

# “It is Finished”

John 19:28-30

This Good Friday evening, we remember that dark day when the Savior of the world was nailed to a cross by the people He came to save. Christ hangs on the cross, and He cries out, “It is finished.”

But this is not the moan of defeat. This is not the sigh of anguish or sorrow. This is a cry of Victory. Christ died declaring His victory over death. This is the triumphant announcement that He has now fully accomplished the work that He came to do.

This was an announcement that all who were present at the cross needed to hear. Therefore Christ calls for a drink to moisten His parched throat, and to fulfill what He had told His disciples – that He would not drink again from the fruit

of the vine until all things were accomplished. And as is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, He let out a loud cry, and He died. The loud cry that He gave is this triumphant declaration, "It is finished!"

When we think of Jesus "coming into His kingdom," we are to have in mind His Passion, death, and resurrection. Certainly we long for His return and ushering in a new reality to the kingdom of God. But, for us, our eyes are to be fixed on the cross of Jesus and His empty grave.

The purpose of Jesus Christ the Son of God coming to earth was not just to heal people of leprosy or blindness, or to demonstrate His power by feeding people or walking on the water. He came here to die. He came here to fulfill what was necessary to free us from our sin. He came here to fulfill what God had promised throughout the Old Testament. He came here to be crushed and to be made to suffer. He came here to be pierced for our transgressions; to be wounded for our iniquity. He came here to be the source of our eternal salvation. He came here to die so that we might live.

The Son of God came to earth to be humiliated. He came here to be spit upon, beaten, have the flesh torn off His back by the whips of the soldiers, to be stripped naked and hung on a tree by nails. The sinless Son of God came to pour out His blood, so that the penalty of your sin and mine is paid in full.

“It is finished!” Jesus cries out and proclaims His victory. But it is really our victory. Through that one, horrible, painful, humiliating death, each one of us is spared an eternity of what Christ suffered that one, dark afternoon.

Throughout this Lenten season, we have had the underlying theme that Jesus came to earth and to the cross because He was the only One who could fix the problem of death.

We call this day “Good Friday” with good reason. God our Father sent His Son to give up His spirit so that our spirits can be welcomed into heaven and will one day join in the resurrection of the body. We call this day “Good Friday” because, with the death of Jesus, God has fixed the problem of death.

In the Lord’s Prayer, we pray, “But deliver us from evil.” Luther says in his

catechism that “We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.”

As Martin Luther says in his Large Catechism, this petition is not just “against specific evils that emanate from the devil’s kingdom and may befall us: poverty, dishonor, death, in short, all the wretched miseries and heartaches of which there are so innumerably many on earth.” But this is a prayer for salvation, that we not be deceived out of our faith through the evil of this world luring us or distracting us from keeping our eyes fixed on the cross of Jesus and the reality that “It is finished.”

It was His confidence in the resurrection that caused Jesus to proclaim victory over sin, death, and Satan. He came to fix the problem of death. It is our confidence in our Lord Jesus Christ and His proclamation that “It is finished” that allows us to call this otherwise bleak and bloody day, Good Friday. Amen.