

SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2000

①

ANS 10806
347
220
27
minutes

THE MESSAGE TITLE: ^{"THE WORD OF HISTORY"}
~~"JESUS' SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS"~~

TEXT: JOHN 19:30

60
44
16
27
17
44

JESUS SPEAKS, "IT IS FINISHED"

LET'S GO TO BACK TO THE BEGINNING

~~IT REMINDS ME OF~~ GENESIS 1:1 ... "IN THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED THE
HEAVENS AND THE EARTH."

~~AND~~ THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS! ... GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.

IT DOESN'T SAY GOD MADE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH ... ~~NOR DOES IT SAY~~ ^{IT DOESN'T}

HE ZEROXED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH ... OR BUILT OR DEVELOPED ...

OR MASS-PRODUCED ... NO ... THE WORD IS SIMPLE ... GOD CREATED THE
HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.

~~AND THAT WORD SAYS A LOT ...~~ CREATING IS SOMETHING FAR

DIFFERENT THAN CONSTRUCTING ... ~~THE DIFFERENCE IS PRETTY OBVIOUS. IF~~

~~WE~~ ^{WHEN you} CONSTRUCT SOMETHING, IT USUALLY MEANS ENGAGING ^{your} ~~OUR~~ HANDS,

507-8019

~~WHILE~~ CREATING SOMETHING ENGAGES THE HEART AND THE SOUL!

(2)

~~YOU PROBABLY HAVE NOTICED THIS IN YOUR OWN LIFE~~

THINK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU'VE CREATED . . . A PAINTING PERHAPS . . . OR A SONG . . . OR LINES OF POETRY . . . THAT YOU HAVE NEVER SHOWN TO ANYONE.

~~OR EVEN~~ MAYBE ~~THE~~ DOG HOUSE ~~IN THE BACKYARD~~.
^A OR A ^{TRICK} HOUSE .

MY QUESTION TO YOU IS SIMPLE . . . HOW ~~DO~~ ^{DID} YOU FEEL TOWARD THAT CREATION . . . GOOD? . . . I HOPE SO! . . . PROUD? . . . ^{CERTAINLY!} ~~MY POINT IS THAT WHEN YOU ARE CREATING SOMETHING, OR WHEN YOU CREATE SOMETHING, YOU'RE PUTTING YOURSELF IN IT . . . AND, IT'S FAR GREATER THAN AN ORDINARY ASSIGNMENT OR A TASK . . . IT'S AN EXPRESSION OF YOU.~~

~~NOW IMAGINE, THIS MORNING, GOD'S CREATIVITY.~~ OF ALL ^(THE THINGS) WE DON'T KNOW

ABOUT CREATION, THERE IS ONE THING THAT WE DO KNOW . . . GOD DID IT WITH

HUMOR AND
A SMILE!!

I BELIEVE GOD HAD A BLAST PAINTING THE STRIPES ON THE ZEBRA! ...

HANGING THE STARS IN THE SKY! ... PUTTING GOLD IN THE SUNSET! ... ~~AND~~

~~HOW MANY TIMES I'VE SAID TO MYSELF~~ ... "WHAT CREATIVITY!"

STRETCHING THE NECK OF THE GIRAFFE ... WHAT CREATIVITY!

PUTTING "FLUTTER" INTO THE ~~MOCKING BIRDS~~ ^{FINCHE'S} WINGS ... PLANTING THE

GIGGLE IN THE HYAENA!

WHAT A TIME GOD HAD ... LIKE A WHISTLING CARPENTER IN HIS WORKSHOP. ~~2~~

~~I THINK~~ ^{MINUTE} BELIEVE GOD LOVED EVERY ~~BIT~~ OF IT.

~~GOD Poured HIMSELF INTO HIS WORK~~ ... SO INTENT WAS ~~HIS CREATIVITY~~ ^{GOD'S CREATIVE EFFORT}

THAT HE TOOK A DAY OFF AT THE END OF THE WEEK ... JUST TO REST! ...

AND, THAT ~~also~~ SETS A PERFECT EXAMPLE FOR ALL OF US.

