

The Value of a Finished Work
Relationship

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

A great hindrance to the work of Jesus Christ comes when Christians refuse to live under the Finished Work in the midst of trials and in relating to each other. For example, the Finished Work is constantly on trial in Christian marriages, and couples are breaking up in America like never before.

The problem is that there simply are not enough Finished Work marriages in Christian churches that live in Finished Work relationships. Why? Because for some believers the Finished Work is seen as relevant in salvation for eternal security, but *not* in how to treat one another. Judgments are passed and contentions come because of an ignorance of the Finished Work.

Jesus said in John 17:4, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And according to Romans 11:6, everything about our lives is by

grace, and no more by works (the production of our flesh), because Christ finished the work at Calvary (John 19:30).

This booklet will show how vital it is for us to see not just ourselves but each other, as well, in the Finished Work of Christ. God Himself cannot remember our sins, for He dealt with all of them at Calvary. Only when we really recognize this can we be free to live with ourselves and each other.

Chapter One

ONLY THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:6-9)

Paul was very serious about the Finished Work. He prayed that those who preached “any other gospel be accursed.” The “perverted” gospel was removing the Galatians from the grace of God. For those who removed them from that grace, Paul prayed that they would be accursed, which means they would be heading for hell.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

“And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:14-17).

The tragedy is that Christians have not understood how to have relationships in the Finished Work. Are old things *passing away* or are they *passed away*? The Word of God tells us that they have passed away—every one of them. Do we have a right to know anyone after the flesh? No, not even with our spouse. When we know someone after the flesh, we are violating the precious, tender Finished Work of Christ.

Always Look for Mercy

“Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin” (Deuteronomy 9:27).

When Moses prayed for Israel in Deuteron-

omy 9, he asked God not to look at the people's stubbornness, wickedness, or sin. If we encounter someone who is stubborn, we are not to look at their stubbornness. If we know of a sin, we are not to "look" at it—we are not to be occupied with it. Why? Because Jude 20-21 tells us to "build ourselves up" in the most holy faith, to keep ourselves in the love of God, and to "look" for the mercy of Jesus Christ.

A Christian who is operating in the Finished Work always looks at mercy—not at people's sins. A Finished Work Christian always sees others as they are in Christ and the potential they have in Christ as they grow. If he sees failure, he ministers grace and love that helps others to grow more.

We are to always look for mercy! Way back in the Old Testament, Abraham did some bad things, as did his son Isaac. And what about Jacob? He was double-minded and crooked. The Lord, however, saw all of them in the Finished Work, used them mightily, and referred to them as heroes of the faith.

Chapter Two

FINISHED WORK OCCUPATION

“And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, *which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance*, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the LORD God” (Ezekiel 29:16).

The Holy Spirit is really grieved when we don't consistently live from the viewpoint that Jesus Christ paid for all of our sins and did so much for each of us. Instead, our viewpoint is often to treat others the way we think they should be treated because of their faults.

Consider Paul's failures, as he related them in Romans 7. He said, “The things I do, I shouldn't do. What I should do, I do not. O wretched man that I am!” (see Romans 7:15,24). Paul was saying, “I'm in a problem here, and it doesn't seem to be getting any better.” And there is no record that he changed in Romans 7; but in Romans 8:1, he cried, “No condemnation.” Those are the

only two words expressed in the original Greek text of this passage, and they show how Paul got out of his problems.

Paul entered into a “no condemnation” viewpoint and went on to mention the work of the Holy Spirit in him nineteen times in Romans 8, whereas in Romans 7:14-24 it was “I” and “me” thirty-two times. The difference was that he became occupied with the Finished Work *because* of the work of the Holy Spirit. It changed him, although it didn’t change him overnight. As Paul was now occupied with the Finished Work, he started to grow in understanding and experience by living in it.

