

The FINISHED WORK of Jesus

We've looked at the Trinity and worship, and idols

We've also thought about the Father, and what it means to be loved by our true and heavenly father

This paragraph of the prayer covers some of the main points of what Jesus has done for us. So today we're going to look at the Son, God himself in human form, and what he has done for us.

People often talk about the finished work of Jesus - everything that has already happened for us to be saved, forgiven and loved by God and given a place in his Kingdom now and for ever.

What Jesus has done for us is like money we have in the bank - only much more dependable. It's there, always available. It never goes into debt; it just increases

It's proof of God's love and commitment to us; nothing can change it or take it away.

Thank you for proving your love for me by sending your only ■ 7 Son, Jesus, to be my substitute and representative *Romans 5:8*. I open up my life again to all of his Life and all his Work which you ordained for me *Luke 9:23*. Thank you for including me in Christ *1 Cor 1:30*, for forgiving me my sins *Col 2:13*, for granting me his righteousness *2 Cor 5:21*, for making me complete in him *Col 2:10*. Thank you for making me alive with Christ *Col 2:13*, raising me with him *Col 3:1*, seating me with him at your right hand *Eph 2:6*, granting me his authority *Luke 10:19* and anointing me with your Holy Spirit *Eph 1:13*. I receive it all with thanks and give it total claim to my life.

Thank you for proving your love for me by sending your only ■ 7 Son, Jesus, to be my substitute and representative

1. Romans 5:8 p.942

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

FOOTBALL Jesus takes the injury and comes off the field, so that I'm free to come on the field and play.

We're messed up

We're injured

We're not good enough to play

...but Jesus comes off, takes the injury, or the red card, whatever it is, so that we can be allowed to go on and play.

Alex Ferguson hair drier - it's as if he's about to blast us, but Jesus stands in the way, and takes the full force. Anything we deserve, Jesus takes for us.

WHO YOU KNOW - We have all the right connections in heaven.

Ultimately they are far more useful than any human connection.

Jesus is our representative - he stands up for us, even when everyone else lets us down.

I open up my life again to all of his Life and all his Work which you ordained for me

2. *Luke 9:23 p.867*

23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

We have to *choose* day by day to take hold of what Jesus has done.

It's not about trying to be a Christian, trying too be good. That's getting things the wrong way round.

Grace comes to us not because we can earn it or deserve it
Rather, it comes to us because God is so good to us.

But while we can't perform in order earn God's grace and love,]
we can exert effort to take hold of everything he's done for us.

That feels counter-intuitive: we want to "try to" be Christian rather than seeing things as the Bible sees it.

We're called to put aside self-justification, and take hold of Jesus' and cross every day, putting to death our old nature, and living the new life that has already been given to us.

Deny ourselves – put God first – every day. That's way to living God's life, life to the full.

We may not feel like it – but that's what we have to do

Praying this Daily Prayer can be part of re-calibrating ourselves in this way.

We often say 'please' to God when we pray. Here, though, we're acknowledging what he has done and thanking him for it.

Perhaps our prayers need to change: instead of asking for God's help, we can start believing in Jesus and what God has already done for us in Him.

Thank you...

...for including me in Christ

3. *1 Cor 1:30 p.952*

30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption

Sandy Millar used the idea of a piece of paper in a book.

The page is in the book – where the book goes, the page goes. Where the page goes, the book is there, all around.

Same for us and Jesus: we're in Him, part of his body.

Wherever Jesus goes, we are with him
Wherever we go, he is there, all around.

That includes:

Righteousness: right status with God, increasingly right living

Sanctification: getting better, living life more fully

Redemption: securely transacted into God's kingdom, saved from everything wrong in us and the world.

A lot of us desperately want to feel included, that we belong, that we matter. Because of Jesus, we are exactly that: We are secure, in a stable, good place. We are *in Christ Jesus*.

...for forgiving me my sins

4. Colossians 2:13-14 p.984

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Amazing Grace is one of the best-known hymns in the world. Even people who don't consider themselves Christian know it and love it. The tune and words are well known and much loved.

John Newton: a foul-mouthed slave trader, and fully involved in its horrors . He was an abuser of women, a horrible character, but someone who eventually found God. He realised how far wrong he'd gone wrong, but, much more than that, he also realised what God had done to put him right again.

With many struggles, he grew in his faith and gradually turned his life round.

When he was ordained, he said:

No one could be more unworthy, for I had been long a persecutor and blasphemer and a profligate. And considering my situation, connections and habits of life no one could be more unlikely!

That's God's forgiveness. It applies to anyone and everyone who believes - now matter how bad they've been.

He was most certainly dead in his trespasses, but as he believed and took hold of what Jesus had done, his forgiveness sunk in, and he changed.

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see: Because of Jesus, forgiveness is black and white. north and south.

...for granting me his righteousness

5. 2 Cor 5:21 p.966

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Driving Licence: we get it, and are qualified, but it doesn't make much sense to have a licence and not use it.

