

“IT IS FINISHED!”**NO. 421****A SERMON****DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 1, 1861****BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON****AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON**

*“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

MY brethren, I would have you attentively observe the singular clearness, power, and quickness of the Savior’s mind in the last agonies of death. When pains and groans attend the last hour, they frequently have the effect of discomposing the mind, so that it is not possible for the dying man to collect his thoughts, or having collected them, to utter them so that they can be understood by others. In no case could we expect a remarkable exercise of memory or a profound judgment upon deep subjects from an expiring man. But the Redeemer’s last acts were full of wisdom and prudence, although His sufferings were beyond all measure excruciating.

Remark how clearly He perceived the significance of every type! How plainly He could read with dying eye those divine symbols which the eyes of angels could only desire to look into! He saw the secrets which have bewildered sages and astonished seers, all fulfilled in His own body. Nor must we fail to observe the power and comprehensiveness by which He grasped the chain which binds the shadowy past with the sun-lit present.

We must not forget the brilliance of that intelligence which threaded all the ceremonies and sacrifices on one string of thought, beheld all the prophecies as one great revelation, and all the promises as the heralds of one person and then said of the whole, “‘It is finished,’ finished in Me.”

What quickness of mind was that which enabled Him to traverse all the centuries of prophecy, to penetrate the eternity of the covenant, and then to anticipate the eternal glories! And all this when He is mocked by multitudes of enemies, and when His hands and feet are nailed to the cross! What force of mind must the Savior have possessed, to soar above those Alps of Agony, which touched the very clouds. In what a singular mental condition must He have been during the period of His crucifixion, to be able to review the whole roll of inspiration!

Now, this remark may not seem to be of any great value, but I think its value lies in certain inferences that may be drawn from it. We have sometimes heard it said, “How could Christ, in so short a time, bear suffering which should be equivalent to the torments—the eternal torments of hell?” Our reply is, we are not capable of judging what the Son of God might do even in a moment, much less what He might do and what He might suffer in His life and in His death.

It has been frequently affirmed by persons who have been rescued from drowning, that the mind of a drowning man is singularly active. One who, after being some time in the water, was at last painfully restored, said that the whole of his history seemed to come before his mind while he was sinking, and that if anyone had asked him how long he had been in the water, he should have said twenty years, whereas he had only been there for a moment or two.

The wild romance of Mahomet’s journey upon Alborak is not an unfitting illustration. He affirmed that when the angel came in vision to take him on his celebrated journey to Jerusalem, he went through all the seven heavens, and saw all the wonders thereof, and yet he was gone so short a time, that though the angel’s wing had touched a basin of water when they started, they returned soon enough to prevent the water from being spilt. The long dream of the epileptic impostor may really have occupied but a second of time.

The intellect of mortal man is such that, if God wills it, when it is in certain states, it can think out centuries of thought at once. It can go through in one instant what we should have supposed would have taken years upon years of time for it to know or feel. We think, therefore, that from the Savior’s singular clearness and quickness of intellect upon the cross, it is very possible that He did in the space of two or three hours endure, not only the agony which might have been contained in centuries, but even an equivalent for that which might be comprehended in everlasting punishment. At any rate, it is not for us to say that it could not be so.

When the Deity is arrayed in manhood, then manhood becomes omnipotent to suffer, and just as the feet of Christ were once almighty to tread the seas, so now was His whole body become almighty to dive into the great waters, to endure an immersion in “unknown agonies.”

Do not, I pray you, let us attempt to measure Christ’s sufferings by the finite line of your own ignorant reason, but let us know and believe that what He endured there was accepted by God as an equivalent for all our pains, and therefore it could not have been a trifle, but must have been all that Hart conceived it to be, when he says He bore—

*“All that incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, but none to spare.”*

My discourse will, I have no doubt, more fully illustrate the remark with which I have commenced. Let us proceed to it at once. First, *let us hear the text and understand it*, then, *let us hear it and wonder at it*, and then, thirdly, *let us hear it and proclaim it*.

