

I want to talk to you today about "It is finished". We all have things that are trying to hold us back. Guilt for past mistakes, temptations we can't seem to overcome, dysfunction that's been passed down. It's easy to learn to accept it and think that that's who we are, but God didn't create you to go through life weighed down by addictions, dysfunction, guilt, the past. He created you to be free.

And when Jesus hung on the cross, before he took his final breath, he said, "It is finished". He wasn't just talking about his life and how he had finished his purpose. He was putting an end to all the negative things that could keep us from our destiny. He was saying, in effect, the guilt is finished, the depression is finished, the low self-esteem, the mediocrity, it is finished. And instead of accepting the addiction, thinking, "It's the way it's always going to be. Everybody in my family has it."

You need to announce to that addiction, "It is finished. You don't control me. You can't keep me from my destiny. The price has been paid. I am free, I am clean, I am whole". But as long as you accept it, but when you tell the addiction, tell the past, tell the poverty, "It is finished, this is not who I am, I am blessed, I am prosperous, I am victorious," in the unseen realm, strongholds are broken, chains are loosed, favor is released.

Are there things you're living with that you need to say, "It is finished"? Are you going around guilty, down on yourself because of past mistakes, not expecting anything good? You need to announce to that guilt, "It is finished. I am done beating myself up, Living condemned. God's mercy is bigger than my mistakes. I am redeemed, I am restored, I am forgiven, and I am excited about my future".

Are you leaving with a sense of shame, Feeling inferior because of how somebody treated you? They did you wrong, they walked away. Now the accuser whispers its because you are not good enough, you are not attracting enough, you don't deserve to be loved. Announce to that shame it is finished. I am not leaving inferior and unworthy, I know who I am, I am the child of the most high god. I'm wearing the crown of favor. I have royal blood flowing to my

veins. No matter what someone did or didn't do to you, it's not going to change who you are.

You may have had bad breaks, gone through unfair situations, don't have a victim mentality, have a victor mentality. God said he will pay you back double for the unfair things that have happened. That person that did you wrong, they thought they were hurting you, the truth is they were helping you. They qualified you for double. They thought they were setting you back, in reality they were setting you up.

Now, do your part, say to the self-pity, "It is finished. I'm not living discouraged, dwelling on my disappointments, reliving my hurts. I'm letting go of the old and I'm getting ready for the new things God has in store. Father, thank you double is coming my way". We can all find a reason to live negative, thinking that we're at a disadvantage. "My boss overlooked me". Somebody walked out of a relationship. I'm asking us to get rid of the excuses. It's time to say, "It is finished. I'm done thinking about what I didn't get, what didn't work out". You have to tell the past, tell the self-pity, tell the discouragement, "It is finished". As long as you justify your condition, you're giving it permission to stay.

John chapter 5, Jesus met a crippled man that had been lying by the pool of Bethesda for 38 years. There were five porches surrounding this pool filled with sick people, and once a year, when the angel moved the waters, the first person to get in would be healed. Jesus said to the crippled man, "Do you want to get well"? It seemed like there was an obvious answer, everyone was at the pool to get well. But the scripture says when Jesus saw the man lying there, he asked, "Do you want to get well"? In other words, there was nothing in this man's actions that said he wanted to get well, nothing in his behavior that said, "I'm expecting things to change". He had his bed there by the porch, his whole area set up.

I can imagine a table, a lamp, books, pictures. In 38 years, he had gotten comfortable in dysfunction. He thought, "This is my lot in life. It's never going to get better". He was surrounded by other people that were sick, that were blind,

that were afflicted. He gravitated to people that were just like him. Everybody was needy, everybody was complaining, everybody was discouraged.

You need to be careful who you surround yourself with, especially in difficult times. You may have an illness, but don't go find a bunch of other sick people to hang around. Misery loves company. If you struggle with an addiction, don't hang out with people that are addicted. That's going to cause you to get stuck. If you're depressed, don't go find five depressed friends so you all can be depressed together. Find people that have what you want. If you're struggling in your finances, get around blessed people, generous people, people that are well off. If you tend to be negative and critical, don't stay around people like that. Find people that are happy, positive, grateful.

