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Beverly E.C.C., Chicago, IL

“IT IS FINISHED”

John 19:30

☐ John 19:30: **“Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”**

“It is finished.” {Msg} **“It’s done...”** This is the Lord’s **sixth word from the cross.**

☹ **“It is finished”** can be a whimper of defeat. It can mean external defeat and internal despair, crushing failure or unwilling surrender. It can seal the death of a marriage, a career, or a cherished hope.

☑ I remember the woman who sobbed in a hospital emergency room, “It’s all over. It’s done.” She had just lost her second husband to a massive heart attack, as she had lost her first husband some years before in the same E.R. She told that me her life was finished, done, over.

→ To some people, Christ’s sixth word from the cross sounds like “I give up.” Yet The Messiah is not the tragic figure of Good Friday (that role was played by sinners). He said, with total confidence: {Jn 10:18, NLT} **“No one can take my life from me. I lay down my life voluntarily.”**

☺ **“It is finished”** can be a cry of sheer relief. It can mean the certainty of a diagnosis after the stress of not knowing, the end of a difficult project after a series of setbacks, or well-needed rest after a futile struggle.

☑ In July 2001 AmyLynn fell and bit through her tongue. Part of it was hanging on by a flap. We rushed her to the Urgent Care at 99th and Western and held her

hands as they stitched her tongue. It was such a relief when the doctor finally said, “It’s finished.”

→ To some people, Christ’s sixth word sounds like, “At least that’s done.” Surely, he was glad when his suffering was over, yet he was a man of steely resolve. We see this so clearly in Gethsemane where his soul was {Mt 26:38, NLT} **“crushed with grief”** and still he prayed three times, **“Not as I will, but as you will.”**

☺ Sometimes, **“It is finished”** is a shout of great triumph. It can mean external victory and internal fulfillment, the fruit of dogged perseverance or unexpected success. It can mark the beginning of a new life, fresh opportunities, or higher aspirations.

☑ Beth and I joyfully said something like **“It is finished”** when each of our daughters was born. What a thrill it was to hold those precious new lives for the first time!

☆ To some people, Christ’s sixth word from the cross sounds nothing like a cry of triumph. Yet in prophesying his death he said, {Jn 27} **“It was for this very reason I came to this hour.”** His **“It is finished”** was, first and foremost, a declaration of victory.

It was another way of saying, “It is accomplished! I have fulfilled my purpose! I have completed my mission!”

What was accomplished? What purpose did Christ fulfill? What mission did he complete?

✝ By his death Jesus made amends for our sin, bearing our guilt and paying the penalty we deserve. John 1:29: “[Behold], **the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**” And First John 2:2: **“He**

is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

✠ By his death Jesus ransomed us from slavery to sin. Matthew 20:28: **“the Son of Man [came] ... to give his life as a ransom for many.”**

✠ By his death Jesus reconciled us to God. Romans 5:10: **“When we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son.”**

✠ By his death Jesus has expanded the Covenant to include us Gentiles who trust in him. Ephesians 2:13: **“now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.”**

✠ By his death Jesus conquered Satan and death. Hebrews 2:14-15: **“he... shared in [our] humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”**

✪ Jesus has achieved all this, and much more. By his death and subsequent resurrection and ascension, he has accomplished an even larger purpose: to establish God’s Kingdom and bring many sons and daughters into it. Coming from his lips, **“It is finished”** means “Mission accomplished!”

What about you and me? Is it finished in us?

Has the Gospel come to life within us? Or has our hearing been more about information than formation and transformation?

Have we entered the rest of the finished work of Christ? Or are we shedding blood, sweat and tears to earn God’s approval?

Has the work of Good Friday borne its fruit in us? Or are we {Eph 2:1} **“dead in [our] sins”**?

The day will come when you and I will breathe our last, when each of us will say **“It is finished.”** Will it be a whimper of defeat, a mere cry of relief, or a shout of triumph? The answer will depend on our response to the Messiah and his work on the cross

“Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

This is the Word of the Lord.