

The Glory of the Crucified Christ

John 19:16-42

KV John 19:30 "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

Have you ever finished something?

Do you know the joy and satisfaction in completing something?

Something that you finished so that it never has to be done again?

How great it is.

In John's account of Jesus' crucifixion, he writes that Jesus' last words on the cross were --- "It is finished."

It was the shout of victory by Jesus Christ who finished the work His Father gave him and completed our salvation.

How satisfying it was to Jesus!

And how great it is for us who believe in His finished work for us.

Today's account of the crucifixion of Christ is written by the apostle John who was an eyewitness.

He writes so that you may believe in Jesus' finished work and have life in his name.

Through today's message may you see the glory of the crucified Jesus, what He accomplished on your behalf and have life in His name.

Part One (The crucifixion of Christ, verses 16-27)

In yesterday's message by Eberhard Gross, we found that in Jesus the glory of God became man.

The eternal creator almighty God came and dwelt among men and became flesh.

How glorious it was!

Though he did lots of glorious things --- raising the dead, healing lepers, driving out demons, etc.

The hour of his glorification could be found in today's passage.

It was the most glorious event in human history.

This glorious God would humble himself to do the most amazing, most loving, most powerful act for mankind.

He would be crucified.

Let's see John's account of Jesus' crucifixion.

Look at verse 16a. Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

Though Pilate found no basis for a charge against Jesus and tried to free him, the hostile Jewish crowd kept pressuring Pilate to crucify Jesus.

Crucify him! Pilate was dumbfounded at their request to crucify Jesus.

He asked a most remarkable question.

"Shall I crucify your king?"

To crucify a king was unheard of.

Thieves, robbers, insurrectionists were crucified.

Kings were honored, served and bowed down to.

But this was what happened to King Jesus.

Look at verses 16-17. "So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.”

King Jesus was led like a hardened criminal by soldiers.

Prior to this, Jesus had suffered so much.

He was surely worn down from long trials, a flogging, crowns of thorns twisted and put on his head and blows to the face (19:1-3).

Yet, John writes that Jesus carried his own cross.

A wooden cross was said to weigh anywhere from 100 - 300 pounds.

Jesus had taught that if anyone would follow after him he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow him.

Jesus was taking up His cross that His Father gave Him as exceedingly heavy as it was.

He was carrying it all the way to Golgotha.

Look at verse 18. “There they crucified him, and with him two others --- one on each side and Jesus in the middle.”

John writes his account of the crucifixion as a matter of fact like a man reporting a crime scene.

He writes it as a matter of fact so you may believe it as a matter of fact.

There they crucified him.

There was a place – in Hebrew Golgotha.

There was someone doing the crucifying – the Roman soldiers.

There was Jesus being crucified.

His position was in the middle.

In all of his life, John probably never ever forgot that scene.

How could he?

The One who came from the Father full of grace and truth.

The Righteous One whom he had been with and seen perform miracle after miracle.

The One who had loved him and bore all of his weaknesses.

Now this same Jesus was being crucified like a condemned man.

When John wrote this account of the crucifixion everyone was very familiar with it so he doesn't explain it.

But when Jesus was crucified he experienced long iron spikes driven through his hands and feet, the most tender parts of the body.

While on that cross, his body was stretched to the point where all of his muscles were likely torn, all of his bones out of joint (Ps 22:14).

To even breathe was especially painful and cumbersome.

To take a breath, Jesus would have had to stand up and place all of his weight on his nailed feet which would have caused excruciating pain.

When it was too much to bear he would then place all of his weight back on his hands and wrists but be unable to breathe.

He would go back and forth in this way for hours.

Hundreds of years earlier the Psalmist told of Jesus' pain on that cross --- “my heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me.”

Isaiah foresaw His appearance on the cross – so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness (Is 52:14).

The four gospel writers pointed out different things in their accounts of Jesus' crucifixion.

Yet all of them share the one detail shown in verse 19.

"Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews."

It was customary for a man being crucified to have a notice fastened to the cross stating the reason for his execution.

While others were crucified for their deeds.