There should be something about you that says, "I want to get well. I want to be blessed. I want to go to the next level". When Jesus asked this man that He wanted to get well, instead of saying, "Yes, that's what I'm believing for, that's my dream," he said, "Sir, I don't have anybody to help me get in the water. When the angel comes, somebody always beats me in". He was justifying his condition. "I'm this way because I'm at a disadvantage, nobody will help me. As long as you're making excuses for where you are, you're going to get stuck. "I'm this way, Joel, because I had a bad childhood. I'm bitter because a business partner cheated me. I'm negative because I have this illness."

I'm asking us to get rid of the excuses. Nothing that's happened to you has to keep you from your destiny. If it was going to stop your purpose, God wouldn't have allowed it. You may not understand it, it may not be fair, but if you will take the hand you've been dealt and make the most of it, God will get you to where you're supposed to be. Bad break, no addiction, no sickness. God has the final say. Tell the self-pity, "It is finished". Tell the excuses, "It is finished. This is a new day. God's about to do a new thing."

Jesus said to the crippled man, "Get up, pick up your bed, and walk". will instantly the man was healed. He stood up and was able to walk out of there. what you think is permanent, looks like it's never going to change, that addiction

you've had for years, the illness, the situation in your finances, you don't see a way, but God has a way. Right now, he's fighting your battles. I believe things are changing in your favor. Breakthroughs are headed your way. New beginnings, healing, freedom, it may look permanent, God is saying, "It's only temporary. I'm about to turn it around."

What's interesting is this crippled man didn't have a lot of faith. He didn't say, "Yes, I believe I can get well". He made excuses, yet God in his mercy healed him. Imagine how God feels when he sees you shaking off the self-pity, shaking off the excuses. Say lord i believe you can turn my child around. I believe you'll take me to the next level. I believe you'll free me from this addiction". When you believe, God will make things happen that you couldn't make happen. Tell the excuses, tell the doubt, tell the negative thoughts, "It is finished". It's time to put a stop to some things.

This is what my father did, he grew up very poor. His parents were cotton farmers, and they lost everything during the great depression. My father went to school with holes in his pants and holes in his shoes. In high school, he was given the christmas basket that went to the poorest family. He was at a disadvantage, no money, very little education. The odds were all against him. He had a good excuse to settle where he was and accept a life of mediocrity.

But at the age of 17, my father gave his life to Christ, the first one in his family. On the inside, he could feel seeds of greatness rising up. On the outside, everything said, "You're poor. You're at a disadvantage. You're limited. You don't have a future". But down in his spirit, he could hear God whispering, "This is not who you are, you're better than this. You can set a new standard. You are made for more."

At 17, he told his parents he was going to leave the farm and become a minister. They thought he had lost his mind. They said, "John, you better stay here on the farm with us. All you know how to do is pick cotton". They meant well, but sometimes well-meaning people will try to talk you out of your destiny. If my

father would've stayed in that limited environment, he would've never seen the fullness of what God had in store.

You have to get away from people that only see you for who you used to be and not for who you're about to be because some people that knew you back then will try to you grew up in. They'll try to put limitations on you, "You can't accomplish that dream, you're not that talented. You better play it safe."

This is what happened in the scripture with David. His family didn't see him as a giant killer, as a king. They discounted him. David's father didn't bring him in from the shepherd's fields when the prophet Samuel was choosing one of his brothers as the next king. He thought, "Ah, it's just David. He's so small, he's so young, He doesn't have the experience". But people don't determine your destiny. What they say about you, how they try to make you feel cannot stop what God has ordained for your life, and you need to distance yourself from people that are always trying to put limitations on you and talk you out of what God put in your heart.

Sometimes it's the people that have known you the longest. Because they can only see you one way. Jesus' brothers never accepted him. He was performing all these miracles, but they didn't see him as the Messiah, they only saw him one way, as their brother, thinking, "Oh, it's Jesus. Nothing special about him, we grew up with him". Even when Jesus began to notoriety, the scripture says his brothers scoffed at him. They made fun, "Yeah, right, you're the Messiah". They tried to discount him, talk him out of his destiny. Jesus let it go in one ear and out the other.

