

'It is finished'

SMALL GROUP NOTES

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Theme

The final part of the 'Last Words' series looking at 3 phrases Jesus spoke on the cross; how they help us to understand what Jesus achieved at the cross, what that means for us and how we can respond. This talk was on the phrase 'It is Finished' with the focus on Jesus completing his work, being a perfect sacrifice, paying our debt and how this linked to the resurrection. This means we can contribute nothing to our salvation or pay God back for what he is done. Our response is to follow Jesus's example and finish the work he has given us.

Scriptures

- John 19:28-30
- John 4:34
- Psalm 69:21
- Hebrews 10:12
- Mark 10:45
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Hebrews 12:1b-2
- Acts 20:24
- Philippians 1:6

Outline

- I. What does Jesus mean when he says 'it is finished'?
 - a. What is finished? – The original Greek word means: to complete a goal, to perfect and discharge a debt. Jesus voluntary death after a sinless life:
 - i. Completes the work given to him by the Father
 - ii. Is the perfect once for all sacrifice for our sin
 - iii. Pays the ransom/discharges the debt to free us from sin to ensure our redemption
 - b. Why is Jesus drinking sour wine at that moment? – Fulfilment of another prophecy to demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ
 - c. If it's finished why are we celebrating the resurrection? – Jesus is saying he has finished the specific part he has to play in securing our salvation. The resurrection is primarily or solely the work of God the Father (see below for further study material on the resurrection)

2. What does that mean for us? – We can do nothing and need to do nothing to contribute to our salvation or pay God back in instalments.
3. How can we respond? – Follow Jesus’s example and run with perseverance and endurance the race God has set out for us and finish the work he has allocated us to do.

Questions for discussion

- What skills, gifts and passions has God given you? How are you using them?
- What next steps could you take in:
 - a. Deepening your relationship with God
 - b. ‘one anothering’ within the church family
 - c. Being a witness
- Can anyone identify with a heart attitude and/or actions coming from a place of trying to pay God back for our salvation
- Is anyone struggling with anything specific relating to their race or more generally feeling like giving up – pray and support one another

Tags

Cross, Atonement, Resurrection, Jesus’s Death, Sacrifice, Grace, Completed Work, Race, Endurance, Perseverance

Further Study Information on the Resurrection

The Resurrection more than merits a complete sermon if not series by itself but in summary the Bible talks about both the Death and Resurrection of Jesus as contributing to our salvation. Wayne Grudem’s ‘Systematic Theology’ sets out three specific things that the resurrection achieves as part of our salvation:

- Our new life/our regeneration (1 Peter 1:3, Ephesians 2:5-6,)
- Our Justification (Romans 4:25)
- Perfect Resurrection Bodies (1 Corinthians 6:14, 15:12-58; 2 Corinthians 4:14)

Without the resurrection, as Mark Driscoll puts it, we would be ‘forgiven corpses’.

In saying ‘It is finished’ at the cross Jesus is saying he has completed the specific part he has to play of willingly laying down his life. The work of resurrection is either solely or primarily a work of God the Father. There are four specific references to God (the Father) raising Jesus from the dead (Acts 2:24, Rom 6:4, Gal 1:1, Eph 1:20). However, Jesus himself says he lays down his life-only to take it up again (John 10:17-18) and that he was the resurrection and the life (John 11:25). What we can conclude is that Jesus certainly had the ability to raise himself from the dead, what is not clear is whether he did or not or whether, as part of that overall submission process, it was solely a work of the Father.

The resurrection in one way can be seen as the Father’s statement of ‘It is finished’. His response to Jesus’s finished work is to say that yes the debt is paid; a perfect sacrifice for sin has been made for all time, my wrath is assuaged.