Jesus was innocent and sinless.

God gave Pilate insight that Jesus was being crucified for who He was.

Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

This sign was written in three languages, Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

Together, they represented the entire world at the time, all of mankind.

Jesus Christ was crucified for all of mankind.

When we look on this story from human perspective it looks like another sad story of injustice.

But we see from John's account that this was anything but that.

It was not Pilate who sent him, nor the Jewish mob nor was it just the evil of mankind.

It was God who sent His son Jesus to that cross and was fulfilling Scripture.

Three times in this passage, John mentions so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

It was God who was fulfilling His glorious will in even the smallest details.

Look at verses 23-24.

When a person was crucified, he was stripped naked by soldiers.

The soldiers took his clothes and divided them into 4 shares, one for each of them.

Only the seamless undergarment remained.

They did not tear it but decided by lot who would get it.

It was a dreadful moment for Jesus.

Not only was He crucified but in his humiliation all of his clothes were taken and he was left to watch 4 evil soldiers play games over his undergarment.

How vulnerable he was made at that very hour.

With his hands and feet nailed to the cross, there was nothing he could do to cover himself or keep the soldiers from doing what they did.

He was like a lamb led to his slaughter.

Even in this horrifying scene, John saw Scripture being fulfilled.

Look at verse 24.

This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment."

So this is what the soldiers did.

John saw that the soldiers were doing exactly as what God had prophesied nearly 1000 years earlier.

So this is what the soldiers did.

The horror was not just a random act of evil but what God had planned for His Son to undertake.

Having lost all of his dignity and all of his clothes, he then experiences the sadness of leaving those closest to him.

Near the cross were 4 women including his mother and John who identified himself as the apostle whom Jesus loved.

They were people who were very precious to Jesus and most loyal to Jesus even following him to the crucifixion site.

One can only imagine the pain inside as they watched Jesus suffer on the cross.

Jesus sees them and comforts them.

To his mother he says "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."

Jesus saw their needs and took care of them.

Jesus' deep love to care for those he loved, even on the cross, shows us his glory.

When we look at the crucifixion we see a very repulsive scene.

It was so cruel, it has long been banned as a means of punishment.

If God was in control, why did He send His Son to purposefully suffer and die like this? How could he do that?

If we look at why Jesus came and for what purpose he was being crucified we see that it all had to do with sin.

The Bible says Jesus came to save His people from their sins (Mt 1:21).

Jesus Christ suffered for sins (1 Pe 3:18).

Jesus Christ died for our sins (1 Cor 15:3).

Jesus Christ was an atoning sacrifice for sins (Ro 3:25).

He is the lamb of God who takes away our sin (Jn 1:29).

God sending Jesus Christ to the cross had everything to do with sin.

Sin is the most serious issue between God and man.

The Romans used crucifixion to punish slaves, insurrectionists, thieves, etc.

The punishment was harsh.

When God sent Jesus (His own Son) to the cross, he was punishing sin.

He was pouring out His wrath against our sins on Him.

He was bearing our sins.

How terrible are a man's sins before a holy God.

When Jesus was on the cross, he was not only suffering physical pain for our sins but of much greater suffering was the spiritual pain.

In bearing our sins, Jesus was forsaken by His Father.

In his agony he cried out --- "my God my God why have you forsaken me."

In order to save us from sin, Jesus momentarily gave up the greatest thing he ever knew – fellowship with His Father.

At that point, when Jesus became sin for us, the Father turned away from even his own Son.

How awful is our sin and how holy is our God!

Often we are blinded in this world to see our sin problem and when we compare ourselves to others we can justify ourselves.

But the Bible says, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

The standard of goodness is the glory of God.

When you see the glory of God one realizes just how sinful they really are.

When Isaiah saw God sitting high on the throne, he was ruined for he was a man of unclean lips.

He was a condemned man.

When the disciples realized Jesus was God who calmed the storm and they were sitting in the same boat with him, they were terrified.

How terrible it is to be a sinner in the hands of a holy God who hates evil and sin!

If we have to bear our own sins before God, how could we stand?

