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The Gospel Without Religion

By Charles Pinkney

GWR 06
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The Day Religion Died
"It is Finished!"

What was finished?

What were the meaning of the words Jesus cried aloud from the Cross?

Was it more than an agonizing cry of a dying man?

***It was, in fact, to announce to all of the earth and the heavens that he had accomplished his earthly mission.
At this watershed moment, the Lord became "The Seed" who, was planted to bring forth a mighty harvest.***

What Was Finished?

What was finished? A life of alienation from God.

What Was Finished?

A Life Without Access to Intimacy in God's

What Was Finished?

No person could call God Father.

What Was Finished?

The Requirement of Keeping Religious Laws.

What Was Finished?

The Old Covenant Priesthood

What was finished?

A life of alienation from God.

Before Jesus said, "It is finished," There was no real intimacy possible between God and humanity . The life that was

given upon the cross that day opened the door of relationship to every man, woman and child upon the face of the earth. The sayings of the angels in the fields near Bethlehem had come to pass, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will (blessings) extended toward all men of faith.*" (paraphrased, Luke 2:14) If you would like to do some interesting research in the Bible look up any references which refer to "justification." Justification refers to the idea of God Almighty seeing us **believers as being made perfect** by substituting Jesus Christ's goodness (or right standing) for our own. One scripture to point out this application of access to God is the first verse of Romans chapter 5, "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

What was Finished?

A Life Without Access to Intimacy in God's Presence.

When Jesus cried out, "*It is finished,*" the veil of the temple was rent in two. The veil was a fabric curtain of great size and weight which separated the Holy Place from the place called the Holy of Holies, it was only within the Holy of Holies where God would manifest physically after the priests had sufficiently prepared with cleansing and with blood sacrifices. God Almighty prior to this time manifested physically in one place for a certain covenant people, the Jews. He was **their God** and the Gentiles were until that time, excluded from fellowship and from covenant. This is a scriptural reality that contradicts the beliefs of a Universalist or Deist who maintains that God is and is the same in any religion.

What was finished? Until this moment, No person could call God "Father."

After Jesus' sacrificial death, he was seen by Mary of Magdalla just before he was to ascend to the throne, (John 20:17) Jesus spoke to Mary saying, "*Don't touch me yet, for I have not yet ascended, but go to my brothers and tell them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and their God.*" (paraphrased.)

Do not assume in reading that the word "brothers" applied to the Lord's friends and disciples **before he made a way for them** to become true adopted "sons of God." Jesus spoke with such an emphasis that when Mary was to announce his message, it made it very clear that there was to be a brand new kind of relationship which was to be known among the disciples or believers. That we could be considered family to Jesus Christ and to his Father. Christ was now our brother. God was now our Father. Now we could actually pray the prayer which Jesus taught them, saying, "Our Father, in heaven - -." Jesus is called, "- - *the first born of many brethren,*" in Romans 8, verse 29.

What was Finished?

The Requirement of Keeping Religious Laws, Rituals, and Ordinances

Righteousness was associated with keeping religious laws and ordinances in the old covenant which Moses brought to the house of Israel. The Ten Commandments were the principal framework for righteous living, but you will note with any casual reading of the Book of Leviticus that the laws were extensive, detailed, and covered exhaustively matters of practice for every day life ranging from food to social practices. There were covenant blessings resulting from keeping the Laws of Moses, but there were also curses associated with failure to keep the law even in the most minute detail. (Refer to Deuteronomy chapter 28.)

Jesus, one sinless man, fulfilled the law. It was as though we were given permission to borrow the test paper of a brilliant classmate who scored a perfect 100 on an achievement test and we were given the legal right to use his score. Where does scripture verify this statement? Read the third chapter of Galatians, especially verse 13 and 16. This chapter is foundational reading for to understand God's provision for receiving His acceptance through another's merit. It establishes the nature of God's blessings as a free gift rather than a reward for personal effort. Read it again and again and compare it to any church taught doctrines which would place us in bondage to any works oriented performance!

What was finished? The Old Covenant Priesthood

When Jesus declared, "It is finished." It also brought an end to the necessity of having a class of persons whose job it was to communicate with God on our behalf. The Levites were the tribe of Israel whose soul purpose it was to minister to the Lord, to prepare sacrifices, to make atonements for sin, to declare the people free and absolved from sin, to talk

to God, to hear and teach His Word. If you were a Levite you were automatically a priest, not a priest plus another profession. You were supplied with provision from the "tithes" of the people. They supported the work of God by providing by the tithe of food and produce to feed the Levites supply the temple. The priests talked with God on behalf of the people of covenant. The priests were those who were trained to know the Word of God and study the texts of Holy Law.

When Jesus cried, "It is finished." it would come to pass that, " - *the old things would pass away and all things became new,*" The old priest hood would pass away and a new priesthood would come. Jesus himself would become the high priest over a new covenant, a better covenant. It was to be an eternal, never perishing priesthood. He would sit at the right hand of the Glory of God, "*ever making intercession*" on the part of His children in the earth. He was appointed heir and ruler over all things. This appointed heir and king and high priest has all things at his command and all things under his feet. At the utterance of his name ever spiritual and physical knee will have to bow. (God is Great.)

The people who could not know God were joined into the vine of Israel. The people who could never enter within the veil of the Holiest Place could enter in freely, being justified and purged from an evil conscience by the blood of the Lamb. (Read Hebrews 10:2, Hebrews 10:22)

What had happened? We (any and all believers) became priests unto our God. We could enter in. We could minister to Him. We could offer up sacrifices of praise. We could hear His voice. We could proclaim the Words that He would speak to us. We could speak on His behalf. We could be an oracle of God. We were given authority to use His name, the Name Jesus which commands the Spiritual Power and authority over every name and condition. We could study His Word we could hear His voice speaking in the Scriptures, we could know the Wisdom of God.

We became Kings and Priests unto our God. We received the "*Spirit of Truth who could lead us into all truth and we needed no man to teach us*" about God. All of us could be Taught by God. (Read John 6:45 and Hebrews 8:10, 11) *This is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel in those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, saying know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest."*

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