

**IT IS FINISHED**, three words with immense meaning and profound impact. They are the very last words in the redemption of man.

In Genesis we read that after God created the heavens and earth He rested. He blessed that day and called it holy. It was a finished work and man certainly had no part in it. In the book of Hebrews, we read of another rest. This was the rest promised to the people of Israel whereby they would enter a promised land flowing with milk and honey. Only two of that generation would enter, Joshua and Caleb. Because of the people's rebellious hearts an entire generation perished in the desert. With that came a stern warning- "I swore in my wrath they shall never enter my rest." [Hebrews 3:11-12] They had witnessed the parting of the Red Sea, manna from heaven, water from a rock, a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night still their hearts were hardened towards God.

Contrast that with these words of Jesus, "come unto me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. [Matthew 11:28] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

How can both be true of the same God? They are because He is both. He is infinitely holy, just, and pure and cannot abide with sin. He is also a God of great mercy and grace. How can both be reconciled? This all-familiar scripture speaks volumes. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. [John 3;16] Thus, He gave His son as a sin offering once for all. He poured out His wrath on the cross. He made peace by the blood of the cross.

It was not Pontius Pilot, the Jews who shouted crucify, nor the Roman soldiers who mocked him, but it was the very mind of God from time eternal. Jesus did not die at their hands but in faithful obedience to his father. The scripture says he *gave up* his spirit. Do you not think he could have called upon legions of angels and brought devastating retribution to all who sought to kill him? While we yet sinners He died for us. The mind of God was revealed in time as the scripture proclaims, "the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and subsequent glory."

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you and in the things which have now been announced to you by those who preached the good news through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Things into which angels longed to look.” [ 1 Peter 10-20] We are certainly the object of His mercy and grace.

Finally, there remains a ‘rest’ yet today for all who will enter by faith into this finished work. Today when you hear His voice do not harden your heart as those who did so in the wilderness. [ Hebrews 3:15] We are to dwell and live in that rest according to all the rich promises of God as revealed in His word. The finished work and the rest within are for each and every day. He did what we could never have done by whatever personal righteousness or goodness we may think of possessing. He restored us to an intimate fellowship with God. It is by the very righteousness of Christ alone we are restored. We are indeed ‘born anew’. Lay hold of those promises. Lay them up in your heart.

“Where sin and sorrow cease and song and the saint begin [Oswald Chambers].”

Let your song begin today!