How horrible would be that day we stand before the Father.

Thankfully at the cross, God sent Jesus in our place to bear the heavy weight of our sins.

We must ask ourselves, why would he do that?

Why would he give up His own Son and let him do that for us? For me?

I could never do that. You could never do that.

No other god would do that.

But there is a God who did that.

As holy as God is, he is also so loving.

When he gave His Son, it was an act that revealed His great amazing love for man.

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

How glorious is our God that he would do such a thing!

In His love for us, he did not even spare His one and only son.

How truly great the Father's love for us!

The most foolish thing you can ever do in your life is to reject this love.

The 2nd is to forget it and not pass it on.

May the Lord bless you to see how deep the Father's love for us really is.

Part Two (It is finished)

From John's account, there's one thing Jesus really wanted to communicate as well.

Let's read verse 30. "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

John writes that the words "It is finished" was said right after receiving the drink and just before bowing his head and giving up his spirit.

John records these words as the last words spoken by Jesus.

Have you ever desired to say something really badly?

That after you said them you could be totally at peace and even die?

He so desired to say this that afterwards he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Why did he say this and what did it mean?

When Jesus said it is finished it meant that the work the Father sent him for was accomplished!

It was complete. John's gospel emphasizes that Jesus was sent by His Father to do His works.

In all of his life, Jesus was on a mission from God the Father who sent him.

He even said "my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (Jn 4:34).

He loved his father and lived to finish the work His father gave him.

To give His life as a ransom for our sins.

To fulfill His father's will.

Despite His loneliness, despite the opposition from the religious leaders, despite the failures of His disciples.

He kept going with this finished work in mind.

He had marched resolutely into Jerusalem to do this very thing.

Having perfectly obeyed the Father who sent Him and given his life for our sin, how exceedingly happy he must have been to go back to the Father and sit at his right hand!

When Jesus said it is finished, it was a shout of victory by the Son of God!

Unlike the first Adam, he defeated Satan.

He conquered sin.

3 days later he would rise again and defeat the power of death.

God's promise to Abram that all peoples would be blessed through him was complete.

God's promise to Hosea that a people not his people could be called his people was complete.

God's promise to Isaiah that the Lord would lay on Him the iniquity of us all was fulfilled.

God's promise to David to establish an eternal kingdom through His descendant was complete.

The Lion of Judah triumphed (Rev 5:5)!

When Jesus shouted it is finished, it was not just his own achievement.

But he longed for you and I to know this.

When we accept and believe in Jesus' finished work, we become the most blessed people.

Our salvation is made complete.

In Greek "it is finished" also means paid in full.

It was often written on business documents or receipts to show that a debt was no longer owed.

When Jesus was dying on the cross the ransom for our sins was being paid in full.

Jesus was taking on all of God's wrath and condemnation for our sins.

He finished taking it on.

He took every last drop of God's wrath for every last one of our sins.

The physical pain, the humiliation, even being forsaken by the Father.

God's glorious plan of salvation for sinners was made complete.

There's nothing you or I could add to it.

No work we could do.

No pain we could ever inflict upon ourselves.

He paid the full price of our sins once and for all.

He totally satisfied the righteous requirements of a Holy God on our behalf and completed the work God gave him to do. Praise God!

Because Jesus took on the full wrath of our sins, He is able to do something beyond glorious for us.

Colossians 1:22 says, "But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."

How unholy we are. How many blemishes do we have!

How much wrong can we be accused of every single day.

But praise be to God and Jesus Christ!

That when Jesus was on that cross, he was the lamb of God who took away our sins.

He is able to present us holy in God's sight!

Without any blemish.

Without any accusation.

Perfect! How glorious!

Praise the Lord for what Jesus accomplished on our behalf!

Because of what He has done for us we have the most secure, most glorious future.

We can know for certain where we are going.

The disciples were troubled at the thought of Jesus leaving them.

But because He was going to the cross, they didn't need to be troubled.

He was going to the cross to prepare a place in His father's house for them!

How glorious! You may be very troubled now, but because of what Christ has done for us it is just a momentary trouble.

