

DMPC SUNDAY 24th MARCH 2024 10:30am
Jesus words from the cross 4 – *It is finished!*

NOTES: ● Cat to lead ● Dan to preach

PHIL/BAND TO PLAY

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

SONG 1: Make way, make way **MP 457**

NOTICES 1: ● Easter Cards ● Alpha – come? Invite? Help with meals – cooking/serving

ALLAGE: Psalm Sunday

SONG 2: Give me oil in my lamp **MP 167**

SONG 3: Praise is Rising **MP 1221**

Young folk to leave (creche & summer club)

SONG 4: You are the king of Glory **MP 790**

PRAY (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication)
& THE LORD'S PRAYER

NOTICES 2:

SONG 5: All glory, laud and honour **CH4 364**

OFFERING PAUSE & PRAYER (call & response - you're invited to read text in yellow.)

SERMON INTRO

BIBLE: John 19:16-30

SERMON

SONG 6: The power of the cross (oh to see the dawn) **MP 1217**

PRAYER, BENEDICTION & OFFER OF PRAYER MINISTRY

PHIL/BAND TO PLAY

INTRODUCTION: Over the last few weeks as we journey towards Easter, we have been considering Jesus' last words/statement from the cross. As we read the Bible passage today, I invite you to read aloud with me Jesus words which are highlighted in yellow. This is the word of God.

BIBLE: John 19:16-30

¹⁶ Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷ Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

¹⁹ Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. ²¹ The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

²² Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

²³ When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

²⁴ "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it."

This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said,

**"They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment."^[a]
So this is what the soldiers did.**

²⁵ Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman,^[b] here is your son," ²⁷ and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

²⁸ Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. ³⁰ When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

SERMON: Jesus words from the cross 4 – ***It is finished!***

We have been paying special attention to Jesus' last words/statements from the cross.

It got me thinking.

If death was drawing near...

...what would I most want to say and communicate to the ones I love, to ones nearby?

...What most important message or point would I want to pass on?

...what words would I want to speak, to go ringing on in the their ears?

I would want to make my words count.

Jesus absolutely makes his final words count.

So much so...

...(as we thought about last week) that a criminal being crucified next to Jesus, goes from mocking Jesus to entrusting his life to him.

Whilst, at the same time, the other criminal and many others remain resolute in their scorn of Jesus.

These are the seven statements Jesus is recording saying, dying in agony on the cross. Words directed to different listeners and for the benefit not just of his friend but his enemies!

1. To God the Father and to those with ears to hear he cries...**“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**
2. And **“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”**
3. To the turned around (repentant) dying criminal who asks him to remember him when he comes into his Kingdom, Jesus declares...**“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**
4. To his mum Mary who is watching on he says...**“Woman, behold your son”**... and to the beloved disciple (most likely John) he says: **“Behold your mother.”**
5. To those watching on he says... **“I thirst.”**
6. Once again to God the Father and to those with ears to hear he says...**“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”**
7. And with his last breath to heaven and earth with a loud voice (according to the other gospels), he says, **“It is finished.”**

7 statements recorded between the 4 gospel accounts.

Four that we are covering in this sermon series.

Each statement communicates so much about...

...Jesus' character and nature

...his humanity and divinity

...our humanity

...living with hurt and hope

...how seriously God takes sin and suffering

...the kind of King that Jesus is and how different his Kingdom is and comes

...his kindness

...God's great rescue plan and how he saves

...the depth of sin and the deeper redeeming love of Christ

And the centrality of Scripture to Jesus and Jesus being the fulfilment of it.

Jesus when cut, bleeds the word of God, holds onto the word of God, and is held by the word of God.

With each cry of Scripture, the word of God made flesh and the word of God come together finding their focus and fulfilment. Jesus' death and resurrection make sense of Psalm 22. A Psalm the original singers 100s of years before Jesus must have wondered about and had serious questions about as they were singing it. Who is this character that speaks this way? What kind of Messiah is this? Here are portions of from the Psalm that bring us right up to the Jesus of the cross and his sayings, sufferings, reason for dying and what will be accomplished.

V1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

**Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?**

V7 ⁷ All who see me mock me;

they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

⁸ "He trusts in the LORD," they say,

"let the LORD rescue him.

Let him deliver him,

since he delights in him."

V15¹⁵ My mouth^[d] is dried up like a potsherd,

and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;

you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ Dogs surround me,

a pack of villains encircles me;

they pierce^[e] my hands and my feet.

