

It Is Finished - Random Thoughts on the Final Moments, Christ's Death, Resurrection and the Battle for the Souls of Men

The Finished Work of Christ.

³⁰**When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.** John 19:30 KJV.

Much is said of the finished work of Christ. I was impressed with the proceedings of this week regarding the passing and burial of the Roman church's papal leader. What stood out in my mind was the glorification beyond the human condition of the man. He was, after all, a man - indeed, a sinner just as we all are. Good works? Yes, he did much for the advancement of the value of human life and human rights but in the final analysis – he was a mere mortal.

All men must be careful who they put their trust in as far as the destiny of their souls. When Jesus said "it is finished" He was referring to the fact that man has nothing to offer by way of good works that would result in their salvation. Witness the remarks of Isaiah. Turn if you would to Isaiah 64. Isaiah is very much of the sinfulness of man. He is also very much aware of the vast gulf between man and God. He begins with a prayer of the fearful presence because came down and visited sinful men.:

¹Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, ²**As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!** ³**When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.** Isa 64:1 - 3.

The problem was that Judah had sinned but the problem was deeper than that as we will see in a moment. So the very thing that Jehovah wanted was impossible because of the rebellion of man. Look at the next remarkable statement of Isaiah:

⁴**For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.** ⁵**Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.**

There is hope for the sinner. In the midst of this gloom and doom Isaiah give out hope; from the beginning of the world God had a plan for sinful man. Interesting. This passage was referred to by Paul with reference to all believers in the church.¹ So there is hope even though all men had continued in their sins - there was hope in Isaiah's time too - what was that hope based on? Perhaps being "good?" No. God has an opinion of our righteousness take a look at verse 6:

⁶**But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.** ⁷**And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to**

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[1 Cor 2:9, 10](#)

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take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. Isaiah 64:6, 7. KJV.

I cannot tell you what the original for filthy rags referred to - it would violate our sensibilities. It was the most disgusting form of uncleanness for the Jew and for that matter for all. These rags had only one way of being handled - they could not be washed - they were discarded. Please bear in mind that we are talking of the best of man's good works – not his sins – those were already dealt with. So the helplessness of man could not be shown more eloquently than was with this passage. And yet there was hope. Look at the next verse:

⁸But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Isa 64:8 KJV.

So man's salvation is a reality based not on what man could do but based on a relationship with **the Father**. Interesting. A dad will not forget a son because of his sins or shortcomings. No. But a dad will be the potter, molding the son with his "hands" his life, advise, chastenings – indeed, by virtue of a personal involvement with the son.

All this just to make this point: that is it and never will be the good works of man that we are saved but because of what Christ did on the cross. He paid the price, He made it possible for a personal relationship with God – indeed the sinner becomes a son of the Father because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Christ's Death.

Look at the last part of our verse "**...and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost...**" Literally His breath which comes out to be His life. No one nor event had power over the life of Christ. He dismissed His life by His own volition. Read John 10:17, 18:

¹⁷Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. ¹⁸No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

The very fact that Jesus dismissed His life confirmed His first statement that He had finished His work of atonement – the sins of men had been paid for – the righteousness of man was judged insufficient! This is a very important point to be made. Paul and the psalmist had reduced the righteousness of man to **nothing**.² Jesus' death was not a defeat - the last thing Satan wanted was this death. He tried to have Jesus slaughtered as a child. He tried to have Jesus stoned by the mob because He has claimed to be the Father's Son – but to be slain as the Lamb of God? No! This was victory over the deadly hold Satan had on men. Once and for all men can have victory over death's grip through the finished work of Christ on the cross and faith in that Work.

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See Romans 3:10, 11 - quoted from Psalm 14.

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The Burial.

Read [John 19:31-42](#)

Holman produces an interesting chart on this final section that might be good to refer to. I'll only reproduce a part of it:

<i>Old Testament Prophecies</i>		<i>New Testament Fulfillment</i>
<i>Psalm 34:49</i>	<i>No Bones broken</i>	<i>John 19:33</i>
<i>Isa 53:9</i>	<i>Buried with the rich</i>	<i>John 19:41</i>

Interesting that Holman left out the prophecy referred to in verse 37 "they shall look upon me:

¹⁰And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. (My emphasis) Zech 12:10 KJV.

John does not make any particular application. May I say that this is a future reference and that there will come a time when the Jew will look at Jesus whom they pierced - they pierced, indeed. It was the Roman soldier who did the piercing – let me say that all mankind participated in this act – it was all our sins that put Jesus on the cross. But I digress. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus gained permission to obtain the body of Jesus. Joseph was a secret disciple – that is he was afraid to step out and witness for Jesus and yet the Lord allowed him to become a part of this privilege. May I say that as much as we deride the "silent" disciple – Jesus is gracious and will work in the life of each fearful disciple and bring him to the point where he will step forward and witness for Christ.

The Empty Tomb.

John skips the account of the resurrection and produces the proof. Interesting to see each disciple's reaction to the empty tomb. It appears that only John had an inkling of the importance of the empty tomb:

⁸Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. ⁹For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

Curious wording – John knew that Jesus' body had not been stolen – it clearly states that he believed – what? What Jesus had taught the disciples. It may be that he did not have a full grasp of the resurrection but given his grasp of the other prophecies I'm going to assign this account to his modesty.

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I skipped the fact that Jesus' first appearance was to Mary Magdalene.³ Much is made of the fact that Jesus first revealed Himself to a woman. I think it might be only that the women seemed to grasp the meaning of Jesus' teaching in this regard and that He meant to be a comfort to Mary and perhaps others who were with her. Mary certainly lost no time in announcing that Jesus had risen just as He said He would. Unfortunately, the man had more difficulty putting things together. I think the most telling part of Jesus' appearance to the disciples was when He appeared to Thomas – doubting Thomas:

²⁷Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. ²⁸And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God. ²⁹Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

It was good that Thomas was finally a believer in what Jesus taught concerning His resurrection but it would have been much better if he had followed Mary's and John's example. Later on Peter makes reference to this experience (perhaps he had this experience in mind) in 1 Peter 1:7 - 9. I want to make one more final comment regarding John's comment in 20:9 **"For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead."** They "knew not" – the negative of eido to see and perceive – the scriptures. Jesus had told them – the scriptures had prophesied His resurrection but they looked and heard yet did not perceive the fact and hence lacked in their personal relationship with Him. When Jesus revealed the prophesies to the disciples who were on the way to Emmaus, He call them fools and slow of heart.⁴ It was only after the scriptures were opened to them by the Lord that they were able to truly enjoy fellowship with Him – and so it is with all believers – to know Him is to know and understand the scriptures.

The Battle for the Souls of Men.

Finally, we come to John's version of the great commission:

²¹Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

There you have it – our commission has been place on the same plane as the Father's commission to the Son. The Son executed the Plan of the Father to provide salvation to mankind. All believers are called into this Plan so that they may evangelize – proclaim the good news that Christ died for all that all who believe might live. Amen.

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[John 20:1.](#)

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[Luke 24:13 - 27.](#)