Praise God for Jesus who has secured our eternal salvation with the Father forever.

Because Jesus completed the work His Father gave him, our salvation is certain.

It is not 80% sure and 20% left to chance or hope.

Apart from faith in Jesus' finished work we can never be certain of our salvation.

But because he 100% finished the work, completed all that the Father required of him, taking on his full wrath for our sins, we can be 100% confident.

When we are -- all doubt, all fear, all worry about tomorrow, all guilt and condemnation can be banished forever!

Praise God! We are free to serve the living God joyfully and peacefully until he takes us home.

Who secured our salvation?

Was it your accomplishment?

No, Jesus Christ finished it.

He did it all. He paid it all.

He fulfilled all of God's righteous requirements.

He laid down his life. He shed His blood.

And He will present you perfect, blameless and without accusation before the Father.

When did he do this?

While we were still sinners, He died for us.

While we were God's enemies.

While we were engrossed in a life of sin and rebellion against Him, He shed his blood for us.

There's nothing we did to deserve it!

We deserved God's wrath.

But by His grace when we believe His finished work, we are saved!

This is the best news!

It is the good news of the gospel!

He has done it! It is finished!

When we remember what Jesus has done for us we too can have a victorious life in Him!

We can live as thankful people even if our human situation is not ideal!

We can be happy and satisfied in our identity in Christ.

The Ones Jesus loved! Just as He has forgiven us we can forgive others.

Just as we have freely received His grace, we can freely give.

When we hold onto the grace of Jesus to us all of our life problems can be solved in Him.

Last night we heard the message on how Jesus saved and healed the paralytic.

In my life I was like that paralyzed man.

Though I really wanted to do good and knew the good I should do, I was powerless to do any good thing.

I was full of fatalism about my life.

One clear manifestation of this was in my speech.

I had a terrible stutter for many years.

Because of this, I suffered greatly not being able to even speak clearly to anyone.

Then one day as I studied Mark 5, the grace of Jesus touched my heart.

I was shocked by Jesus who paid the price to save a demon possessed man in whom there was no good.

I could not understand it.

It blew my mind. This man was not worth it! He was good for nothing!

From this God opened my eyes.

I was the miserable sinner Jesus was willing to save at any cost.

I had no good works.

There was nothing good in me.

Yet, Jesus was willing to go to the cross and give His life for my sins.

He suffered and died for my own sin.

This Jesus suddenly became truly glorious to me!

I no longer thought of myself as one who was suffering but one who was blessed.

When I found His goodness, my own burden of trying to be good enough was lifted.

I received 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 as my life key verses.

Though I wanted to leave the church because I was not good enough, God chose me – a weak and foolish thing, a thing that was not – to reveal His glory and goodness.

Before knowing Christ, the last thing I wanted to do was open my mouth to speak before others.

But afterwards God gave me a yes, lord heart.

I accepted to use my mouth to speak about His goodness and glory.

I'm currently serving as the director of Washington UBF chapter.

Before preparing this message, I was struggling with 2 issues ---

I am not good enough to do this and nothing I could do was ever enough.

I wondered why did God call me to do this?

But God spoke to me through the passage --- It is finished.

I didn't call you because of your talent or ability or goodness.

I called you to preach Christ crucified.

I have already done it! It is enough.

Through this, God renewed my joy and spirit.

I pray that wherever you are in your life or mission life, you too may hold onto Christ crucified.

He is enough! Whatever your problem you will find your answer in Him.

After saying "It is finished", Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

His mission accomplished, the time had come for Christ to surrender his life.

Nobody took it from him.

Jesus gave up his life of His own will.

He had poured out his life for sinners and he was returning to the Father who sent him.

How glorious was our Lord Jesus Christ!

In God's perfect, glorious plan he sent His Son Jesus to reconcile sinners to himself.

He perfectly fulfilled God's will and became the lamb of God who takes away all of our sins.

It is finished. John wrote his account of the crucifixion so that you may believe this.

Do you believe it?

May God help you to believe this all powerful and all loving act and have life in His name.