I. LET US HEAR THE TEXT AND UNDERSTAND IT.

The Son of God has been made man. He has had a life of perfect virtue and of total self-denial. He has been all that life long despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His enemies have been legion, His friends have been few, and those few faithless. He is at last delivered over into the hands of them that hate Him.

He is arrested while in the act of prayer, He is arraigned before both the spiritual and temporal courts. He is robed in mockery and then unrobed in shame. He is set upon His throne in scorn and then tied to the pillar in cruelty. He is declared innocent and yet He is delivered up by the judge, who ought to have preserved Him from His persecutors.

He is dragged through the streets of that Jerusalem which had killed the prophets and would now crimson itself with the blood of the prophets’ Master. He is brought to the cross. He is nailed fast to the cruel wood. The sun burns Him. His cruel wounds increase the fever. God forsakes Him. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” contains the concentrated anguish of the world.

While He hangs there in mortal conflict with sin and Satan, His heart is broken, His limbs are dislocated. Heaven fails Him, for the sun is veiled in darkness. Earth forsakes Him, for “His disciples forsook him and fled.” He looks everywhere and there is none to help. He casts His eye around and there is no man that can share His toil. He treads the winepress alone and of the people there is none with Him.

On, on, He goes, steadily determined to drink the last dreg of that cup which must not pass from Him if His Father’s will be done. At last He cries, “It is finished,” and He gives up the ghost.

Hear it, Christians, hear this shout of triumph as it rings today with all the freshness and force which it had eighteen hundred years ago! Hear it from the sacred Word and from the Savior’s lips, and may the Spirit of God open your ears that you may hear as the learned, and understand what you hear!

1. What meant the Savior, then, by this, “It is finished”? He meant, first of all, *that all the types, promises, and prophecies were now fully accomplished in Him*. Those who are acquainted with the original will find that the words, “It is finished,” occur twice within three verses. In the twenty-eighth verse, we have the word in the Greek—it is translated in our version “accomplished,” but there it stands,

“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now *finished*, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ‘I thirst.’”

And then He afterwards said, “It is finished.” This leads us to see His meaning very clearly, that all the Scripture was now fulfilled, that when He said, “It is finished,” the whole book, from the first to the last, in both the law and the prophets, was finished in Him.

There is not a single jewel of promise, from that first emerald which fell on the threshold of Eden, to that last sapphire-stone of Malachi, which was not set in the breastplate of the true High Priest. Nay, there is not a type, from the red heifer downward to the turtle dove, from the hyssop upwards to Solomon’s temple itself, which was not fulfilled in Him. And not a prophecy, whether spoken on Chebar’s bank, or on the shores of Jordan, not a dream of wise men, whether they had received it in Babylon, or in Samaria, or in Judea, which was not now fully wrought out in Christ Jesus.

And brethren, what a wonderful thing it is, that a mass of promises, and prophecies, and types, apparently so heterogeneous, should all be accomplished in one person! Take away Christ for one moment and I will give the Old Testament to any wise man living and say to him, “Take this. This is a problem, go home and construct in your imagination an ideal character who shall exactly fit all that which is herein foreshadowed.

“Remember, he must be a prophet like unto Moses and yet a champion like to Joshua. He must be an Aaron and a Melchisedek. He must be both David and Solomon, Noah and Jonah, Judah and Joseph. Nay, he must not only be the lamb that was slain, and the scapegoat that was not slain, the turtledove that was dipped in blood, and the priest who slew the bird, but he must be the altar, the tabernacle, the mercy seat, and the showbread.”

Nay, to puzzle this wise man further, we remind him of prophecies so apparently contradictory, that one would think they never could meet in one man. Such as these, “All kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him,” and yet “He is despised and rejected of men.” He must begin by showing a man born of a virgin mother, “A virgin shall conceive and bear a son.” He must be a man without spot or blemish, but yet one upon whom the Lord does cause to meet the iniquities of us all. He must be a glorious one, a Son of David, but yet a root out of a dry ground.

