you that the price has been paid. You don't have to stay here anymore. Let's go. I'm taking you into heaven.

You may now enter your eternal dwelling place." What a victory announcement that was! And the Catholics are doing what, ... sacrificing Him again so that they can make it, what millions have already made by faith?

Requirement for salvation is this. If you haven't learned anything else from these words on the cross, in heaven's name, learn this. The requirements for salvation by grace is only faith in what God has provided through the death of Jesus Christ.

That alone! Acts 16:31, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved," period. No question about it. John 3:16, "for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son," that is His unique son, "that whosoever believes in Him, should not perish, but have eternal life." In Revelation 20:15, it says that whosoever was not written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be in the Lake of Fire forever. Isn't that interesting? Two whosoevers. One here in John 3:16 that has the whosoever who accepted Christ as personal savior and believed Him when He said "it is finished." The other, the other stream of humanity who said, "I don't believe that, it's not that simple, it's more complex."

It is that simple. And the only reason people think it's complex is because they don't believe what is simple, God's simple answer and God's simple provision. John 6:47, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life." That is the greatest blasphemous treatment of any verse perhaps in the Bible, this one right here. Truly, truly, absolutely, no question about it. Jesus said, as I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. Catholics say, "oh, no, not just he who believes, it's he who does the works that are assigned by the priests in the church. It is those who have done enough works. Those eventually through purgatory who will have enough works," or as the Mormons say, "to prove yourself worthy. If you prove yourself worthy by your efforts and you will go to heaven."

So what is the message that you have? You follow Jack Smith's system. You clear yourself with God, that you are in temporal fellowship, and your walk is with him, in fellowship with the will of the Father. Then you ask. I'm ready. I have the evangelism brochures in my hand. If I do nothing more than to give one this day to a person I had to deal with; I'd like to bring someone to Berean Church and open up the deep things of the Spirit of God, from salvation to the full counsel of God.

So being saved God's way by grace is not believe and repent of your sins. You don't go and mourn and weep and wail about your sins.

You cannot repent of your sins unless you believe. They are 2 sides of the same coin. If you want to repent of your sins, as the Scripture does say that is required, the way you repent is you say, "I'm wrong. Christ is right. I changed my mind." That's what repent means, "and I believe in him." You cannot repent without believing.

It is not believe and confess your sins. There are some groups that just want you to get up in public and confess your sins. When you see the TV evangelists getting in trouble, and they confess their sins on TV, boy, do you ever know that you're listening to the voice of Satan? Nobody who understands 1 John 1:9 would ever get up publicly and confess their sins. It'll hit you out of the blue. I've had people walk into a Berean Church service and come forward and I'm seeing somebody come after me. People always get mad at things I say. I'm always worried that someone's going to come after me. Night and day, I worry about that... Here's this guy charging down the aisle one time and came up, "I'm such a terrible sinner. I just want to confess my sin to the people." I said, "Go hang your dirty laundry someplace else. We don't want to hear it. Give it to God. It's His business, not ours." It'll surprise you how many people are told you must confess your sins to be saved.

It's not believe and walk down the aisle in order to publicly profess Him. Some churches just couldn't stay in business if they didn't get a raising of hands. If nothing more than just to pray for you, they've got to get people to do something. What do they tell people? You want to go to heaven, believe on Lord Jesus Christ and do something. Do this. Add to it! They never get through their heads Ephesians 2:8:9 and the Titus 3 passage. It is not by works of righteousness, which we have done.

Being saved is not believe AND be water baptized. Water baptism will only make a wet sinner out of a dry one. That's all. It will not get you to heaven. I cannot tell you how many people have come to me when we have a baptismal service and said I want to be baptized again. I did it ritualistically through my church, through my parents. I didn't have the foggiest notion what I was doing. That's why we don't allow children before junior age to even request to be baptized.

We don't allow them to take the Lord's Supper. Because they don't fully understand the magnificence and the seriousness of what they're doing. Until they hit the fourth grade, they're not even mature enough to think about this, let alone then. But people who find that they went through a ritual that was meaningless, they say now I'm ready to make a testimony that baptism will make.

It's not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and join a church. That has nothing to do with salvation. It is not believe and live a good life. That salvation is a commitment, that's wrong. The Bible will not give you salvation as a commitment; only by an act of acceptance. There is no such thing in the Bible as believe and do something to be saved. The sin problem has been forever resolved, for God's holiness is now satisfied for every person. So the only issue is, will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved?

Then we come to that magnificent final and seventh word where it's all finally brought to an end? And we shall look at that next time. God, our father, we thank you for this.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1999

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