The Author and Finisher of Our Faith

Attacking the Finished Work is one of the greatest transgressions against Jesus Christ we can commit. Satan consistently attacks the Finished Work, which speaks of what Jesus Christ did once and for all, for each and every believer. Demon forces work to make people familiar with the Finished Work. Their focus is on attacking Finished Work relationships. As a result, many Christians attack the Finished Work by not living in it.

In Deuteronomy 9, Jesus said in so many

words, “God doesn’t look at our sins, so you shouldn’t either.” What God is looking for is the opportunity to give us His righteousness. He wants us to receive His grace (Isaiah 30:18).

Israel often brought their iniquities and sins to remembrance (Ezekiel 29:16). They were occupied with failure, while God was waiting to be gracious to them.

We don’t get anything out of being occupied with what we have done wrong in the past or what we are doing wrong now. We are to look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and what He has done. Look to who He is, and be occupied with what He says about our position in the Finished Work.

All of our sins were placed upon Him (Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24), and they were judged once and for all. There can never be a sin question. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12). As sins are no longer an issue in my life, they surely cannot be an issue for me in anyone else’s life. We are to know no one after the flesh. It is impossible to judge in another what has already been judged by Christ. He bore all of our sins in His own body. “It is finished,” He said (John 19:30). *It is finished.*

Remember, when we make the Finished Work relative to our salvation but disregard it in our interpersonal relationships (such as marriages and friendships), then we are attacking the grace of God. We are taking the blood of Jesus Christ, wherewith we are sanctified, and putting it under our feet, treading on it, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29). That means if we do not live in the Finished Work with our spouse, then we take the Blood, put it under our feet, and insult the spirit of grace. We tread on the New Covenant, under which old things are passed away and every single thing is new.

Let the Holy Spirit work this into our hearts: We start out in the Finished Work; we pray in the Finished Work; we live in the Finished Work; and if we fail, we rebound and recover because of the Finished Work of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Three

JUDGMENT BELONGS TO THE LORD

“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matthew 7:1-2)

In giving a different outlook on some of these verses, I want to make it clear that we are not to judge, lest we be judged. We have to put the Finished Work into our relationships. In the measure we judge, judgment is going to come back on us.

By refusing to look at anyone after the flesh, we make Finished Work righteousness, grace, and mercy available to the guilty, the ignorant, the fallen, those in pain, and those who are crushed by things in their life. Everyone needs to be seen in the Finished Work and ministered to in the Finished Work.

How can people read Matthew 7:1-2 and still

enter into division, slander, maligning, gossip and other attacks? If we malign, which is to judge a person for what we know to be true, we take the discipline for the sins of the one who is guilty and put them upon ourselves. But that's not all. Judgment in the form of discipline comes back upon us in a double measure, because we will also be disciplined for the act of maligning.

When I argue with another Christian, in principle I am taking Christ's name in vain and doing despite to the Spirit of grace. Now, if I were the only one affected by the chastisement, that would be one thing. But the chastisement can also affect my family and children because of what they may have been exposed to. So you see, this is very serious.

God is the God of all mercy (2 Corinthians 1:3), the God of all comfort, the God of all patience (Romans 15:5), and the God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10). He is the God who was Love before He created anyone or anything. He is still love today, and His name, YAHWEH, means mercy, graciousness, lovingkindness, longsuffering, and forgiveness (Exodus 34:6-7).

Satan attacks the Finished Work more than any single thing on the earth. He attacks it because He knows the Finished Work gives every-

one an opportunity to make it. More than that, the Finished Work sees us as having already made it. It sees us as being seated forever with Christ the moment we become Christians.

God Takes Away Iniquity

“And he shewed me Joshua, the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

“And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

“And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment” (Zechariah 3:1-4)

“I have taken his iniquity away,” the Lord said. *That is the Finished Work.* God says David never turned aside, and he served Him perfectly all the days of His life (1 Kings 15:5). Acts 13:22 tells us David fulfilled all of God’s will. What is that? The Finished Work. Forget what happened

with Bathsheba. God refuses to view David in any light but that of the Finished Work.