Now, I say it boldly, if all the greatest intellects of all the ages could set themselves to work out this problem, to invent another key to the types and prophecies, they could not do it. I see you, you wise men, you are poring over these hieroglyphs. One suggests one key, and it opens two or three of the figures, but you cannot proceed, for the next one puts you at a perplexity.

Another learned man suggests another clue, but that fails most where it is most needed, and another, and another, and thus these wondrous hieroglyphs traced of old by Moses in the wilderness, must be left unexplained, till one comes forward and proclaims, “The cross of Christ and the Son of God incarnate,” then the whole is clear, so that he that runs may read and a child may understand.

Blessed Savior! In You we see everything fulfilled which God spoke of old by the prophets. In You we discover everything carried out in substance, which God had set before us in the dim mist of sacrificial smoke. Glory be unto Your name! “It is finished”—everything is summed up in You.

2. But the words have richer meaning. Not only were all types, and prophecies, and promises thus finished in Christ, but *all the typical sacrifices of the old Jewish law were now abolished as well as explained.* They were finished—finished in Him.

Will you imagine for a minute the saints in heaven looking down upon what was done on earth—Abel and his friends who had long ago before the flood been sitting in the glories above. They watch while God lights star after star in heaven. Promise after promise flashes light upon the thick darkness of earth. They see Abraham come, and they look down and wonder while they see God revealing Christ to Abraham in the person of Isaac.

They gaze just as the angels do, desiring to look into the mystery. From the times of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they see altars smoking, recognitions of the fact that man is guilty, and the spirits before the throne say, “Lord, when will sacrifices finish?—when will blood no more be shed?” The

offering of bloody sacrifices soon increases. It is now carried on by men ordained for the purpose. Aaron and the high priests, and the Levites, every morning and every evening offer a lamb, while great sacrifices are offered on special occasions.

Bullocks groan, rams bleed, the necks of doves are wrung, and all the while the saints are crying, “O Lord, how long?—when shall the sacrifice cease?” Year after year, the high priest goes within the veil and sprinkles the mercy seat with blood. The next year sees him do the like, and the next, and again, and again, and again.

David offers hecatombs, Solomon slaughters tens of thousands, Hezekiah offers rivers of oil, Josiah gives thousands of the fat of fed beasts, and the spirits of the just say, “Will it never be complete?—will the sacrifice never be finished?—must there always be a remembrance of sin?—will not the last High Priest soon come?—will not the order and line of Aaron soon lay aside its labor, because the whole is finished?” Not yet not yet, you spirits of the just, for after the captivity, the slaughter of victims still remains.

But lo, He comes! Gaze more intently than before—He comes who is to close the line of priests! Lo! there He stands, clothed—not now with linen ephod, not with ringing bells, nor with sparkling jewels on His breastplate—but arrayed in human flesh He stands, His cross His altar, His body and His soul the victim, Himself the Priest, and lo! before His God He offers up His own soul within the veil of thick darkness which has covered Him from the sight of men.

Presenting His own blood, He enters within the veil, sprinkles it there, and coming forth from the midst of the darkness, He looks down on the astonished earth, and upward to expectant heaven, and cries, “*It is finished! it is finished!*”—that for which you looked so long, is fully achieved and perfected forever.

3. The Savior meant, we doubt not, that in this moment *His perfect obedience was finished*. It was necessary, in order that man might be saved, that the law of God should be kept, for no man can see God’s face except he is perfect in righteousness. Christ undertook to keep God’s law for His people, to obey its every mandate, and preserve its every statute intact.

Throughout the first years of His life, He privately obeyed, honoring His father and His mother. During the next three years, He publicly obeyed God, spending and being spent in His service, till if you would know what a man would be whose life was wholly conformed to the law of God, you may see him in Christ.