AND THEN, ~~AS A~~ ^{AS A} ~~THE~~ FINALE TO A BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE, GOD MADE MAN!

WITH HIS TYPICAL CREATIVE FLAIR, HE BEGAN ~~THE~~ ^{WITH A} USELESS MOUND OF DIRT

4

AND ENDED WITH AN INVALUABLE SPECIES CALLED A HUMAN BEING. A HUMAN WHO HAD THE UNIQUE HONOR TO BEAR THE STAMP "MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD."

AT THIS POINT IN THE STORY, ONE WOULD BE TEMPTED TO JUMP AND CLAP ~~AND SHOUT~~ "BRAVO!.. ENCORE!.. UNMATCHABLE!.. BEAUTIFUL!" BUT THE APPLAUSE WOULD BE PREMATURE. ~~THE DIVINE ARTIST HAS YET TO UNVEIL HIS GREATEST CREATION.~~ ~~BECAUSE~~ ~~CREATOR HAD~~ ~~THE DIVINE ARTIST HAS YET TO UNVEIL HIS GREATEST CREATION.~~ - YOU KNOW WHAT THAT WAS.

AS THE STORY UNFOLDS, ~~THE DEVIL OF A SNAKE FEEDS MAN A LINE AND AN APPLE... AND... GUILTY ADAM SWALLOWS THEM BOTH.~~ ~~THIS ONE ACT OF REBELLION SETS IN MOTION THE DRAMATIC AND EROTIC COURTSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.~~ ~~TO EAT OF THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT~~ ~~AGAINST GOD~~ ~~SATAN IN THE FORM OF~~ ~~RESCUES THE WOMAN AND THE~~ ~~AND CONSTANT TENSION~~

THOUGH THE CHARACTERS IN SCENES CHANGE, THE STORY HAS REPEATED ITSELF ENDLESSLY FROM CREATION TO THIS MOMENT.

BUT,
GOD STILL ~~WAS~~ THE COMPASSIONATE CREATOR . . . WOOS HIS CREATION . . . ~~REBELLS~~
AND
THE CREATION, ALTERNATELY REACHES OUT IN REPENTANCE AND RUNS IN
REBELLION.

IT IS WITHIN THIS SIMPLE SCRIPT THAT GOD'S CREATIVITY FLOURISHES. IF YOU
THOUGHT HE WAS IMAGINATIVE WITH THE SEA ~~AND~~ THE STARS, LAND THE ANIMALS
IN THE BIBLE
~~UNTIL YOU READ~~ WHAT HE DOES TO ~~OUR~~ HIS CREATION! . . . ~~WHEN TO LISTEN TO~~
~~HIM!~~

~~FOR EXAMPLE~~ . . . A NINETY YEAR OLD WOMAN GETS PREGNANT.

A ~~WOMAN~~ IS TURNED
~~ANOTHER WOMAN~~ ~~TURNS~~ TO SALT.

A FLOOD BLANKETS THE EARTH.
LEADS INTO FLAMES
A BUSH ~~BURNS~~, BUT DOESN'T BURN UP.

THE RED SEA SPLITS IN TWO.

THE WALLS OF JERICHO FALL.

~~THE SKY RAINS~~ FIRE. RAINS FROM THE SKY.

~~AND~~ MONKEY TALKS

(6)

YOU TALK ABOUT "SPECIAL EFFECTS!" . . . BUT THESE ACTS . . . BE THEY EVER
INGENIOUS . . . STILL COULDN'T COMPARE WITH WHAT WAS TO COME.

DURING THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY, GOD, MOTIVATED BY LOVE AND

DIRECTED BY DIVINITY, SURPRISED EVERYONE . . . GOD BECAME A ~~MAN~~ ^{HUMAN BEING}
EMANUEL! GOD WITH US.

IN AN UNTOUCHABLE MYSTERY, HE DISGUISED HIMSELF AND LIVED IN A DUSTY

JUDEAN VILLAGE, ~~BY THE NAME OF~~ ^{CALLED} NAZARETH.

DETERMINED TO PROVE HIS LOVE FOR HIS CREATION, HE WALKED INCOGNITO

THROUGH HIS OWN WORLD . . . HIS CALLOUSED HANDS ~~TOUCHED~~ ^{HEALED} WOUNDS AND DISEASES.

