**It is Finished**

Good morning, everybody. Uh, we're going to be looking at our sixth of our seven statements of Jesus upon the cross. We're going to look at that in a moment. If you have your Bibles, this John chapter 19, verse 28 to 30, we're going to be looking at, um, I think most of us now have started to find one person in our world that has at least some touch with the Corona virus.

Um, just in the last. Day or two. Um, we have found one very close to home here. I wanted you to know so you can be praying. Pastor Jim has been diagnosed with the, uh, Corona virus. Uh, he's doing well, but he and Ann have been in seclusion for. 10 to 14 days and on how long? And uh, it looks like that's going to be a little longer now he's doing well.

Um, but did want you to know that we can be praying for it as we probably all are going to hear more people that we know and love that are impacted by this. I'd like to read John 19 verse 28. Um, and we're in the same passage that pastor Mike was last week. Where he had a three word statement of Jesus, and I have one as well.

John chapter 19 verse 28 later, knowing that all was now completed and so that the scriptures would be fulfilled. Jesus said, I am thirsty. A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stock of the hyssop plant, and he lifted it to Jesus' lips when he had received the drink.

Jesus said, it is finished. With that. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Let's pray together. Father, we come to you this morning and we're conscious that there are people watching this video, um, all over our area in family rooms, living rooms, and God, now we seek to hear your word. I pray that you would teach us from this.

This astonishing statement of Jesus, it is finished. Help us to learn from it. Understand that we pray, we pray, Lord, for continued help and guidance in all of our family's lives, individual's lives. We think of Jim and Anne that you would protect them. Bring Jim out of this soon. I pray and. Uh, God continued to care for families here that are in distress, duress.

Um, the unknown. Lord, we look to you in, in our times of confusion, perplexing. And we pray that you would speak to us and lead us now in Jesus name. Amen. We've been looking at the seven statements of Jesus. Um, we're doing that. And the first of those statements was. Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing.

The second one was, today you will be with me in paradise. The third woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother. Those took place between 9:00 AM and 12:00 PM then a second group of statements was made and actually probably at close to three hours later at the earliest, because these four statements all took place toward the latter part of the.

It should actually be 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, um, period. And in that section from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, we see these four statements. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Secondly, I am thirsty. Uh, the, the sixth statement is the one we're going to look at today. It is finished and the seventh is. Father into your hands.

I commit my spirit, which will be at our six o'clock. Good Friday service, uh, coming up this Friday. You'll notice here he says in John 1930 it is finished. It is finished, not I am finished, which we might expect him to say. So the question is what's the it that he's referring to? And I'd like to look at that asking two questions.

Number one, what did Jesus mean by these words? Secondly, what can those words mean to you? We're going to spend more time looking at the first one, but what did Jesus mean when he, when he uttered these words upon the cross? He's been in his earthly journey about 30 years. Apparently. This is not just his, his death cry.

Uh, there's another statement he'll make after this, and also the particular words that he chose, uh, wouldn't really make any particular sense. Um. To make as a final statement. As we'll see later on, he says it is finished and Jesus is very conscious of a special calling upon his life that there was a specific purpose in him.

His being here, and. In his in scriptures that we find in the gospels. There's a couple of ways that this is illustrated that he was very conscious of this, this mission. First we see, he used metaphors that refer to it. Uh, two particular metaphors. The first metaphor is drinking the cup and, and his mission defined by metaphors.

A first passage you'd be Mark 10 38, where it says this, can you drink the cup? I drink. Or be baptized with the baptism that I am. Those two metaphors are used often of Jesus, of his mission, the cup that I'm going to drink. Uh, the sense of that, that this is something that when he, when he drank the cup, it's, it's fully partaken of that.

It is. That we would use the term, we drain it dry. He would drink the cup, and secondly to be baptized, to be immersed in an event in Luke 12 verse 50 he said, but I have a baptism to undergo and how distressed I am until it is completed. At the end of his life, Jesus wrestled with what this event would include and in the garden a few hours before the crucifixion, he wrestled with how horrible it would be.

To complete his mission. And he used one of these metaphors. Here's what he said, father, if you are willing, take this cup from me yet, not my will, but yours be done. Later that night, he is now with the disciples and um, Judas has come and Peter is trying to defend him and now he's determined to drink that cup to the full.

And he says this, put your sword away. Peter. Shall I not drink the cup the father has given me. It's obvious that the metaphors of the cup that he's going to drink of the baptism that he's going to be immersing himself in is referring to the work of the cross. That would transpire just a few hours after this garden scene.