¹⁷ **All my bones are on display;
people stare and gloat over me.**
¹⁸ **They divide my clothes among them
and cast lots for my garment.**

**V23 ²³ You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honour him!
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!**
²⁴ **For he has not despised or scorned
the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him
but has listened to his cry for help.**

**V26 ²⁶ The poor will eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the LORD will praise him—
may your hearts live forever!**
²⁷ **All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
will bow down before him,
²⁸ for dominion belongs to the LORD
and he rules over the nations.**
²⁹ **All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;
all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—
those who cannot keep themselves alive.**
³⁰ **... future generations will be told about the Lord.**
³¹ **They will proclaim his righteousness,
declaring to a people yet unborn:
He has done it!**

Psalm 22 starts with **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**
And concludes with **He has done it! Or it is finished!**
It is this final saying that we are going to land on today.
The other 3 statements we've not covered are well worth pondering.

Let me read the verse 28-30 again.

²⁸ Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. ³⁰ When he had received the drink, Jesus said, **“It is finished.”** With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

I wonder how you hear Jesus say, ‘It is finished?’

I wonder how you see Jesus in this moment?

How we see and hear Jesus in this moment has a vital bearing on...

...our relationship with him

...the kind of King we think he is

...and the kind of Kingdom we believe he brings

Is Jesus going out with a whimper, as a helpless victim?

Is he going out with a bang – like William Wallace crying ‘Freeeeeeeeeeedom!’ in the film Braveheart – sticking it to tyrant King Edward I.

Which kind of king is he?

Is he a wee weedy, pretender king ...overwhelmed, out his depth, caught up, swept along by powers beyond him.

Is he the Hollywood William Wallace type, stoic, unflinching in the face of death, inspiring armies to charge and kill and conquer their enemies, at the point of a sword, routing them and in glorious victory and glorious defeat...sending them *‘homewards to think again.’*

He’s neither. Thank God!

Jesus is a different kind of King and Messiah.

He’s, **“I am thirsty”** fully human and fully divine.

Here it’s worth considering the original Greek word for **gave up** in verse 30.

The word is Παρέδωκεν (paredōken) means: yielded up, committed, handed over, entrusted, to deliver over with a sense of close (personal) involvement.

With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Was Jesus’ Spirit taken from him?

Do the religious leaders remove his spirit from his body?

Do the Roman soldiers take his spirit?

Does the threat and power of Rome or the Emperor cause his Spirit to leave?

Does death rip Jesus’ spirit away from him?

No.

Jesus gives up his spirit.

There are echoes from earlier conversations here.

Like in John chapter 10:10 when Jesus is talking about being the Good shepherd and laying his life down for his sheep. ¹⁸ **No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.**

Like in Mathew 26:50 when Jesus is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and Peter cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant...[Peter] ⁵² **"Put your sword back in its place,"** Jesus said to him, **"for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"**

Like in Jesus' conversation with Roman Governor Pilate in John chapter 19...

¹⁰ **"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"**

¹¹ **Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.**

Jesus was not a helpless victim.

His life and spirit were not 'taken' from him against his will.

Jesus willingly handed over his Spirit as he willingly laid down his life.

Fully divine *and* fully human - no short cuts, no pain avoidance, entering fully into the worst kind of physical, relational, emotional and spiritual **My God My God why have you forsaken me** suffering.

In order to...?

Finish it!

Finish what?

When Jesus says **It is finished** what does he mean?

What is finished?

Because looking out into the world, and round about us and within us, there seems to be a lot that is still unfinished, out of kilter, broken, hurting and wrong.

When Jesus says **It is finished** what does he mean?

Let me start with what Jesus is *not* claiming and then follow up with what he *is* claiming.

When Jesus cries **it is finished**, he is not claiming that...
...universal, perfect peace (Shalom) has been established.
...all wrongs are now righted
...all is well immediately and comprehensively.
...injustice and evil have been instantly eradicated.
...trials and violence and wars have ceased
...with immediate effect people will now no longer suffer and die
...that local and temporal oppressors will straight away held to account.

You might be thinking...*But surely the true king would ensure that. Surely that's how the Messiah, the Son of God would do it! All that needs overthrown being ousted... all that's broken fixed now! That's how I would do it!*

But He's a different kind of king.
He's a donkey riding king who whilst riding into Jerusalem (knowing he's going to the cross) says if the people didn't shout 'Hosanna!' as he passes by the stones would!
He the kind of King who says the Kingdom of God is...
...like yeast that works through dough...
...like a mustard seed that grows...
...sometimes hard to see
...within you
...received with childlike trust
...for the meek and poor and humble.
...now and not yet.

You might be thinking...*Argghhhh! What does that mean!* You might be thinking *but this involves frustration, groaning, being perplexed, not always understanding, living in tension with answered prayers and unanswered prayers, living with mystery and trusting and yielding.* To this King Jesus says...Yes.