HIS COMPASSIONATE ~~TONGUE~~ ^{SPEECH} TOUCHED HEARTS. ^{WITH THE GOOD NEWS -}
^{THE GOSPEL.}

~~AS WE SAID LAST WEEK . . .~~ REMEMBER? . . . HE BECAME ONE OF US.

LIKE A MASTER PAINTER, GOD RESERVED HIS MASTERPIECE UNTIL THE END . . .

AND, THE EARLIER ACTS OF LOVE HAD BEEN LEADING TO THIS ONE .

THE ANGELS HUSHED, ~~AND~~ THE HEAVENS PAUSED TO WITNESS THE FINALE.
GOD ~~UNVEILS~~ ^{UNVEILED} THE CANVASS, AND THE ULTIMATE ACT OF CREATIVE
COMPASSION ~~IS~~ ^{WAS} REVEALED.

GOD... WHAT A CROSS!

THE CREATOR BEING SACRIFICED FOR ~~THE~~ ^{HIS OWN} CREATION!

GOD CONVINCING ~~PERSONS~~ ^{US} ... ONCE FOR ALL ... THAT FORGIVENESS STILL
FOLLOWS FAILURE.

I OFTEN WONDER, ~~AT~~ ^{Y/E} WHILE ON THE CROSS, THE CREATOR ALLOWED HIS

THOUGHTS TO WANDER BACK TO THE BEGINNING ... ~~ONE~~ ^{DID} ~~WONDER~~ ~~IF~~ ~~HE~~

~~ALLOW~~ ALL THOSE FACES AND ACTS ~~TO~~ PARADE IN HIS MEMORY?

~~SOMETIMES~~ ~~WONDER~~ ~~IF~~ ~~HE~~ ~~REMINISCED~~ ^{THOUGHT} ABOUT ~~THE~~ ~~HIS~~

CREATION? THE SKY? THE SEA? ... DO YOU SUPPOSE HE MIGHT HAVE

RELIVED THE CONVERSATIONS ^{HE HAD} WITH ABRAHAM AND MOSES? ... DID HE

REMEMBER THE PLAGUES AND THE PROMISES, THE WILDERNESS AND ~~THE~~ ^{HIS}

WANDERINGS?

WE DON'T KNOW - BUT

8

THE TRUTH IS, WE DO KNOW WHAT HE SAID . . . "IT IS FINISHED!"

~~THE~~ ^{HIS} MISSION WAS FINISHED . . . ALL THAT THE ~~MASTER PAINTER~~ ^{CREATOR} NEEDED TO DO WAS DONE . . . ^{AND} IT WAS DONE IN SPLENDOR!

~~THE CREATION COULD NOW COME HOME!~~

"IT IS FINISHED," HE CRIED . . . AND THE GREAT CREATOR WENT HOME.

OUR INABILITY TO FINISH WHAT WE START IS SEEN OFTEN IN THE SMALLEST OF THINGS . . . A PARTLY MOWED LAWN . . . A HALF READ BOOK . . . LETTERS BEGUN BUT NEVER COMPLETED . . . AN ABANDONED DIET . . . A CAR UPON BLOCKS . . . OR, IT SHOWS UP IN LIFE'S PAINFUL AREAS . . . AN ABANDONED CHILD . . . COLD FAITH . . . A JOB HOPPER . . . A WRECKED MARRIAGE . . . AN UN-EVANGELIZED WORLD.

WHAT WE MUST REMEMBER IS THAT JESUS DID NOT QUIT. ~~DO NOT~~ DON'T THINK

FOR ONE MINUTE THAT HE WASN'T TEMPTED. ~~WATCH HIM Wince~~ ^{IS IMAGINE HE} AS HE HEARS

WINCED AS HE WATCHED

THE APOSTLES BACKBITE AND QUARREL Among THEMSELVES.

~~LISTEN TO~~ HE WEPT AS HE STOOD
~~HE REMEMBERED AS HE SAT AT LAZARUS' TOMB ... OR HEAR HIM WAIL UP~~
 MUST HAVE BEEN AS HE STAYED IN THE GARDEN OF
~~AS HE CLAWED THE GROUND OF GETHSEMANE~~ GETHSEMANE.

