

“It Is Finished”

Daystar Church – 3/20/2005 – Jerry Lawson

Introduction:

We celebrate the resurrection of Christ one week from now.

We will see a beautiful depiction of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ played out on this stage.

If you read your Bible, you'll find Pastor Greg's musical remarkably true to scripture.

Though I have not seen the rehearsals nor read the script, I imagine Christ will utter three simple words from the cross.

The meaning of these 3 words, however, is not fully understood by most believers.

John 19:28-30 NKJV

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" 29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

GO IMMEDIATELY TO DVD ILLUSTRATION!

PAUSE AT END OF MUSIC ON PICTURE OF CHRIST.

The first time I saw this video, I thought I was watching an impressionistic artist.

Colors seem to be thrown around at random, only the artist knowing what they are all about.

However, in the end, this painting takes a remarkable turn...when it

is finished, the picture comes clear!

RETURN TO POWERPOINT SHOW!

Just as the colors of this painting come together to create a picture, so the events of Christ's life come together to FINISH the work God began with the first man.

Christ's life seems to have several elements that we would expect in the life of a king:

Virgin birth, kings worship the babe, multitudes follow, triumphal entry into Jerusalem...

But then there are several strange, unclear events that do not seem to fit the life of the Son of God.

Ridiculed, falsely accused, arrested, beaten, crowned with thorns, crushed on the cross...

This could leave the casual observer confused.

How do these pieces fit in the puzzle of life?

What picture is God painting here?

Actually, if you look at the life, death, & resurrection of Christ you'll notice powerful truths about the world God created that are accurate, not only of Christ's journey on this earth, but also our own.

Sometimes the elements of our lives don't make much sense.

The purpose of Christ's life was awesome.

The prophecy of the life of Christ begins as far back as Genesis 3:15, when we are told that Christ will "crush" the head of Satan.

In fact this is a recurring theme in Scripture:

1 John 3:8 KJV

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

In the beginning, this sounds like a story we're going to really like, however as it unfolds things get a little confusing.

Jesus is arrested, beaten, hanged on a cross...

Instead of Jesus destroying Satan, it seems like Satan is destroying Him.

This really doesn't make much sense.

Early on in Jesus' ministry we hear Him say:

John 10:10 NKJV

The thief does not come except to steal, & to kill, & to destroy. I have come that they may have life, & ... have it more abundantly.

It sounds like He has come to keep Satan from killing and destroying and to give us abundant life.

But a few days later we see Satan killing Jesus.

Where is the "abundant life" in all of this?

This doesn't make sense.

You know, there are many times in my life that I have been confused.

A university student was seen with a large "K" printed on his T- shirt. When someone asked him what the "K" stood for, he said, "Confused." "But," the questioner replied, "You don't spell "confused" with a "K." The student answered, "Now you know how confused I am."

Sometimes I feel just about that confused.

See, I know what God's word says about me too.

I'm the head and not the tail, lender and not the borrower, over-

comer, more than a conqueror...

God has an awesome plan of blessing for my life...

Then something happens that seems to go completely against the grain of God's promises for my life.

Bad news from the doctor, pink slip at work, trouble at home...

How does this fit in God's plan of blessing, hope and abundance for my life???

We just have to trust that GOD IS IN CONTROL!!!

His ways are higher.

He IS working things out for my good.

He is the master Painter and if we could see the finished product, we'd see how every color on the canvas comes together to accomplish His will!

When we understand God's purpose for Christ's life:

His death has everything to do with you and I having abundant life.

The stripes He bore have everything to do with our healing.

Though His horrible crucifixion didn't make sense at times, in the end we realize that the pouring out of His blood at Calvary became a river of redemption that flows even to this day!!!

And although there are some confusing things going on in your life right now, I promise you that if you will hold on, GOD WILL WORK IT OUT FOR YOUR GOOD!!!

Sometimes Life is Painful.

As the disciples accompanied Jesus into the Jerusalem to the joyous shouts of "*Hosanna!*" they had no idea of the pain that

awaited them all.

