

“It Is Finished”

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*“When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said,
It is finished: and he gave up the ghost.”—John 19:30*

How terribly have these blessed words of Christ been misunderstood, misappropriated and misapplied! How many seem to think that on the cross the Lord Jesus accomplished a work which rendered it **unnecessary** for the beneficiaries of it to live holy lives on earth. So many have been deluded into thinking that, so far as reaching heaven is concerned, it matters not how they walk provided they are “resting on the finished work of Christ.” They may be unfruitful, untruthful, disobedient, yet (though they may possibly miss some millennial crown) so long as they repudiate all righteousness of their own and have faith in Christ, they imagine they are “eternally secure.”

All around us are people who are worldly-minded, money-lovers, pleasure-seekers, Sabbath-breakers, yet who think all is well with them because they have “accepted Christ as their personal Saviour.” In their aspiration, conversation, and recreation, there is practically nothing to differentiate them from those who make no profession at all. Neither in their home-life nor social-life is there anything save empty pretensions to distinguish them from others. The fear of God is not upon them, the commands of God have no authority over them, the holiness of God has no attraction for them.

“It is finished.” How solemn to realize that these words of Christ must have been used to lull thousands into a false peace. Yet such is the case. We have come into close contact with many who have no private prayer-life, who are selfish, covetous, dishonest, but who suppose that a merciful God will overlook all such things provided they once put their trust in the Lord Jesus. What a horrible perversion of the truth! What a turning of God’s grace “into lasciviousness”! (Jude 4). Yes, those who now live the most self-seeking and flesh-pleasing lives, talk about their faith in the blood of the Lamb, and suppose they are safe. How the devil has deceived them!

“It is finished.” Do those blessed words signify that Christ so satisfied the requirement of God’s holiness that holiness no longer has any real and pressing claims upon us? Perish the thought. Even to the redeemed God says, “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (I Peter 1:16). Did Christ “magnify the law and make it honorable” (Isa. 42:21) that we might be lawless? Did He “fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15) to purchase for us an immunity from loving God with all our hearts and serving Him with all our faculties? Did Christ die in order to secure a divine indulgence that we might live to please self? Many seem to think so. No, the Lord Jesus has left His people an example that they should “follow (not ignore) His steps.”

“It is finished.” What was “finished? The need for sinners to repent? No indeed. The need for turning to God from idols? No indeed. The need for mortifying my members which are upon earth? No indeed. The need for being sanctified wholly, in spirit, and soul, and body? No indeed. Christ died not to make my sorrow for, hatred of, and striving against sin, useless. Christ died not to absolve me from the full discharge of my responsibilities unto God. Christ died not so that I might go on retaining the friendship and fellowship of the world. How passing strange that any should think that He did. Yet the actions of many show that this is their idea.

“It is finished.” What was “finished?” The sacrificial types were accomplished, the prophecies, of His sufferings were fulfilled, the work given Him by the Father had been perfectly done, a sure foundation had been laid on which a righteous God could pardon the vilest transgressor of the law who threw down the weapons of his warfare against Him. Christ had now performed all that was necessary in order for the Holy Spirit to come and work in the hearts of His people; convincing them of their rebellion, slaying their enmity against God, and producing in them a loving and obedient heart.

O, dear reader, make no mistake on this point. The “finished work of Christ” avails you **nothing** if your heart has never been **broken** through an agonizing consciousness of your sinfulness. The “finished work of Christ” avails you nothing unless you have been saved from the power and pollution of sin (Matt. 1:21). It avails you nothing if you still love the world (I John 2:15). It avails you **nothing** unless you are a **“new creature”** in Him (II Cor .5:17). If you value your soul, search the Scriptures to see for yourself; take no man’s word for it.