My father could've stayed in that limited environment and accepted a life of poverty and lack. He could've lived with a scarcity mind-set, but he did what I'm asking us to do. He rose up and said, "It is finished. This may be where I am, but this is not who I am". At 17, he took a step of faith. He had to hitchhike, but he left the farm. He started ministering in the prisons, in the senior citizens homes, in the schools, and God began to promote him and open doors, and he and my

mom founded Lakewood. He pastored here for 40 years. He went on to live a blessed, abundant life.

Here is my point. My father broke the curse of poverty in our family. Now myself, my siblings, all of our children are living at a higher level because one man didn't settle for the status quo. One man didn't say, "I'm at a disadvantage. I've had bad breaks". Instead, he said, "It is finished. I'm a difference maker. I can set a new standard". You can be that man, you can be that woman for your family. You can put an end to negative things that have been passed down.

What you're dealing with may not have started with you, but it can stop with you. You need to say to the poverty, say to the lack, "It is finished. I will lend and not borrow". Say to the addiction, the depression, the dysfunction, "It is finished". God wants you to set a new standard. You have seeds of greatness. You are full of talent, ideas, potential. You're not limited by where you came from. Just because negative things have been passed down doesn't mean they're supposed to continue. You're the one to break the curse, to break the poverty, to break the depression, to break the dysfunction. You can take your family to a new level.

Now, don't talk yourself out of it. Don't let circumstances discourage you. The odds may be against you, but the most high God is for you. He is breathing in your direction right now. He's going to open doors that no man can shut, bring talent out of you that you didn't know you had, cause the right people to be good to you, opportunity is going to track you down. Good breaks, freedom, increase, you're stepping into a new level. Bondages that have held you and your family back are being broken.

Now, do your part, have a new mind-set, an abundant mentality, a free mentality, a healthy mentality, a victorious mentality. I wouldn't be standing here if my father would've kept that poverty mind-set, that scarcity mentality, thinking, "I'm at a disadvantage. I've had bad breaks". We could all come up with an excuse to settle where we are. I'm asking us to get rid of the excuses. Anything that's holding you back, it's time to announce it "this is finished. this is

a new day, I'm drawing the line in the sand. Will serve the Lord, we will live free from addictions, we will lend and not borrow, we will be generous and help others, we will accomplish our dreams and become everything we were created to be."

I have a friend that's very successful, his father was a police officer, and he was raised in a middle class home. When he was 11 years old, his father asked him to get in the car and they were going to take a drive together. They drove for several hours to another state. The father never told his son where he was taking him. They came to this very rundown neighborhood, trash everywhere, nothing kept up. Young boy's eyes were so wide, he'd never seen anything like this.

They finally pulled in to this dirt makeshift driveway of this house that was very dilapidated. No front door, the windows were broken out, it looked like it was vacant. They walked in, there was an old man sitting on a stool. No shirt on, hadn't shaved, looked like he was homeless. The father looked at him and said, "Dad, I brought my son to see you". The young boy couldn't believe that was his grandfather. He'd never seen him, never heard his father talk about him. The grandfather wouldn't look up. He didn't want anything to do with his son nor his grandson. The father put some money on the counter, said, "Dad, I love you, I just wanted to say hi."

They both walked out. The young boy said, "Dad, that was the most scared I've been in my whole life. I never want to come back to this place". The father said, "Son, that's why I brought you here to show you this is where we come from, but this is not who we are."

Now, you may have been raised in a limited environment, they were good people, but they didn't have any vision, they settled for mediocrity. Like my friend, you can set a new standard. Where you start is not important. Where you finish is what matters. God is going to use you to not just break a generational curse, but to start a generational blessing. Where you come from is not who you are. You are blessed, you are free, you are talented, you are a child of the most high God.