If someone wants to judge someone else, God will not allow it. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4). "*And stand he will*" (Romans 14:5a) because of the Finished Work.

Creating Capacities

The Finished Work is more than a salvation message to make me feel good. In my marriage, in my friendships, and in the Body, I am accountable as a steward of grace to live with the understanding that *every* sin has been paid for. The issue now is to create capacities in others to live in the Finished Work. The way to do that is to love them, love them, and love them, through the fruit of the Spirit that never fails.

1 Corinthians 13:8 says that love never fails. We love and give grace. As stewards of mercy, we let mercy rejoice against judgment. And before it's all over, God will help people get right, through me.

"If anyone is going to deal with My children, it will be Me," God says (Romans 12:19; He-

brews 10:30). “I paid for their sins, and I turned My face from their sins. I turned My face away from the sins of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Don’t look at their stubbornness. Don’t look at their wickedness or their sin. Remember, in Ezekiel 29, God said Israel was foolish for bringing their sins to remembrance, when even He couldn’t remember them (Jeremiah 31:34).

God Alone Deals with His Children

Pertaining to Solomon, God told David, “I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him” (2 Samuel 7:14-15a). Who would chasten Solomon? God would. Did he sin? Yes. Was he chastened? Yes, and he was chastened for this reason: He would not receive God’s way, God’s truth, or God’s life. Solomon was chastened because he would not forsake his own way and return to fellowship with God. Fellowshiping with God was the issue, not Solomon’s sins, because his sins—as with all of our sins—were placed upon Jesus Christ.

In the book of Acts, Ananias and Sapphira lied about the offering they made, and they did

it before the congregation. As a result, they died instantly. Who did the judging in this case? God did. People were not involved. "Judgment belongs to Me," says God (see John 8:16). No one has a right to become involved in His judgment.

When I make judgments, I am trying to take the place of God. It is as if I'm saying, "Move over, God. I am going to give judgment on this one." There is just one problem with this: Only a person without sin can judge or even cast a stone (John 8:7). "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We are liars if we claim to have no sin. And because only a person without sin can pass judgment then everyone has to stop judging.

Consider James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." So, you want to judge someone for violating Law No. 6, while you are breaking Law No. 9, which you think is not nearly as bad. But sooner or later, you will be disciplined for the sin you judged, because if you offend the law in one point, you are guilty of offending it all.

Thank God, we are saved by grace!

Chapter Four
WHAT GOD REMEMBERS,
WHAT GOD FORGETS

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve” (Jeremiah 50:20)

I want you to see what God remembers and what He doesn't remember. For instance, if someone tries to bring up your past sins, not in love but to accuse you, just smile and walk away. He will be disciplined for the accusation he made toward you. Whether you did wrong or not makes no difference.

The iniquity of Israel “shall be none.” The sins of Judah “shall not be found.” Why? They were placed upon Jesus Christ who would die at Calvary. Way back then, God declared the Finished Work. Israel and Judah were not under the Law but under the Finished Work. In their own

heads, they might have thought they were under the Law, but it wasn't God who put them there. The greatest thing for our lives is to let the Finished Work really take over.

The Problem Is in the Soul

“Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

“From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isaiah 1:5-6)

When a person walks in his soul, in his fallen sin nature, even if he is a seasoned Christian, he has no soundness. He might think he is sound, but he is not. What he does have are wounds. “Wounds” are the result of being stricken once and then again. “Bruises” come when a person has been crushed many times. “Sores” refer to poison that enters the body because of pains. Jeremiah 15:18 reveals that these pains can become perpetual.

So many people suffer because they live in the wounds in their soul. They don't live in the human spirit with the Holy Spirit and the Word

of God motivating them. Therefore, their pain *is* perpetual. And until they take on a Finished Work perspective, the pain will go on.

As Christians, we never lose our wounds and bruises. They remain in the soul and surface when our human spirit is not operating. Yet we can live completely outside of them because of the Cross and the filling of the Spirit. If we choose to step out from under the control of the Holy Spirit, then we fall back into the “incurable” and “grievous” ways of Jeremiah 30:12.

