

Good Friday, March 30, 2018, 3 p.m.
What Makes Good Friday Good?

The Bible records seven sayings of Jesus on the cross:

1. Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
2. Luke 23:43, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."
3. John 19:26–27, "Woman, behold your son!" [John] "Behold your mother!"
4. Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"
5. John 19:28, "I am thirsty."
- 6. John 19:30, "It is finished!"**
7. Luke 23:46, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."

A series of sermons could be done on each one of those sayings of Christ, but today I want to focus on "It is finished!"

Jesus knew that all had been done, and so He said, "I am thirsty," it was about three o'clock. A soldier fixed a sponge on the tip of a spear and held it up to Jesus' lips, after which Jesus cried out, "*It is finished*," He then said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit," and with that He gave up His own life.

Jesus' cry, "It is finished!" is just one word in Greek, the word *tetelestai*, pronounced [*teh-tel-es-sty*]. This expression or phrase was part of the everyday language during the time of Jesus, in a variety of situations.

When a servant completed a difficult job that his master had given him to do, he would say to his master *tetelestai*, implying that all difficulties and obstacles had been overcome in order to complete the job, to the best of his ability, and it is finished!

When a merchant at the market place made a sale and payment was handed to him, he would say *tetelestai*, confirming that the correct amount had been given, i.e., "You have made full payment, the transaction is complete."

When an artist finished a painting he might stand back and look at it, then say, *tetelestai* it is finished, i.e., "there is nothing more I can do or add to make this painting any better, it is completed."

When children concluded their chores around the house or out in the field, they would say to their parents, *tetelestai* "I have finished all my chores."

When Jesus spoke from the cross "*It is finished*," He was declaring that everything required of Him by Father was completed, for He had satisfied the full payment for our sins.

Jesus took our punishment for sin; He cancelled our total sin debt by paying it with His own life. No doubt, some of those who heard Jesus say *tetelestai*, knew that something supernatural and earth shaking had just happened.

Matthew 27:50-53, "*And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. 51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. 52 The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. 53 They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.*

Sin separates us from God, if you want to go to heaven to be with God, the curse and condemnation of sin must be removed. For that reason God sent His Son into the world, Jesus died on the cross to remove sin's power to condemn us.

The reconciliation of the relationship between God and humanity that existed in the very beginning, before sin entered creation, was restored at the cross. Salvation is complete, forgiveness has been rendered, "It is finished!"

That's why we call today "Good Friday." It certainly wasn't a good day for Jesus, who was rejected by His own people, dragged before Annan, Caiaphas, Pilate, Herod, returned to Pilate, mocked by the soldiers, flogged almost to death, made to carry His own cross to the site of execution, after which He was nailed to the cross through His hands and feet, and he suffered in agony for six hours before He died.

It is "Good Friday" because the cross is proof of God's merciful, gracious, and sovereign love for us, love so powerful that it conquered sin and death in order to redeem us, and to make us God's own children.

When Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?" we sense something of the terror of bearing the weight of the sins of all humanity. God did this because of His great and merciful love for us.

Isaiah 53:3-6, *"He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

Jesus was sentenced to death, although He was innocent of any crime. His blood was shed as final payment to God for our sins; He was then buried, and on the third day He rose from the grave, demonstrating eternal life.

Hebrews 9:22, *"the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. 26, "He [Jesus Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself." 28, "Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him."*

Hebrews 10:4-5, *"it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body you prepared for Me."*

The Bible declares that everyone is a sinner deserving death, yet God in His great mercy grants forgiveness and eternal life, through His One and Only Son, Jesus Christ; through His own sacrificial death He made payment for our sins; He took our punishment so that we could be set free from sin's penalty.

Romans 3:23-24, *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."*

Romans 5:8, *"God demonstrates His own love for us in this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." 10, "We were God's enemies, but we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son."*

Romans 6:23, *"The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Acts 4:12, *"There is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

Romans 10:9-10, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." **13** "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

"It is finished," is God's sovereign declaration that full payment for sin was made by the Son and received by God the Father, through the power of God the Holy Spirit, as Jesus' last words declare, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."

1John 5:10-13, "Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

Jesus willingly endured the most horrific and lonely death, in order to provide forgiveness and eternal life, this is God's greatest demonstration of His love for us.

Jesus is the Son of God, the Suffering Servant of God. The reason God came to earth in the flesh of a baby [Immanuel], was fully revealed and realized at the cross, on that Passover Friday when Jesus [God's Salvation] was crucified: God's Lamb was the only acceptable sacrifice for sin's curse; His blood was shed for you and for me, in order that we might ultimately live forever, in heaven, with Him.

When Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" He was proclaiming that sin's curse and condemnation had been eternally removed from everyone who would, by faith, trust in Him as Savior; and that is what makes Good Friday Good! But what if the crucifixion was all we had, what if Jesus did not rise from the grave? What if we only received forgiveness for sins, but not eternal life?

Matthew 9:1-7, "Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." And the man got up and went home.

God the father validated Jesus' authority to forgive sin, and we have no reason to doubt Him who said (**John 11:25-26**), "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" I can say unabashedly, I do believe I have received forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord, how about you?

In order to demonstrate and to prove that all those who believe in Jesus are saved through Him, Jesus came out of the grave alive, just like He said that He would, on the third day.

May the LORD bless you and keep you, and be gracious to you. May The LORD turn His face toward you, shine upon you, and give you peace" (Deuteronomy 6:22-24).

Pastor Mike <'(((><