DID HE EVER WANT TO QUIT? ... YEAH! ... YOU BET! ... AND, I GUESS

THAT'S WHY, ~~BECAUSE~~ ^{FOR US} HIS WORDS ARE SO ~~BECAUSE~~ ^{MEANINGFUL.}

"IT IS FINISHED" ... ~~STOP AND LISTEN~~ ... CAN YOU IMAGINE THE CRY FROM THE
 CROSS? ... THE SKY IS DARK ... THE OTHER TWO VICTIMS ARE MOANING ...

THE JEERING MOUTHS ARE SILENT ... ~~PERHAPS~~ ^{(WIND AND LIGHTNING AND} THERE IS THUNDER ~~PERHAPS~~

THERE IS WEEPING ... ~~PERHAPS~~ ^{THEN} THERE IS SILENCE!

~~AND THEN~~, JESUS DRAWS IN A VERY DEEP BREATH ... ~~PUSHES HIS FEET DOWN~~

~~ON THE ROCKS~~ AND CRIES ... "IT IS FINISHED!"

~~WHAT WAS FINISHED?~~ THE LONG PLAN OF REDEEMING HUMANKIND

WAS FINISHED ... THE MESSAGE OF GOD TO HUMAN BEINGS ~~IS NOT FINISHED~~.
 "IT IS FINISHED!"

THE WORKS DONE BY JESUS AS A MAN ON EARTH ARE FINISHED.

THE TASK OF SELECTING AND TRAINING ^{GOSPEL-SPREADING} AMBASSADORS IS FINISHED.

10

~~THE JOB IS FINISHED~~

~~HIS~~ ~~HAD~~ ~~THE SONG~~ ~~HAS~~ ~~BEEN~~ ~~SUNG~~ ... ~~HIS~~ ~~THE~~ ~~BLOOD~~ ~~HAD~~ ~~BEEN~~ ~~POURED~~ ... ~~HIS~~ ~~THE~~ ~~SACRIFICE~~

~~HAD~~ ~~HAS~~ ~~BEEN~~ ~~MADE~~ ... THE STING OF DEATH ~~HAS~~ ~~BEEN~~ ~~REMOVED~~!

IT'S OVER!

"IT IS FINISHED" ... A CRY OF DEFEAT? ... ~~WAS~~ HARDLY!

HAD HIS HANDS NOT BEEN FASTENED DOWN ... I BELIEVE THAT A TRIUMPHANT FIST WOULD HAVE PUNCHED THE DARK SKY.

IT IS FINISHED

~~NO - LISTEN CAREFULLY ... THIS IS NOT A CRY OF DESPAIR ... IT IS A CRY OF~~
~~COMPLETION ... A CRY OF VICTORY ... A CRY OF FULFILLMENT ... AND EVEN,~~

VICTORIOUS

~~OR DEATH!~~

MY FRIENDS, ~~AS YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR LIFE~~ OR, AS YOU ~~ARE~~ LOOK
INTO YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW ... ~~IS ANYONE, THIS DAY,~~ ~~ARE YOU~~ CLOSE TO QUITTING?

PLEASE - PLEASE - DON'T DO IT !!!

ABOUT YOUR LOT IN LIFE?
HANG IN THERE!

ARE YOU DISCOURAGED ~~AS A PARENT~~

EP

WORKING IN THE CHURCH?

ARE YOU WEARY ~~WITH DOING GOOD?~~

~~I WANT TO ASK YOU TO DO JUST A~~

PICK YOURSELF UP, DUST YOURSELF OFF

AND DO
LITTLE MORE!

ARE YOU PESSIMISTIC ABOUT YOUR JOB?

~~I WANT YOU TO ROLL UP YOUR~~

SLEEVES AND KEEP GOING!
~~GO AT IT AGAIN!~~

~~THERE ISN'T ANY COMMUNICATION IN YOUR MARRIAGE?~~

~~I WANT YOU TO~~

GIVE IT ONE MORE GENUINE SHOT!

