

It Was Finished

*They searched His face for anger, for vengeance in His stare
Instead of eyes that burned with hate a look of love was there
He prayed for their forgiveness and bowed His battered head
And no one knew the meaning of the final words He said
It is finished!*

These lyrics come from one the songs performed by the FBC Choir during last month's Easter musical. For me this is the most powerful statement in the song originally written and released by the Christian band, PETRA in 1985. After all that Jesus went through from being betrayed by one closest to him, facing a rigged trial, being scourged by a whip that ripped His flesh, beaten mercilessly with a crown of thorns stuck into His head, carrying a 300+ pound cross a few miles to Golgotha, only to be nailed to that same cross, and still he had love and forgiveness for all of them.

The words spoken from Jesus on the cross, "*Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do...*" still echoes in my heart along with His final words, "*It Is Finished*" (Luke 23:34 and John 19:30 respectively). Let the narrative read by David Bodin from the Easter musical remind us of the impact of Jesus' final statement from the cross:

"What was finished? The history-long plan of redeeming man was finished. The message of God to man was finished. The works done by Jesus as a man on earth were finished....The song had been sung. The blood had been poured. The sacrifice had been made. The sting of death had been removed. It was over!" "A cry of defeat? Hardly. Had His hands not been fastened down I dare say that a triumphant fist would have punched the dark sky. No, this was no cry of despair. It was a cry of completion; a cry of victory; a cry of fulfillment; yes, even a cry of relief."

Our human nature will never be able to fathom the depth of compassion and love Jesus had for us. May we reflect and learn from His words spoken from Gethsemane garden, "*Not My will but, Thy will be done...*" to His statements from the cross, "*My God, My God why have You forsaken me...*" to "*Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do...*" and to the thief, "*Today, you will be with me in Paradise...*" and finally, "*It Is Finished!*" God's judgement upon mankind was removed by His Son's death. It was finished!

I would like to end with a personal note of THANK YOU to the Choir for their outstanding performance and commitment. Also to Luke Chaffer and Dr. David Drury for their support of the audio and video: and finally to Pastor Matt Peek and the church for their prayers and support. May the Lord continue His blessings on FBC Pelham.

Keep the Faith,

Bro. Andrew