

WHY DID JESUS CHRIST DIE?

Intro: I have chosen to speak on this subject tonight because we are approaching the Easter season when the attention of the whole world is focused upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

~~Next Sunday morning I am going to take up the subject, Why Was Jesus Christ Raised From The Dead?~~

~~Both of these subjects~~ ^{This} ~~is~~ really far beyond the scope of one message. However, I am not trying to be exhaustive, but just to get at the heart of the answer to both of these questions. It would be impossible to ask any ~~two~~ ^{is} question that ~~is~~ ^{this} more important than ~~these~~. The answer might be known to us, but the vast majority of people in the world could not answer either one of them if their lives depended upon it. We also know that there are not two events in the life of our Lord that more people of the world are sceptical about than the death of Christ and His resurrection!

We are not interested tonight in the answers which men give. We are interested in the answers which are given in the Word of God. These are the only answers that are worth considering because they are the only answers that can possibly be right!

I would like to point out FIVE reasons why Jesus Christ died:

I. TO SHOW HIS ABSOLUTE DEVOTION TO GOD AND HIS COMPLETE SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL.

What an amazing life the Lord Jesus lived! No other life in Scripture or out of it could compare with His. Many men have loved God. Many of them have given their lives for Him. BUT NO ONE LOVED HIM SO COMPLETELY, SO DEVOTEDLY, AS DID OUR LORD. He is the only Person who ever lived who could say, "I do always those things which please Him" (John 8:29b).

When Peter was speaking on the day of Pentecost, he described the death of Christ in these words:

"Him (Christ), being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Though it looked like men were having their day, God was absolutely in control.

But how did the Lord Jesus feel about this?

What better answer can we find than the one in the Garden of Gethsemane:

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39b).

Earlier in His ministry He had said,

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34).

Or, think of those words in John 10:17,

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."

Or John 14:31,

"But that the world may know that I love the Father, and, as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do."

When the Lord prayed His high priestly prayer in John 17 we find these words in v. 4:

"I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Of all the reasons as to why Christ died, none was of any greater significance than this -- what His death meant in His relationship with His Father -- a meaning which men and angels need to consider again and again.

But there is a second reason . . .

II. TO SHOW THE TRUE ATTITUDE WHICH GOD HAS FOR MEN.

The Lord is misunderstood and misinterpreted constantly by men -- and perhaps by angels. If men get their ideas about God from their own hearts, rather than from the Word of God, they will be wrong every time.

John 3:16 gives us our answer, loud and clear -- and in the words of the Lord Jesus Himself. (Quote.) This is why He die.

Cf. Paul's words in Rom. 5:8,

"But God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

God's love for us did not start when we responded to His love, but before we had any idea of how He felt about us.

The Apostle John says the same thing in these words found in 1 John 4:9, 10,

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and

sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Is it any wonder that the Apostle Paul in Rom. 2:4 says, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

This is the greatest drawing power that God has for the hearts of men!

The third reason . . .

III. TO SHOW THAT THE SCRIPTURES ARE TRUE.

Listen to what we read in John 19:28,

"After this Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst."

In the Greek it is just one word and probably referred to what is said of our Lord in either Psa. 22:15 or Psa. 69:21. But even the small details were important to the Lord.

This is probably the greatest single testimony to the infallibility of the OT that we have in the records of prophecy that has been fulfilled.

Note what our Lord said to the disciples He met on the road to Emmaus:

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:26, 27).

If Jesus Christ had not died, the OT could not possibly be the Word of God!

Reason number four . . .

IV. BECAUSE IT TOOK NOTHING LESS THAN THIS TO DESTROY THE POWER OF SATAN FOREVER.

Our passage is Heb. 2:14, 15,

"Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

If this were not true, no one could be saved!

When sin came, it brought death. This is what has given the devil his power. With death conquered, the penalty of sin, conquered by the death of the Lord Jesus, men were no longer held by the devil but could be set free!

But this could not have been possible without the fifth and last reason:

V. "FOR OUR SINS."

Here is where the vast majority of Scriptures dealing with the death of Christ place their emphasis:

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried" (1 Cor. 15:3, 4a).

This is what we learned in Hebrews 9:26b,

"But now once, in the end of the ages, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

But in dying for our sins our Lord has done something else for us which Peter tells us in 1 Pet. 3:18,

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit."

How could He do this?

- 1) Because through His death God has been satisfied that the penalty for our sins has been fully met. Cf. Rom. 3:24-26,

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (a satisfaction) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

- 2) Because, since God is satisfied, we can be forgiven. Cf. Eph. 1:7,

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Concl: Those of us who know these truths never tire of hearing them again. But are there any here tonight who have not heard them before. You think that being a Christian is just trying to do the best that you can. It is

so far beyond the realm of possibility for you to prepare yourself for God that you will be ashamed that you ever thought you could once the truth of the Word of God reaches your heart. If what you are doing could be enough, it was the tragedy of all tragedies for our Lord to die! But thank God He did die because He had to if we were ever to be saved. If these truths are clear to you, why not trust Him now to do what He died to do. It is only when you personally trust Christ as your Savior that salvation from sin is yours -- forever.