*“My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in Thy Word,
But in Thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters.”*

It needed nothing to complete the perfect virtue of life but the entire obedience of death. He who would serve God must be willing not only to give all his soul and his strength while he lives, but he must stand prepared to resign his life when it shall be for God’s glory. Our perfect substitute put the last stroke upon His work by dying, and therefore He claims to be absolved from further debt, for “It is finished.”

Yes, glorious Lamb of God, it is finished! You have been tempted in all points like as we are, yet have You sinned in none! It *was* finished, for the last arrow out of Satan’s quiver had been shot at You. The last blasphemous insinuation, the last wicked temptation had spent its fury on You. The prince of this world had surveyed You from head to foot, within and without, but he had found nothing in You.

Now, your trial is over, You have finished the work which Your Father gave You to do, and so finished it that hell itself cannot accuse You of a flaw. And now, looking upon Your entire obedience, You say, “It is finished,” and we Your people believe most joyously that it is even so.

Brothers and sisters, this is more than you or I could have said if Adam had never fallen. If we had been in the garden of Eden today, we could never have boasted a finished righteousness, since a creature can never finish its obedience. As long as a creature lives it is bound to obey, and as long as a free agent exists on earth it would be in danger of violating the vow of its obedience.

If Adam had been in Paradise from the first day until now, he might fall tomorrow. Left to himself, there would be no reason why that king of nature should not yet be uncrowned. But Christ the Creator, who finished creation, has perfected redemption. God can ask no more. The law has received all its claims, the largest extent of justice cannot demand another hour’s obedience.

It is done. It is complete. The last throw of the shuttle is over and the robe is woven from the top throughout. Let us rejoice, then, in this that the Master meant by His dying cry that His perfect righteousness wherewith He covers us was finished.

4. But next, the Savior meant *that the satisfaction which He rendered to the justice of God was finished*. The debt was now, to the last farthing, all discharged. The atonement and propitiation were made once for all and forever, by the one offering made in Jesu’s body on the tree. There was the cup, hell was in it, the Savior drank it—not a sip and then a pause, not a draught and then a ceasing, but He drained it till there is not a dreg left for any of His people.

The great ten-throged whip of the law was worn out upon His back. There is no lash left with which to smite one for whom Jesus died. The great bombardment of God’s justice has exhausted all its ammunition—there is nothing left to be hurled against a child of God. Sheathed is your sword, O Justice! Silenced is your thunder, O Law! There remains nothing now of all the griefs, and pains, and agonies which chosen sinners ought to have suffered for their sins, for Christ has endured all for His own beloved and “It is finished.”

Brethren, *it is more than the damned in hell can ever say*. If you and I had been constrained to make satisfaction to God’s justice by being sent to hell, we never could have said, “It is finished.” Christ has paid the debt which all the torments of eternity could not have paid.

Lost souls, you suffer today as you have suffered for ages past, but God’s justice is not satisfied, His law is not fully magnified. And when time shall fail and eternity shall have been flying on, still forever, forever, the uttermost farthing never having been paid, the chastisement for sin must fall upon unpardoned sinners.

But Christ has done what all the flames of the pit could not do in all eternity. He has magnified the law and made it honorable, and now from the cross He cries, “It is finished.”

5. Once again—when He said, “It is finished,” *Jesus had totally destroyed the power of Satan, of sin, and of death*. The Champion had entered the lists to do battle for our soul’s redemption against all our foes. He met Sin. Horrible, terrible, all-but omnipotent Sin nailed Him to the cross, but in that deed, Christ nailed Sin also to the tree. There they both did hang together—Sin and Sin’s Destroyer. Sin destroyed Christ, and by that destruction, Christ destroyed Sin.

