

The **COPEL** *without* **RELIGION**

By Charles Pinkney

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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.***

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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 would now 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** in the eyes of God the Father. Jesus Christ's goodness (or right standing) was allotted 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.

In the hour when Jesus cried out, "*It is finished,*" the veil of the temple was rent in two. This veil was a woven fabric curtain of great size and weight which separated the Holy Place from the place called the Holy of Holies, it was within the Holy of Holies where God would manifest physically meeting with a priest had sufficiently prepared with rituals of cleansing and with blood sacrifices. God Almighty prior in the time of temple worship manifested physically in one place for the covenant people, the Jews. Jehovah was revealed to Israel as **their God** and other kindred, tribes and nations, the Gentiles were excluded from fellowship and from covenant. The Messiah was him to was to come and rule and reign as King of the Jews. This scriptural reality contradicts the beliefs of a Universalist or Deist who maintains that God has always been a God of every religion and religion.

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

After Jesus' sacrificial death, he was seen by Mary of Magdalla moments 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 priest-class 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 atonement for sin; to declare the people free and absolved from sin; to talk to God; to hear and deliver His Word. If you were a Levite you were automatically a priest, and only a priest. Priests of the order of Aaron, the Levites were supplied with provision from the "tithes" of the people. Thus the work of God could be sustained. The priests talked with God on behalf of the people of covenant. The priests were those who were trained from their youth 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*," (2 Corinthians 5:17) The old priesthood would pass away and a new priesthood would come. Jesus himself would become the high priest over a new covenant, a better covenant. (Hebrews 8) 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. Praise be unto our God for He is Great and His mercies are wonderful!

Now at last, people who could not know God could be joined into the vine of Israel. A 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)

With the resurrection a miracle happened! We (any and all believers) were invited to become priests unto the God of all creation. We ourselves could enter in behind the 'veil.' We could minister to Him. He would receive sacrifices of praise that we would offer up. We could hear His voice. We could proclaim the Words that He would speak to us. We could speak on His behalf. We could speak as 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 (the rhema voice of God) speaking in the Scriptures, we could know the Wisdom of God.

We became Kings and Priests unto our God. (Read of the first Pentecost in Exodus 19) 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) also (1John 2:27) and from the prophet Jeremiah (31:3) *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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