It's also clear what this is referring to, that the the cross work of Jesus is referring to because he says. It is a mission defined by clear decorations of Jesus constantly in his gospels and in the epistles as well. John the Baptist, the first time he saw Jesus, when Jesus launched his public ministry, he says this in John chapter one look, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, that he recognized.

This is why he's here. This is his mission is to come and to take away sin. Mark 10:45 for even the son of man did not come to be served. But to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. First Timothy chapter one, excuse me, Luke 1910 for the son of man came to seek and to save what was lost.

First Timothy1:15 Christ. Jesus came into the world. This is why he came to save sinners and first John 3:5 but you know that he, Jesus appeared so that he might take away our sins. His mission. His purpose, that what she says is finished, is completed, is referring to a particular work that is taking place here upon the cross to rescue others what was finished.

So now let's look at the specific statement he maids. During the last couple of centuries since actually around just the early 1800 scholars have begun to look into the, okay. Many archeological digs have turned up a host, thousands of papyri. Of, of written records that have writing on them. And many of them are mundane commercial documents that they found.

And in those commercial documents, which are often in the form of receipts, they have found an expression that is continually placed at the, uh, over the document. And it is the statement tetelestai It literally means. The debt is paid, that it is paid in full. The obligation has been completed in the Greek.

When Jesus says it is finished, it is actually the literal word tetelestai He is saying literally. The debt is paid, paid in full, the obligation completed. It's actually a fascinating phrase when you think about it, that Jesus is here talking about his whole mission and he's saying, my whole calling and purpose in coming to earth is being completed at this moment just before he dies.

And he says it by the term the debt is now paid. Oh yeah. We might appropriately ask the question what that and, and he seems to be implying clearly that it is not in relationship to himself because everything about the work that he's going to do on the cross, he says this, for others going to save others.

It can be a ransom for others. It's all about other people. So what we might ask this question, what that do we have? I mean, what do we owe God. We, we, we understand, you know, and it, we'd done bad things and, and we've screwed up. But, but, but, but how, how are we in debt? How do we owe God that Jesus could say the debt is paid?

Well, there are two things that I think are very important to understand here. Number one, a penalty had to be paid. We use this term often in our culture. You heard it all the time around the Michael Vick thing, a, a quarterback in the NFL that, that, um, had a dog anyway, had abuse for dogs. Uh, they did. The dogs went to prison for it.

Everybody agrees rightly so. When he came out, there was a lot of argument about whether Michael Vick, who had now spent time in prison who had lost virtually his entire. A state financially should be able to continue on with his career. And some people were saying no, and the argument which, which I think it was a realistic one to say, you may not agree with what he did or like what he did.

You may not want to go watch him play. It's up to you. But to say he shouldn't have a job, people would argue that he should be able to have a livelihood. He should be able to work. And they would often make this statement because he paid his debt to society. Now what were they saying by that? And we're saying the penalty that our legal system put upon Michael Vick for his illegal heinous behavior to those dogs.

He has paid that penalty. He has experienced it. It has come upon him. And so what he owed to the legal system. What's paid. The debt has been paid. Sin is viewed as a guilt that we have gained and we have accrued against God, and there is a penalty that is affixed to it. We owe to God the debt. Of receiving that penalty and that penalty must be paid.

That penalty. As I mentioned two weeks ago in the sermon, when Jesus cried out to the father, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Or literally, why have you abandoned me? Was Jesus Christ experiencing an eternal penalty for sin in a, in a, in a moment or moments of time being an eternal being? And as I mentioned in that sermon, Jesus was abandoned.

So you would never have to be by God. He was abandoned for us. Now, Jesus is saying by the sixth statement that the penalty for sinful rebellion for our sinful betrayal has been paid. We have paid our debt to God or Jesus is paying the debt that is owed to God. I was talking to a friend, uh, this week and Tom made an interesting statement.

We were talking about just Jesus and his work in our lives. And he was talking about, as he was thinking about Easter, he made this statement. He was, he was talking about the, the, the penalty for sin, the punishment for sin. And he and I, I believe that these are exact words. He said it all came down to this.

God, the father could put it all on me or he could put it all on Christ. He chose Christ. Even though it was me who had done all the sin. That's exactly when Jesus says it's finished. He saying the penalty is fully paid. We don't have any debt that has to be paid. Secondly, there is a righteousness that has to be lived.

If we are going to experience heaven, if we're going to live eternally in a relationship with God. We must live according to God's principles that that is described as righteousness. And the entrance requirement to heaven is total righteousness. There is no sin in heaven, and in this sense, and I haven't lost my, my theology or my salvation by this statement, but heaven is earned.