Next, came the second enemy, Satan. He assaulted Christ with all his hosts. Calling up his myrmidons from every corner and quarter of the universe, he said, “Awake, arise, or be forever fallen! Here is our great enemy who has sworn to bruise my head, now let us bruise His heel!” They shot their hellish darts into His heart, they poured their boiling cauldrons on His brain, they emptied their venom into His veins, they spat their insinuations into His face, they hissed their devilish fears into His ear. He stood alone, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, hounded by all the dogs of hell.

Our Champion quailed not, but used His holy weapons, striking right and left with all the power of God-supported manhood. On came the hosts, volley after volley was discharged against Him. No mimic thunders were these, but such as might shake the very gates of hell. The Conqueror steadily advanced, overturning their ranks, dashing in pieces His enemies, breaking the bow, and cutting the spear in sunder, and burning the chariots in the fire, while He cried, “In the name of God will I destroy you!”

At last, foot to foot, He met the champion of hell and now our David fought with Goliath. Not long was the struggle, thick was the darkness which gathered round them both, but He who is the Son of God

as well as the Son of Mary, knew how to smite the fiend, and He did smite him with divine fury, till, having despoiled him of his armor, having quenched his fiery darts, and broken his head, He cried, “It is finished,” and sent the fiend, bleeding and howling, down to hell.

We can imagine him pursued by the eternal Savior, who exclaims—

“Traitor!

***My bolt shall find and pierce thee through,
Though under hell’s profoundest wave
Thou div’st to seek a shelt’ring grave.”***

His thunderbolt o’ertook the fiend, and grasping him with both His hands, the Savior drew around him the great chain. The angels brought the royal chariot from on high, to whose wheels the captive fiend was bound. Lash the coursers up the everlasting hills! Spirits made perfect come forth to meet Him. Hymn the Conqueror who drags death and hell behind Him, and leads captivity captive! “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in!”

But stay, ere He enters, let Him be rid of this His burden. Lo! He takes the fiend and hurls him down through illimitable night, broken, bruised, with his power destroyed, bereft of his crown, to lie forever howling in the pit of hell. Thus, when the Savior cried, “It is finished,” He had defeated Sin and Satan, nor less had he vanquished Death.

Death had come against Him, as Christmas Evans puts it, with his fiery dart, which he struck right through the Savior, till the point fixed in the cross, and when he tried to pull it out again, he left the sting behind. What could he do more? He was disarmed. Then Christ set some of his prisoners free, for many of the saints arose and were seen of many—then He said to him, “Death, I take from you your keys. You must live for a little while to be the warden of those beds in which My saints shall sleep, but give Me your keys.”

And lo! the Savior stands today with the keys of death hanging at His girdle, and He waits until the hour shall come of which no man knows, when the trump of the archangel shall ring like the silver trumpets of Jubilee, and then, He shall say, “Let my captives go free.” Then, shall the tombs be opened in virtue of Christ’s death and the very bodies of the saints shall live again in an eternity of glory.

“‘It is finish’d!’

Hear the dying Savior cry.”

II. Secondly, LET US HEAR AND WONDER.

Let us perceive what mighty things were effected and secured by these words, “It is finished.” Thus He *ratified the covenant*. That covenant was signed and sealed before, and in all things it was ordered well, but when Christ said, “It is finished,” then the covenant was made doubly sure. When the blood of Christ’s heart bespattered the divine roll, then it could never be reversed, nor could one of its ordinances be broken, nor one of its stipulations fail.

You know the covenant was on this wise—God covenants on His part that He would give Christ to see of the travail of His soul, that all who were given to Him should have new hearts and right spirits, that they should be washed from sin and should enter into life through Him. Christ’s side of the covenant was this, “Father, I will do Your will. I will pay the ransom to the last jot and tittle. I will give You perfect obedience and complete satisfaction.”

Now if this second part of the covenant had never been fulfilled, the first part would have been invalid, but when Jesus said, “It is finished,” then there was nothing left to be performed on His part and now the covenant is all on one side.

