

Sermon: It is Finished

The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse
Center Church, Hartford
Good Friday, 2019

What was finished, exactly?

The frustration of the Holy One stuffed into a human body with all its limitations.

The need to deal face to face with human beings who constantly just did not get it, even when he explained it simply in small words and vibrant stories!

The desire and inability to touch and heal all the sickness of body, mind and spirit, and the hunger and the sorrow constantly in front of him.

The tears on his cheeks, weeping over Lazarus, over Jerusalem.

The tearing pain of the nails, the inability to breathe, the sensation of the heart slowly ceasing to beat.

The feeling that he simply did not do enough.

It is Finished.

The soft touch of his mother's hand and the scratchy chin of his father when he was held as a child.

The moments when he saw face to face people's minds, thoughts, beliefs, and lives opened up after a heartfelt conversation with him.

The children stumbling around him, reaching to hug him, laughing and making him laugh.

The welcome taste of warm bread, pungent wine, smoky fish.
The gritty feel of sand and stone under his feet.
The sleepy sensation of rocking in a boat on the water.
The rich smell of the ointment poured out on his hair and his feet.
These things, and so much more, were finished for Jesus.

It is Finished.

What did he feel when he said that? Sorrow? Relief? Defeat?
Victory?

No, I think, not that. Not victory that day.
And yet.

He had told them not to be afraid.
He told them that on the third day: life!
He promised them he would not leave them orphaned.
He told them they would know him in the breaking of the bread.
He assured them peace.

Did Jesus remember, in that final-but-not-final moment, what he had
been saying to them for weeks? Did he believe it? Do we?

Many things were finished. And yet.