It is earned. As a matter of fact, there's a guy that came to Jesus one day, a rich young ruler, and he says, Lord, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Now, most of us would have said, you don't have to do anything. It's free, but Jesus didn't do that. Jesus said this. what must you do to inherit eternal life?

You must follow the commandments. Do not commit any start to list of, did not commit adultery, do not lie, do not murder. And the guy's listening and he's getting happier and happier, and he says, his response is, Jesus. I'm your man. All of these I've done since I was a child. And then what Jesus said is, okay, there's a little Willy paraphrase of this, but Jesus basically says to him, okay, let's just check that out.

You've done all these commandments, you fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the law. We'll just take one of the commitments. Um, let's go with number 10. You shall not covet. And he says, then go and sell everything you have and give your money to the poor. And the guys quiet and Hama Hama Hama Hama Hama ah, and then he walks away.

Leafs, it says he went away. Sorrowing because he was unwilling to let go. In other words. He was cuffing. He was holding on. He was the word. Covet means the last he was, he didn't ever desire to, to be a rich man and to hold onto it, and he loved that more than righteousness. But Jesus said to him, in order to have eternal life, it's earned.

It's a life of total righteousness. But what this man learned is what the Bible says from cover to cover. No sinful human being can fulfill the command, the standards of righteousness. We needed somebody else to do that for us in order to qualify for eternal life, we owed God a righteous life. He gave us the capacity to live righteously.

We've chosen not to. So someone else needed to do that for us. It's why the theologians co talk about, uh, this righteousness. They use the term an alien. Righteousness, a righteousness outside ourselves. I've used this story before, but we, when I grew up on long Island. We lived in Nassau County right in the center of the Island and there was a place called the mid Island Plaza.

They had the best pizza joint that I have ever been. I loved the place we called it the pizza shop. I'm not even sure that it was named that we would always ride our bikes there and imagine if that pizza shop one time put out an advertisement and they said. We're going to give away a free pizza for any young person that gets total straight A's on their report card.

Well, as much as I wanted a pizza from the pizza shop, I knew that I don't remember many report cards that would have gotten me a pizza, but suppose they had fine print and they said, and we will also accept report cards of your brother or sister. So I looked to my kid, sister Priscilla, five years younger, and I say, Hey, you can get me a free pizza with your report card.

I can get the pizza on the basis of your grades. So we go in, I get my pizza, maybe I share a little bit, and it's an alien righteousness. They're alien grades. They're not mine. Jesus Christ. got consistent straight A's on the report card of righteousness. No one else ever did in thought. He was never envious.

He never coveted. He was never giving in to lust in word. He never lied. He never gossiped. He never manipulated people he never berated or anyone else. He was always trying to build each other up with his word. He fulfilled as Matthew 3:15 says, he fulfilled all righteousness. So here's Jesus. He lives totally righteous, and on the cross he says, two things are happening.

Number one, a debt is being paid where the death that we owed because of sin and the penalty that we should have received. That penalty has been met in Jesus Christ. That's why second Corinthians 5:21 says. God. The father made him Christ who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Our sin was laid on Christ. Christ. Righteousness was laid to our account, and here's what he says on the cross, it's finished. The debt is paid. I've lived the life that they should have lived. The life they owed to God. I've died the death that they should have died. The pet receiving the penalty that they owed because of their sin.

This is what transpired when Jesus said it is finished. The other thing that's true on the cross, he fulfilled the prophecies about, I'm just going to touch on this in this passage in, in verses nine to eight, excuse me, in chapter 19 verse 28 to 30 it says there that later, let me just read the verses because it gives a picture of what I'm trying to say later, knowing that everything had now been finished and so that scripture would be fulfilled.

Jesus said, I'm thirsty. And then it comes down in verse 31 he had received the grank drink. Jesus said, it is finished three times. It says it is, it is finished or it is fulfilled. All were are from the same word. he says, everything's been done. The scriptures has been completely fulfilled, completely brought to finishment and at that moment Jesus says, it's finished.

The scriptures being fulfilled about him certainly were part of what he's referencing here. There's an amazing painting I just became aware of in the last couple of weeks. So I was researching for this, and this is a painting that is actually found in the Brooklyn museum of art. It's by Jim . Uh, it was done in somewhere between 1884 and 1888 and it's a picture of Christ on the cross.

It is entitled. It is finished. And in this particular painting you see down below is Mary. She is reaching up with her arms. But the interesting part of the painting for me in this message in the background are all of these guys with their arms raced and they're the profits to the old Testament prophets, but they're not just raising their arms in their hands.