It is God’s “I will,” and “They shall.” “A new heart will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you.” “I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean.” “From all your iniquities will I cleanse you.” “I will lead you by a way that ye know not.” “I will surely bring them in.”

The covenant that day was ratified. When Christ said, "It is finished," *His Father was honored and divine justice was fully displayed.*

The Father always did love His people. Do not think that Christ died to make God the Father loving. He always had loved them from before the foundation of the world, but—"It is finished," took away the barriers which were in the Father's way. He would, as a God of love, and now He could as a God of justice, bless poor sinners. From that day, the Father is well-pleased to receive sinners to His bosom.

When Christ said, "It is finished," *He Himself was glorified.* Then on His head descended the all-glorious crown. Then did the Father give to Him honors, which He had not before. He had honor as God, but as man He was despised and rejected. Now as God and man, Christ was made to sit down forever on His Father's throne, crowned with honor and majesty.

Then too, by "It is finished," *the Spirit was procured for us.*

*"Tis by the merit of His death
Who hung upon the tree,
The Spirit is sent down to breathe
On such dry bones as we."*

Then, the Spirit which Christ had aforesaid promised, perceived a new and living way by which He could come to dwell in the hearts of men, and men might come up to dwell with Him above.

That day too, when Christ said, "It is finished," *the words had effect on heaven.* Then the walls of chrysolite stood fast, then the jasper light of the pearly-gated city shone like the light of seven days. Before, the saints had been saved as it were on credit. They had entered heaven, God having faith in His Son Jesus. Had not Christ finished His work, surely they must have left their shining spheres and suffered in their own persons for their own sins.

I might represent heaven, if my imagination might be allowed a moment, as being ready to totter if Christ had not finished His work. Its stones would have been unloosed. Massive and stupendous though its bastions are, yet had they fallen as earthly cities reel under the throes of earthquake. But Christ said, "It is finished," and oath, and covenant, and blood set fast the dwelling place of the redeemed, made their mansions safely and eternally their own, and bade their feet stand immovably upon the rock.

Nay, more, that word, "It is finished!" took effect in the gloomy caverns and depths of HELL. Then Satan bit his iron bands in a rage, howling, "I am defeated by the very man whom I thought to overcome, my hopes are blasted, never shall an elect one come into my prison-house, never a blood-bought one be found in my abode."

Lost souls mourned that day, for they said, "'It is finished!' and if Christ Himself, the substitute, could not be permitted to go free till He had finished all His punishment, then, we shall never be free." It was their double death-knell, for they said, "Alas for us! Justice, which would not allow the Savior to escape, will never suffer us to be at liberty. It is finished with Him and therefore it shall never be finished for us."

That day, too, the earth had a gleam of sunlight cast over her which she had never known before. Then her hilltops began to glisten with the rising of the sun, and though her valleys still are clothed with darkness, and men wander hither and thither, and grope in the noon-day as in the night, yet that sun is rising, climbing still its heavenly steps, never to set, and soon shall its rays penetrate through the thick mists and clouds, and every eye shall see Him and every heart be made glad with His light.

The words "It is finished!" consolidated heaven, shook hell, comforted earth, delighted the Father, glorified the Son, brought down the Spirit, and confirmed the everlasting covenant to all the chosen seed.

III. And now, I come to my last point, upon which very briefly. "It is finished!" LET US PUBLISH IT.

Children of God, you who by faith received Christ as your all in all, tell it every day of your lives that “It is finished.” Go and tell it to those who are torturing themselves, thinking through obedience and mortification to offer satisfaction. Yonder Hindu is about to throw himself down upon the spikes. Stay, poor man! wherefore would you bleed, for “It is finished”? Yonder Fakir is holding his hand erect till the nails grow through the flesh, torturing himself with fastings and with self-denials. Cease, cease, poor wretch, from all these pains, for “It is finished!”