And in regard to Christ's kingdom being now and not yet, and many things not being finished, I think the D-Day analogy is helpful and worth re-visiting. When the allied troops on the 6th June 1944, landed on the beaches of Normandy, their arrival in France was the day victory over Hitler and the Nazis was ensured. But there was a period to live in and through before ultimate victory was accomplished, a period where blood flowed, and tears were shed. That period between D Day and Victory Day is like the period in which we now live. We live in the period between King Jesus' earthly intervention (through his life, death and resurrection) and His return.
When...

When there will be divine judgement and all wrongs will be righted.

When there will be no more sadness, or sickness or death.

When all will be well - all hurts healed.

When all creation and all who follow Jesus' creation will be redeemed, restored and enlivened like never before. When God (the source of light, life and love) will once again dwell with his people (as we did in Eden).

With Jesus death, victory is assured and now, and it is also not yet and not fully realised. Sin and death and the forces of evil continue to wreak havoc, but their days are numbered.

And not only are their days numbered, King Jesus' Kingdom of love, life, generosity, justice, truth, grace and restoration is breaking through at times in dramatic, spectacular and supernatural ways and also

...like yeast in dough

...like a mustard seed growing.

Jesus being this kind of King, with this kind of now and not yet, intriguing, enigmatic and infuriating kingdom is what many people find objectionable to point of rejecting Jesus.

It's one of the reasons that many Jewish, secular and agnostic people reject Jesus as Messiah and Lord, God and Saviour.

What kind of a King...what kind of a God and Saviour saves like that?

The Gospels reply...

The kind who is enthroned on a cross.

The kind who is crowned with thorns.

The kind who suffers with us and for us.

The kind who loves us through the blood, sweat and tears.

And here I think it's good to take pause and pray for those who are in the thick of it at the moment. For those whose suffering, and hardship is not philosophical or abstract but very, very real. That is many of us here and many in our community.

So, we pause and say *Come Lord Jesus*. **PAUSE & PRAY**

That's a little bit about what Jesus *doesn't* mean or promise with his **It is Finished** cry. So, what *does* he mean? Here it's really helpful for us to look at the original Greek word for **it is finished** which is one word - τετέλεσται (tetelestai). It comes from the root word teleó which means: to bring to an end, finish, complete, fulfil and pay.

This word is loaded with meaning that the English it is finished doesn't fully convey. There's the idea of...

...plan and purpose and implementation

...carrying out and carrying through to completion the task

...accomplishment, fulfilment, success and satisfaction

...paying the bill or debt that is due

With his dying cry **It is finished** Jesus finishes many things.

Here are 8 for us to be getting on with.

When Jesus dies declaring...**It is finished!** He is saying...

1. ...With my execution, I have executed/completed the divine rescue plan, planned from the beginning, to rescue the ones I made and love from their sin.
2. ...My death deals the death blow to the serpent and to sin, fulfilling the divine promise of the offspring of Eve Saviour. All God's promises find their yes and amen in me!
3. ...The work of keeping God's holy law is finished. I lived the life that Adam and Eve did not and you cannot.
4. ...My work of redemption is finished. On the cross, I did it all, paid it all, suffered all - all that was needed to save the sinner and satisfy the justice of God.
5. ...The work that is needed to make yourself right with God is finished. Your deadly debts and demerits were counted to me. My righteousness is now credited to all who meet me at the cross. There is nothing you can do to make me love you more and there is nothing you can do to make me love you less.
6. ...The barrier that separates sinful man from God's holy presence is finished. The curtain is torn in two. The way to life and home with God is found and finished in and through me. The way is clear and the way is me! I am the way the truth and the life.
7. ...The Old Covenant, the need of the sacrificial system, all the sacrifices, the high priest and the temple are finished. I've signed the new covenant in my blood, sin is punishable over my dead body not yours. I am the pure and spotless Lamb of God, the once and for all sacrifice who takes away the sins of the world. I am the Great High Priest who atones personally for you.
8. My suffering is finished. The weight of the world's sins I have borne. The righteous anger at sin has been poured out. I took the wrath. I drank that cup to the last dregs. I endured God forsakenness. I endured rejection and humiliation and excruciating physical pain. I endured to the end and loved to the end and it was worth it! You are worth it!

It is finished! As pained and fatigued and raw and honest as this cry is, it is no resigned sigh, or cry of defeat. It is a cry of victory!

Samuel Gandy in puts it so well....

*By weakness and defeat
I won the glorious crown;
Trod all My foes beneath My feet
By being trodden down.*

*I hell in hell laid low;
Made sin, I sin o'erthrew;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death, by dying, slew.*

PRAY