Abraham was in a limited environment. God told him to leave his country, leave his family, and go to the land that I am showing you. God was saying, "Abraham, you have to leave what's familiar, leave what you grew up with". I'm not suggesting to abandon your family, but I am saying to leave negative mind-sets you were raised with. Leave a scarcity mentality. Leave limitations that people have put on you. To increase you, and sometimes our environment is too small.

If you take an oak tree seed and plant it in a 5-gallon pot, that oak tree will never become what it was created to be, not because there's something wrong with the tree, but because of the environment that it's in. In the same way, there's nothing wrong with you. You have seeds of greatness. The most high God breathed his life into you. Now make sure your pot is not too small. Make sure your environment is not holding you back. You need to be around people that inspire you, people that have gone further, people that are making a difference, not just people that are settling for the status quo.

Isaiah said, "Enlarge the place of your tent. Stretch forth your curtains. Lengthen your cords. Strengthen your stakes. Make room for God to do a new thing". Tell that limited mind-set, "It is finished. I'm dreaming big dreams. I'm praying bold prayers. I'm expecting to go further than how I was raised."

When my father went to be with the Lord, people would ask me if I thought we could keep the church going. I never said it arrogantly, but I would tell them, "I don't think we can just keep it going, I believe we can go further". It's because God is a progressive God. He wants every generation to increase. Have a big vision. Don't settle for what your parents had, what your relatives accomplished. You were made for more. You can go further. You can be the one to set the new standard.

But it's easy to talk ourselves out of our dreams, live discouraged because of disappointments and things we don't understand. We worked hard, but didn't get the promotion. We prayed, but our loved one didn't make it. We did our best, but it didn't work out. Life is not always fair.



I can't explain everything, but I can tell you God said he would take what was meant for your harm and use it to your advantage. He said he would give you beauty for the ashes, but I've learned you have to let go of the ashes before you receive the beauty. You can't hold onto the old and expect to receive the new. The past is over and done. That's why it's called the past. Quit dwelling on it, quit reliving it. You're not going to understand everything that happens, but God has a purpose, he knows how to bring good out of it. Keep moving forward.

This is what David did, he had a newborn baby that became very sick, and David night and day prayed and fasted for this baby. He wouldn't eat, he wouldn't talk with anyone else. He spent all of his time on his Knees asking god to heal his child. On the seventh day, the little baby died. They didn't know how David would handle the news, but when they told him, David got up off the ground, took a shower, put on new clothes, and went to the temple and began to worship God.

When he finished, he went and had dinner with his men. They were so amazed, they said, "David, when the child was living you wept you refused to eat, but now that he has died, you've stopped your mourning and you're acting like everything's okay". David said, "When the child was alive, I asked God to let him live. But now that he has died, I cannot bring him back, but one day I will go to be with him". David did everything he could. He prayed, he fasted, he believed, but it didn't work out his way. He could've lived bitter, with a chip on his shoulder, but David understood this principle. He said to the past, "It is finished. I don't understand it, but I'm moving forward."

We all have things in life that we don't understand. It's easy to live negative, with a chip on our shoulder. But if we're going to see the double, if we're going to see the beauty for ashes, we have to do like David and say to the past, say to the things you don't understand, "It is finished. I'm not going to dwell on what didn't work out. I'm not going to try to figure out why. I'm going to let it go and keep moving forward."

The past doesn't have to stop you. A bad break, a loss, a disappointment, God is in control of your life. You wouldn't be alive unless he had something amazing up in front of you. You haven't had too many bad breaks, you haven't made too many mistakes. You're on the verge of seeing double. You're on the verge of beauty for ashes. Now, do your part, put on a new attitude, wash your face, and get ready for the new things God is about to do.

Let me declare this over you today. Receive this into your spirit. The past, the hurts, the regrets, it is finished. The poverty, the lack, the limited mind-sets, it is finished. The addictions, the depression, the dysfunction, the guilt, the shame, the self-pity, it is finished. This is a new day. Things that have held you back are being broken right now. You're going to step into a new level of freedom. You're going to break generational curses and start generational blessings. You're about to see the promotion, breakthroughs. They are headed your way in Jesus' name.