In all parts of the earth, there are those who think that the misery of the body and the soul may be an atonement for sin. Rush to them, stay them in their madness and say to them, “Wherefore do you this? ‘It is finished.’” All the pains that God asks, Christ has suffered. All the satisfaction by way of agony in the flesh that the law demands, Christ has already endured. “It is finished!”

And when you have done this, go next to the ignorant adherents of Rome, when you see the priests with their backs to the people, offering every day the pretended sacrifice of the mass, and lifting up the host on high—a sacrifice, they say—“an unbloody sacrifice for the quick and the dead.” Cry, “Cease, false priest, cease! for ‘It is finished!’ Cease, false worshipper, cease to bow, for ‘It is finished!’” God neither asks nor accepts any other sacrifice than that which Christ offered once for all upon the cross.

Go you next to the foolish among your own countrymen who call themselves Protestants, but who are really Papists after all, who think by their gifts and their gold, by their prayers and their vows, by their church-goings and their chapel-goings, by their baptisms and their confirmations, to make themselves fit for God.

And say to them, “Stop, ‘It is finished.’ God needs not this of you. He has received enough. Why will you pin your rags to the fine linen of Christ’s righteousness? Why will you add your counterfeit farthing to the costly ransom which Christ has paid into the treasure-house of God? Cease from your pains, your doings, your performances, for ‘It is finished.’ Christ has done it all.”

This one text is enough to blow the Vatican to the four winds. Lay but this beneath Popery, and like a train of gunpowder beneath a rock, it shall blast it into the air. This is a thunderclap against all human righteousness. Only let this come like a two-edged sword, and your good works and your fine performances are soon cast away. “It is finished.”

Why improve on what is finished? Why add to that which is complete? The Bible is finished—he that adds to it shall have his name taken out of the Book of Life and out of the holy city. Christ’s atonement is finished and he that adds to that must expect the selfsame doom.

And when you shall have told it thus to the ears of men of every nation and of every tribe, tell it to all poor despairing souls. You find them on their knees, crying, “O God, what can I do to make recompense for my offenses?” Tell them, “It is finished,” the recompense is made already.

“O God.” they say, “how can I ever get a righteousness in which You can accept such a worm as I am.” Tell them, “It is finished,” their righteousness is wrought out already, they have no need to trouble themselves about adding to it, if “It is finished.” Go to the poor despairing wretch, who has given himself up, not for death merely, but for damnation—he who says, “I cannot escape from sin and I cannot be saved from its punishment.” Say to him, “Sinner, the way of salvation is finished once and for all.”

And if you meet some professed Christians in doubts and fears, tell them, “It is finished.” Why, we have hundreds and thousands that really are converted, who do not know that “It is finished.” They never know that they are safe. They do not know that “It is finished.” They think they have faith today, but perhaps they may become unbelieving tomorrow. They do not know that “It is finished.” They hope God will accept them, if they do some things, forgetting that the way of acceptance is finished.

God as much accepts a sinner who only believed in Christ five minutes ago, as He will a saint who has known and loved Him eighty years, for He does not accept men because of anything they do or feel, but simply and only for what Christ did, and that is finished.

Oh! poor hearts! some of you do love the Savior in a measure, but blindly. You are thinking that you must be this, and attain to that, and then you may be assured that you are saved. Oh! you may be assured of it today—if you believe in Christ, you are saved.

“But I feel imperfections.” Yes, but what of that? God does not regard your imperfections, but He covers them with Christ’s righteousness. He sees them to remove them, but not to lay them to your charge. “Ay, but I cannot be what I would be.” But what if you cannot? God does not look at you, as what you are in yourself, but as what you are in Christ.

Come with me, poor soul, and you and I will stand together this morning, while the tempest gathers, for we are not afraid. How sharp that lightning flash! but yet we tremble not. How terrible that peal of thunder! and yet we are not alarmed, and why? Is there anything in us why we should escape? No, but we are standing beneath the cross—that precious cross, which like some noble lightning-conductor in the storm, takes itself all the death from the lighting and all the fury from the tempest. We are safe.