Judas would experience the pain of sin and death.

Peter would experience the horrible pain of remorse.

Jesus would feel the greatest pain of all: the agony of taking the sin of the world to the cross completely alone!

Sometimes things just don't turn out as we had planned.

In our minds things would be so great if only it worked out like we hoped.

So we work feverishly to see that plan work out.

When it doesn't work out as we had planned and hoped, it can be painful.

Some years ago a young man approached the foreman of a logging crew and asked for a job. "That depends," replied the foreman. "Let's see you fell this tree." The young man stepped forward and skillfully felled a great tree. Impressed, the foreman exclaimed, "Start Monday!" Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rolled by, and Thursday afternoon the foreman approached the young man and said, "You can pick up your paycheck on the way out today."

Startled, he replied, "I thought you paid on Friday."

"Normally we do," answered the foreman, "but we're letting you go today because you've fallen behind. Our daily felling charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last on Wednesday."

"But I'm a hard worker," the young man objected. "I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!"

The foreman, sensing the boy's integrity, thought for a minute and then asked, "Have you been sharpening your ax?" The young man replied, "I've been working too hard to take the time."

Are you working so hard on your plan that you have failed to check with God's plan?

God tells us in Jeremiah, "I know the plans that I have for you..."

Do you know what those plans are?

I promise you that God wants you to know.

He takes no pleasure in hiding it from you.

He is committed to bringing you onboard with His plan.

He will do anything to get your attention.

Sometimes this is the source of our pain.

We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities ... we can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.

Maybe God has been shouting to you lately.

It's probably b/c he tried to whisper to you.

He tried to speak to you.

Now He is showing you that He'll use any means (even pain) to draw you back to Him.

Why don't you stop swinging that old dull axe?

He is calling us to know Him intimately so that He can put us back on His path today.

Maybe this is why there is so much pain in your life.

Sometimes God has to close one door so he can open another one. *(I know this to be true!)*

Jesus (the man) had to die so that Jesus (the Savior) could rise up from the grave.

He was a great man when he taught men the truth.

He was a great man when he healed men's diseases.

He was a great man when he forgave men's sins.

BUT HE WAS NEVER THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD UNTIL HE

GOT UP FROM THE GRAVE!!!

He proved that He had the power over death.

He validated His claim that He could forgive sin.

He paid the penalty once and for all for MY SIN!

HE SATISFIED YOUR DEBTS AND MINE!!!

Satan thought He had ended the life of the Son of God.

But when Jesus said, "*It is finished,*" He meant that He had fully accomplished the work He was sent to do.

Now you and I don't have to be bound by our sin.

We don't have to live a meaningless existence.

WE CAN BE FREE!

WE CAN HAVE LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY!!!

The painful death Christ endured was just a doorway to the plan of God.

Sometimes the most painful ending is just a process to get you to where God wants you to be. (REPEAT!!!)

You're so involved in the process that you're looking at it at point blank range.

But if you could back away and see what God sees, you'd see His grand design.

HE HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE!

Today (March 20, 2005) is a part of that plan.

How you respond to His voice to you today is especially important.

STAND.

Conclusion: (Rembrandt – “The Three Crosses”)

(Picture on Screen)

If look the picture over you will find those who carried out the crucifixion, those who just came to watch, those who came to poke fun at Christ and Mary and Christ’s family who are in obvious anguish. But if you look at the bottom left corner of the painting, you will find what art critics say is a representation of Rembrandt himself. Rembrandt included himself in the picture b/c he recognized that his sins nailed Jesus to the cross.

We all put Him on the cross.

He was nailed to the cross with our sins.

I put him there; I’ve come to grips with that fact.

But the Bible says that when we keep walking further away from God, we “crucify again the Son of God.”

I don’t want to be guilty of that today.

It’s time to abandon your plan for His.

Sharpen your axe.

Trust that the picture He is painting will be a masterpiece when ***it is finished.***

Sermonillustrations.com

K. Hughes, Liberating Ministry From The Success Syndrome, Tyndale.

C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain
Hebrews 6:6

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