What they're actually holding up. Is the scriptures that were the writings of prophecies that made about Christ, and they're saying what he's doing is fulfilling my writing. He's fulfilling what I wrote 900 years before. He's fulfilling when I wrote 650 years before he's fulfilling. When I wrote eight centuries before.

These, when we're affirming that all the promises made about Jesus are fulfilled, they have been brought to completion, it is finished. She's assessed. So what are these? What can these words mean to you? Well, it can mean that Jesus frees you from the verdict of rejection. The verdict is in is what Jesus is declaring.

And he says, I have been declared liable. For sinner sins and they can be declared liable for my righteousness. The verdicts can be that you are not on the line anymore, that you are not having to measure up or to get it right. Your whole identity is different if you embrace what Jesus did for you by receiving Christ as your own personal savior and Lord.

One of my favorite video clips of Philadelphia Eagles history is actually back about 30 years. It's from the 1980 1981 season. And after the Eagles had just clinched the NFC East, um, they were meeting in the locker room after a game and Dick for a meal was there and the coach, and he's a very emotional guy.

And. He has been through the, they've had some tough years and the Eagles were terrible before he came and they were tough. It was tough records early on and it eventually got better to the point that they, they now have beat the Cowboys out for the, for the NFC East. And as he's, they've clinched the NFC East championship.

There are 10 or 11 guys in the locker room that have been with him from day one. And he's emotional as he was, and he's crying, and he just says, one of the greatest joys of my life is to bring you guys a championship. And then he starts pointing them out and he says, bill Bergie champion, Harold Carmichael champion.

He goes through each of these guys and says their name. What's he saying? He says, he's saying, these guys have a new identity. It's. They're champions. What Jesus is saying when he says it's finished is this, you have a new identity accepted child of God. It's done. The debt has been paid. Your identity can be different because of what Jesus Christ has done for us here.

The second thing that these words, what they can mean to you. Are that Jesus shows you to live with purpose. We're told where to live our lives, independence on Christ. That's what the Christian life is that we're to live. What one Hudson Taylor called the exchange life. His life within us. Jesus shows us in this statement, part of what that life involves.

Jesus saw his life. As a calling that he was on mission, that he had a purpose in why he was here and why God had him. The father had him living in the years that he was here. I think Jesus reminds us that that's true of our lives as well. We who identify with Christ, we who have named the name of Christ, we who have been brought into relationship with him.

We also are called to live on mission. That includes your whole life. I mean, this is just moments before Jesus will die when he says everything I came to do, the life that I came to live for others, the death that I came to die for others, it's now brought to completion. The debt is fully paid. The mission of my life is done.

It's interesting. Paul said the same thing when he was about to die, and first Timothy four he says this, I've fought the good fight. I finished the race, have kept the faith. If you belong to Jesus Christ, you are called to mission. Ephesians two eight to 10 says it this way, for by grace, you've been saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, but it's a gift of God, not of works, so that no one can boast.

Because we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. And you might be out there saying, well, that's a beautiful thought, man. Uh, that's wonderful for young people, for people who are starting out in life, for people that are, you know, raising their, their young families.

And trying to build their homes for Jesus. They need to be reminded that they have purpose and meaning and calling, and God has prepared in advance works for them to do. But Mark Alma, I'm at the, um, I'm on the final lap of, of, you know, uh, a many lap race. Well, the fact that you're still here means you're still works that God prepared in advance for you to do.

There are still more works to contribute to the kingdom of Christ. Jesus fulfilled his mission right to the end. It also is a mission and purpose that focuses on the future. At everything Jesus was doing there was focused ahead. Paul said it this way and that same passage I just read in in second Timothy four he says, now as I'm departing, there's this in store for me, the crown of righteousness and to everybody who has longed for Jesus appearing.

He said, I've, I've not been living ultimately for this world, but for the world to come, Jesus was doing the same. The other thing that's true is this enables you to endure hardship. Now, Jesus is described in Hebrews 12 this way in verse two for the joy set before him, he endured the cross scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hardships look differently when you have an eternal perspective. When you have a view that has the long road within it. Jesus reminds us by the words it is finished, that it is not ultimately about you doing it, is about what he has done. He has already lived the righteous life that you should have lived.

He has already died. The eternal death that you should have died.

It is finished. The debt is paid. Lord, we look to you. We worship you. You were willing to abandon your son that we would never be abandoned. That you are willing to allow him his righteousness to belay to our account, a horror of our sin laid to his. Lord, we worship you for it. We worship you, Lord Jesus, that you were willing to do that for us to endure the cross for us.

In Jesus name. Amen.