Loud may you roar, O thundering law, and terribly may you flash, O avenging justice! We can look up with calm delight to all the tumult of the elements, for we are safe beneath the cross.

Come with me again. There is a royal banquet spread, the King Himself sits at the table, and angels are the servitors. Let us enter. And we do enter, and we sit down and eat and drink, but how dare we do this? Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags—how dare we venture to come here?

Oh, because the filthy rags are not ours any longer. We have renounced our own righteousness, and therefore we have renounced the filthy rags, and now today we wear the royal garments of the Savior, and are from head to foot arrayed in white, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Stand in the clear sunlight—black, but comely, loathsome in ourselves, but glorious in Him. Condemned in Adam, but accepted in the Beloved. We are neither afraid nor ashamed to be with the angels of God, to talk with the glorified. Nay, nor even alarmed to speak with God Himself and call Him our friend.

And now last of all, I publish this to sinners. I know not where you are this morning, but may God find you out, you who have been a drunkard, swearer, thief. You who have been a blackguard of the blackest kind, you who have dived into the very kennel and rolled yourself in the mire—if today you feel that sin is hateful to you, believe in Him who has said, “It is finished.” Let me link your hand in mine, let us come together, both of us and say, “Here are two poor naked souls, good Lord. We cannot clothe ourselves.” And He will give us a robe, for “It is finished.”

“But Lord, is it long enough for such sinners and broad enough for such offenders?” “Yes,” says He, “It is finished.” “But we need washing, Lord! Is there anything that can take away black spots so hideous as ours?” “Yes,” says He, “here is the bath of blood.” “But must we not add our tears to it?” “No,” says He, “no, it is finished, there is enough.”

“And now, Lord, You have washed us and You have clothed us, but we would be still completely clean within, so that we may never sin any more. Lord, is there a way by which this can be done?” “Yes” says He, “there is the bath of water which flows from the wounded side of Christ.” “And Lord, is there enough there to wash away my guiltiness as well as my guilt?” “Ay,” says He, “It is finished.” “Jesus Christ is made unto you sanctification as well as redemption.”

Child of God, will you have Christ’s finished righteousness this morning and will you rejoice in it more than ever you have done before?

And oh! poor sinner, will you have Christ or no? “Ah!” says one, “I am willing enough, but I am not worthy.” He does not want any worthiness. All He asks is willingness, for you know how He puts it, “Whoever will let him come.” If He has given you willingness, you may believe in Christ’s finished work this morning.

“Ah!” say you, “but you cannot mean *me*.” But I do, for it says, “Ho, *every one that thirsteth*.” Do you thirst for Christ? Do you wish to be saved by Him? “*Every one that thirsteth*”—not only that young woman yonder, not simply that grey-headed old rebel yonder who has long despised the Savior, but this mass below, and you in these double tiers of gallery, “*Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money come.*”

O that I could “compel” you to come! Great God, do You make the sinner willing to be saved, for he wills to be damned, and will not come unless You change his will! Eternal Spirit, source of light, and life, and grace, come down and bring the strangers home! “It is finished.”

Sinner, there is nothing for God to do. “It is finished.” There is nothing for you to do. “It is finished,” “Christ need not bleed.” It is finished. “You need not weep.” “It is finished.” God the Holy Spirit need not tarry because of your unworthiness, nor need you tarry because of your helplessness. “It is finished.” Every stumbling block is rolled out of the road, every gate is opened, the bars of brass are broken, the gates of iron are burst asunder. “It is finished.”

Come and welcome, come and welcome! The table is laid, the fatlings are killed, the oxen are ready. Lo! here stands the messenger! Come from the highways and from the hedges, come from the dens and from the alleys of London. Come, you vilest of the vile, you who hate yourselves today, come! Jesus bids you. Oh! will you tarry?

Oh! Spirit of God, do You repeat the invitation and make it an effectual call to many a heart, for Jesus’ sake! Amen.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.