MAKE THE EFFORTS TO BEGIN TO OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN YOU

YOU CAN'T RESIST TEMPTATION?

~~WELL, I WANT YOU TO ACCEPT GOD'S~~

AND YOUR SPOUSE

FORGIVENESS AND GO ONE MORE ROUND!

IS YOUR ~~THIS~~ DAY FRAMED WITH SORROW AND DISAPPOINTMENT? ARE YOUR

TOMORROWS TURNING INTO NOTHING ~~NEVERS~~? IS THE WORD "HOPE" THE FEELING OF

"HOPE", THE ACTION OF "HOPE" IN YOUR LIFE, SOMETHING THAT USED TO BE?

~~WAS YOURS TOO~~

REMEMBER, A FINISHER IS NOT ONE WITH (NO) WOUNDS OR WEARINESS . . . QUITE

TO THE CONTRARY, MY FRIENDS!

YOU KNOW MOTHER THERESA IS CREDITED AS SAYING, 'GOD DIDN'T CALL US

TO BE SUCCESSFUL - JUST FAITHFUL!"

(12)

FAITHFUL

THE LAND OF PROMISE IS FOR THOSE WHO SIMPLY REMAIN TO THE END . . .

FAITHFUL

LET'S ENDURE . . . I OFTEN THINK OF THE WORDS OF II TIMOTHY 4:7,9 . . .

"I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED THE RACE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH. NOW THERE IS IN STORE FOR ME THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH THE LORD, THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, WILL AWARD TO ME ON THAT DAY - AND NOT ONLY TO ME, BUT ALSO TO ALL WHO LONGED FOR HIS APPEARING."

THANK YOU TIMOTHY !!

THANK YOU APOSTLE PAUL !!!

THANK YOU APOSTLE JAMES !!!

BUT, MOST OF ALL . . . THANK YOU LORD JESUS FOR TEACHING US TO REMAIN . . . TO ENDURE . . . ~~AND . . . IN THE END~~ . . . TO FINISH !

THAT'S THE POINT OF THIS SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS . . .

JESUS ~~WAS~~ WON THE VICTORY ... AND ... WE NOW HAVE THE PROMISE THAT WE TOO ... ~~WE TOO~~ ... CAN WIN THE VICTORY!

THESE WORDS FROM THE CROSS OPEN NEW VISTAS OF LIFE FOR ALL ~~WHO~~ ^{OF US}

~~WHO~~ ACCEPT WHAT HAS BEEN DONE FOR ~~THEM~~ ^{US,}

~~MY FRIENDS, IT MUST BE NOTED OF COURSE THAT~~ WE MUST ACCEPT CHRIST'S VICTORY AND MAKE IT OUR VICTORY ... ~~ONLY IN THAT WAY~~ ^{THAT'S THE ONLY WAY}, CAN WE LIVE THE VICTORIOUS AND COMPLETE LIFE ~~OTHERWISE, WE WILL HAVE TO ECHO~~

~~THE WORDS OF ONE OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY:~~

~~"EVEN WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU MORE THAN YOU ASK FOR, YOU HAVE THE FEELING THAT SOMEONE IS LAUGHING AT YOU."~~

WE MUST LIVE IN CHRIST, OR OUR ~~LIFE~~ ^{LIVES} WILL BE FILLED WITH UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND UNENDING REGRETS.