When the human spirit operates properly, the Word is always quick and powerful within the believer, “...sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

If I am not Spirit-taught morning, noon, and night, then I will go back to living in my pains. I might be educated enough so that I don’t reveal them, because I hold them in, but those pains are still there. My countenance will eventually reveal them, too. We know each other’s countenance enough to see when they testify against us (Isaiah 3:9).

Sovereignty Chooses to Forget Our Sins

In Psalm 79:8, the psalmist asks God not to remember our iniquities. And in Isaiah 43:25, God said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." Because of His name and what it means, God remembers our sins no more (Exodus 34:6-7; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17).

Do you want to be found remembering what God has forgotten? He cannot remember your sins. God's omniscience is overtaken by His omnipotence, which limits His omnipresence as far as our sins are concerned because Christ paid for them. Jesus Christ was crucified with all of our sins upon Him, and He died for our sins. God's sovereignty made an agreement to never remember one single sin.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:5-8)

How can we impute sin to someone when

even God cannot? We can never judge another because we are not omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. God alone is everywhere present (Jeremiah 23:24). He alone has all knowledge (Psalm 139), and only God has all power (Matthew 28:18). If we try to judge someone without all the facts, the evidence we have to make our case can't be entered in the courtroom of heaven. On top of that, God can't remember sins.

What does God remember? His tender mercies and lovingkindnesses. In Psalm 105:42, He remembers His holy promises. Habakkuk 3:2 says He remembers His mercy in the midst of doctrine and truth (Psalm 98:3).

“Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD” (Psalm 25:6-7). David prayed, “According to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.” God took David up on it. It was God's goodness David appealed to, not human goodness, and God did not remember.

Think of it: We serve an all-powerful God who has made it so that there is something He

cannot do. He cannot remember any sin of redeemed Christians because the blood of Christ has blotted out all of our sins. It was *precious* blood that Jesus shed (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Living in God's Tenses

Adam's nature gets wounded, offended, and counseled. Adam doesn't change, but we can be dead to Adam through the Cross.* We can be hurting—legitimately so. But the reason is that we don't see our old man for what it is—crucified and buried. We have to understand the tenses God uses in the Bible. *I have been* crucified! *I am* buried! It's all over—this all happened in the past (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:4, 6). The life that I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:14). The verb “forgive” in the Greek text of this verse is a ‘gnomic aorist’, which represents instant timelessness. This means that the moment I realize that someone has done something against me, I instantly forgive and forget what has been done. It is an eternal act of God.

I am to forgive as Christ forgave me (Ephesians 4:32). There is then no real need for me to

even confront the other person because I am not operating in my soul and letting it bother me. If I do go to the person, the Holy Spirit's power of forgiveness will allow me to edify. Yet, as far as I go, the issue is over, forgiven, and forgotten. The only reason I would go to someone who wronged me would be to help him out so that he wouldn't do it again. All the while, I would treat him in meekness, lovingkindness, patience, and forgiveness.

We treat each other this way because of what Christ has done for us in the Finished Work.

"For I will forgive their iniquity, and *I will remember their sin no more*" (Jeremiah 31:34). In this verse, to remember no more means that God has no past record of our lives. He doesn't remember what we were; He only knows us as who we are in Christ.

**Read The Finished Work of Christ, by Pastor Stevens, Grace Publications, 1998.*

CONCLUSION

We need to pray for each other, so that we will enter into the meaning of the Finished Work in our relationships. It is something the Church is missing today. The Finished Work has been so misunderstood by many godly people. They love God and are following after Christ, but their pains keep them from entering into the human spirit's provision through the operation of the Word and the Spirit.

When the Word becomes spirit and life to us, we are set free. The old man is crucified and buried, and we are indeed free, forever. What a joy to live in such freedom, especially in Finished Work relationships with others.