God has always wanted us to be in his image, able to be full of him and his love, loving him and loving others.

But we can't manage it. We always go wrong. Every one of us has messed up.

Sometimes you hear about people taking doing tests for others. It's illegal, of course, and I'm not recommending it – but in a sense, that's what Jesus has done for us.

He's the only human who's ever lived in accordance with God's good plans. If it was a test, he'd be the only one who'd ever passed, and he'd be the only one who could ever live well, in this life and the next, in accordance with God's ways.

But the good news is that Jesus passes any and every test we'll ever face. His death and resurrection and ascension – his work stand for us too.

So when God looks at us, he sees Jesus and his righteousness. We're good enough for God, because in Jesus God was bad enough for us. On the cross He actually *became* all the sin and wrongdoing which would otherwise fail and disqualify us.

...for making me complete in him

6. Col 2:9-10 p.984

9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

Wholeness. Mind body and Soul. Often talked about outside of Christian circles. Many outside of church wouldn't think of Christian faith as the means to wholeness, but because of Jesus, it is.

All God's love and strength and power are available to us through Jesus. We see it in him, and we experience it in us.

Just as Jesus was 100% divine and 100% human, fully God and fully human, so in him we are made whole.

That's why we can expect physical and emotional healing in this life, and new

...for making me alive with Christ

7. Colossians 2:13 p.984

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, *God made alive together with him*, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

IN the 4th century, Augustine said "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."

We're made for God – and because sin gets in the way, there is an empty, dead part of us.

Many people experience a real sense of new life in them when they start to believe: it's as if they've come alive overnight.

For others it happens gradually, because there is a lot written on our hearts and minds which takes time to erase and rewrite.

but the truth is that no matter what we feel, we die with Jesus and we rise with Jesus – Spiritually now, then one day bodily as well.

...raising me with him

8. *Colossians 3:1 p.984*

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

In fact, we're to reckon ourselves raised right here and now. Being born again, born from above, means that new Spiritual life has begun.

We're been spiritually raised with him - we are a new creation, there is new life in us. We hold on to Jesus raised from the dead to remind us of the new life and identity we have in him.

The best is yet to be – when Jesus comes back, we'll take our places with him in his kingdom, the new heaven and new earth.

...seating me with him at your right hand

9. *Ephesians 2:6 p.976*

[God] raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Before the 9/11 attacks, it used to be that you might, very occasionally, get to go in the cockpit of a plane, or the bridge of a ship. For a few moments you could be sitting with the person flying the plane and sailing the ship, as if you were there with them. It was an exciting thing to do.

Jesus Ascension: he lived and died, then rose again, then ascended into heaven – the unseen realm. Seated at the right hand of the father

Stained glass window – Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One of the consequences of us being in Christ is that, in effect, we are in him as he is seated at the right of the Father. We're in the ring seat with him, sharing his glory, part of his victory, part of the family.

That's true now – even though we don't always feel it. And it will be true in the future too.

It has a practical implication as well:

...granting me his authority

10. *Luke 10:19 p.868*

19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

There are evil forces at work in the world. It seems hard to explain the mess we're without it. Because most people in western culture rule out the supernatural, and because in our old nature we do not want to blame ourselves, for many if he exists God is guilty.

But CS Lewis famously talked about two equal and opposite errors: to disbelieve in the devil's existence entirely or to see the devil at every turn all the time. Devil "equally happy with both errors".

the truth is that the devil is beaten by Jesus. The war is over, though there are a few battles left – Satan can still trick us into thinking he has any control over us at the world.

All authority in heaven and on earth are given to Jesus, and he in turn, gives that authority to us.

That means we can tell Satan to shut up and go away. And he has to.

once we learn this it's a powerful help in overcome oppression and unbidden temptation.

...and anointing me with your Holy Spirit.

11. *Ephesians 1:13 p.976*

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit - and he kept the promise.

The Spirit lights us up so we can live Jesus risen life. The Spirit makes all of this real to us. We have the power and love of God living inside us. We can be filled over and over, every day.

It was the Spirit that helped us come to faith in Jesus
It's the Spirit that seals us Jesus too.

All this is what we have in Jesus.

In John's gospel, Jesus' last recorded words were *It is finished*.

And we can take hold of what he has already done, all day every day.

Some of us are used to saying the creeds. The creeds state some of the historical facts about God and Jesus, but the aim today has been to help us understand what they mean, in practical terms, for our daily life.

We have to take hold of it and learn to live in it: this is reality; this is what the good news about Jesus means for us right now, and forever.

- Substitute: taking our place
- Representative: praying for us at the highest level

In him and all his life and work, we get:

- inclusion and belonging;
- forgiveness, no matter what we've done;
- God's righteousness, him passing all our tests
- wholeness, God's wholeness of mind body and spirit
- New life inside of us
- Raised with Jesus
- Seated with him in the heavenly realms
- sharing his spiritual power and authority
- the Holy Spirit, over and over

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I receive it all with thanks and give it total claim to my life.