~~IT'S NOT HARD TO SEE WHY THIS IS THE ENDING THAT DOESN'T END.....~~

OF US

THE VICTORY OF CHRIST IS FOR ALL ~~PEOPLE AND ALL TIMES~~, AS LONG AS

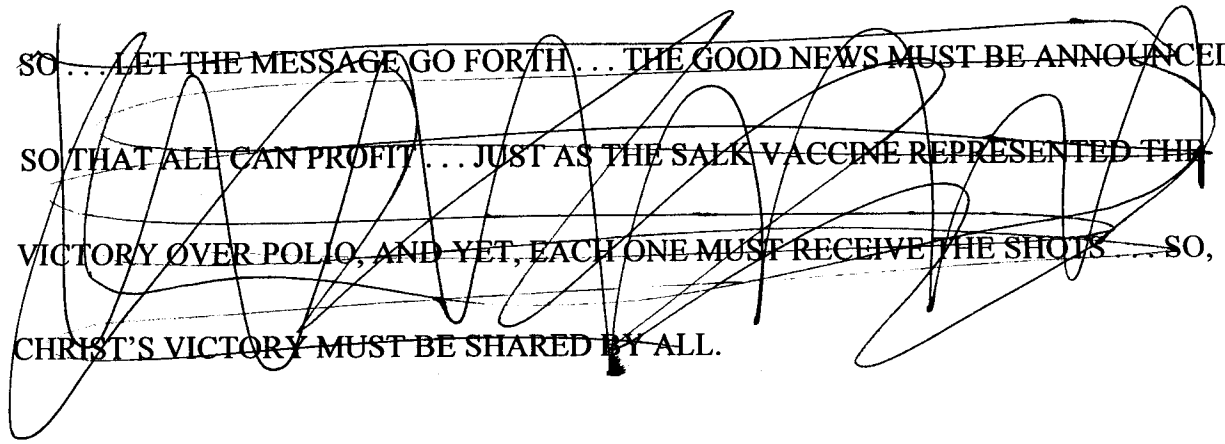
THERE REMAINS ONE PERSON . . . ONE PERSON . . . ~~OUTSIDE WHO IS STILL~~

WHO IS

STRUGGLING WITH ~~THE~~ LIFE'S PROBLEMS AND TEMPTATIONS

~~AS LONG AS PERSONS ARE PRISONERS OF THEIR OWN DESIRES~~, THE WORK OF JESUS IS NOT FINISHED.

SO . . . LET THE MESSAGE GO FORTH . . . THE GOOD NEWS MUST BE ANNOUNCED SO THAT ALL CAN PROFIT . . . JUST AS THE SALK VACCINE REPRESENTED THE VICTORY OVER POLIO, AND YET, EACH ONE MUST RECEIVE THE SHOTS . . . SO, CHRIST'S VICTORY MUST BE SHARED BY ALL.



WE ~~ALL~~ ^{HAVE (MENTAL)} HAVE PICTURES OF, ~~OR REPRESENTATIONS OF~~, CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

BUT, THERE IS A PARTICULAR PORTRAYAL THAT IS BECOMING POPULAR ~~TODAY~~

CHRIST IS ON THE CROSS BUT HE IS CLOTHED IN ROYAL ROBES AND HE BEARS A

~~REAL~~ ^{ROYAL} CROWN ON HIS HEAD . . . ~~AND~~ HIS FACE HAS THE LOOK OF TRIUMPH UPON

IT. THERE IS A LOT TO BE SAID FOR THIS REPRESENTATION.

~~AT LEAST, I BELIEVE, IT IS IN HARMONY WITH THE SIXTH WORD FROM THE~~

~~CROSS~~ . OUR LORD IS NO LONGER CRYING IN AGONY ~~WITH HIS SIXTH WORD.~~

THE KING ^{ASSUMES} ~~BEGINS TO ASSUME~~ HIS THRONE.

JESUS HAS WON THE VICTORY!

^{HE HAS} FINISHED HIS WORK . . . ^{AND} OPENED THE WAY FOR VICTORY FOR EACH OF US.

~~THE~~ OUR LORD SPEAKS FROM THE CROSS ~~THIS SIXTH TIME~~ AND SAYS . . .

"IT IS FINISHED!"

^{BUT} HIS WORK IS FINISHED . . . ~~AND~~ ^{OUR} OURS CONTINUES! - WITH GOD, ~~THE~~ CREATOR ^{IN CONTROL}
LET US GO FORTH TOGETHER TO DO HIS WILL . . . ~~FROM~~ NOW AND FOREVER!

~~AND . . . DON'T FORGET . . . TRUST THE PROCESS OF LIFE . . . GOD IS IN CONTROL!~~

Let us pray - Father let us ever remember
that Jesus died on the cross to atone for
our sins. Let us shout or whisper
thankful prayers for this glorious,
compassionate act of redemption for us.
Amen.