

WHY DID CHRIST DIE?

Romans 8:28-32

Intro: In approaching the subject of “the Christian life,” I am trying to bring some basic messages which are not always covered when a person first receives Christ, and this may be the reason that many make so little progress in their lives as Christians. In my first message, in harmony with what the Apostle John said in his first epistle which obviously was written to help those who had been saved, but may not have had a very clear idea of what was before them, I called attention to what he wrote in 1 John 1:5:

This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

If you read the first four verses of 1 John 1 you will see that the One Whom John had heard, was the Lord Jesus Christ. And here the Apostle John was emphasizing that this was the foundation of the life of every Christian. We have been called into a life of fellowship with an absolutely holy God, or to state it another way as John did in verse 3, we have been called into a life of “fellowship . . . with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

The Apostle Paul was in hearty agreement with the Apostle John because, in writing to the Corinthian church, a church that was full of major problems, he said at the outset in 1 Corinthians,

God is faithful, by Whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9).

This is really a most amazing truth, and it would be hard to believe it if it were not clearly stated in the Bible. Those of us who have been saved have been called into the fellowship of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But we must not forget that in contrast with the Members of the Godhead, before we were saved we were darkness, and we walked in darkness, but now, by the saving grace of God, we also are light and can walk in light, as God is in the light. In confirmation of this let me read what the Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the church at Ephesus. You will find his words in Eph. 5:8-11:

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. (Read v. 11 on page 2.)

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

We are not “light” in the same way that God is, or that Christ is, or that the Holy Spirit is, because we are not Deity and we never will be, but if we truly know the Lord Jesus Christ in salvation, but we have been brought into the light, and we are to walk in the light, which means, as Paul said, “proving what is acceptable to the Lord.”

So the Christian life is a life of fellowship with a holy God. It is a life in which our objective is to know God in an ever-increasing way, and to live to please Him.

Salvation is more than joining a church. It is a life of fellowship with God, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And if we are to have fellowship with Them, it has to be in the light. It cannot be like we were because, again quoting the Apostle Paul, in his prayer for the believers at Colosse he told them how he was praying for them, and what he wanted them to do. This is what he said that he was praying that they would do in their own prayers:

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son (Col. 1:12-13).

How many Christians are there who really understand this truth? The Christian life is a life of holiness because we are called and saved to have fellowship with a God Who is light, and with His Son Who is also light.

To know God, we must know His Word. And to know His Word we must read it, and meditate on it, and then we must obey it. And all of this must be under the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Last Sunday night I Tried to show why the cost of our salvation was so high, a price which none of us could possibly pay. And it certainly is a salvation which we did not deserve, and never could earn. God sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. This does not mean that everyone in the world is going to be saved, but that wherever in the world people are going to be saved, they must be saved through Christ, the Son of God.

When we understand how holy God is, and how sinful we are, we see that

only by the sacrifice of a sinful Substitute could our sins be taken away. The person who talks about saving himself by his works, or even of contributing to his salvation by something that he does, like baptism, for example, is revealing that he doesn't yet understand how holy God is, nor how sinful he is. God would never have sent His Son to die for us if there had been any other way for us to be saved. The fact that Christ came, and died for us, is evidence that there was absolutely no other way for any person on the face of the whole earth, in any generation, to be saved! God has provided salvation for us because He loved us. More than that, He has positively secured, guaranteed, the salvation of all whom He has given to His Son, those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth. We are so hopelessly lost in sin that no one would ever come to Christ for salvation unless that person is *drawn* to Christ by God. The Lord Jesus Himself said,

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:44).

Now tonight I am asking the question, "Why did Christ die?" You might respond by saying, "You have answered that question more than once. What more is there to say?" And you are right. I have talked about some of the immediate purposes that Christ had in dying for us. Christ died to save us from our sins. Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:3, "Christ died for our sins." He died to save us from the penalty of our sins. John 5:24 says this:

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Quoting Paul again from Rom. 6:23, we read this:

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ died so that instead of experiencing eternal death, we would have everlasting life. Isn't this what the Lord said according to John 3:16?

And John 3:17 emphasizes the meaning of John 3:16:

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (John 3:17).

Reading on in that same passage the Lord had more to say about light and darkness:

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were

evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God (John 3:18-21).

Furthermore, we know from Scripture also that we have as a present part of salvation the truth that right now we are fully justified before God. We read in Rom. 5:1,

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

This means that through Christ we are declared to be righteous before God. This is not speaking of our condition, but of our standing before God. It is explained for us in 2 Cor. 5:21:

21 For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who [Christ] knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him [Christ].

And the Apostle Paul added in Rom. 5:9 and 10 these words:

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

I have just been going over some Scriptures which tell us some of the present blessings that we have in salvation. And these blessings are ours only because Christ died for us, and because He has saved us. And this present aspect of the work of salvation is that which qualifies us for fellowship with God.

However, as wonderful as it is to be brought to Christ is salvation, to be forgiven of our sins, cleansed, given eternal life, and so made new creatures in Christ, justified before God, at peace with Him, reconciled to God, and other things that we could talk about tonight, there is still more to salvation even though these blessings will get us into heaven.

There are three tenses to the salvation that we have in Christ. There is what we presently have. And this is what I have been talking about. But since these are the same for every believer, and they are all blessings that we had from the moment we were saved, we can speak of all of this as *salvation in the past tense*. The word that is used to describe what we all

have is the word *justification*. *It is the same for every believer. They are blessings that we have now, and which we can never lose. They are blessings that were purchased for us when Jesus Christ died on the Cross.*

But Christ did not die to leave us just like we were before we were saved. He died in order that we might be changed. We are a new creation when we are saved, but it is the Lord's will that the new life that we have in Christ should begin to show itself immediately in the way that we live. It does not all happen at once. It comes about as the result of spiritual growth. This is what the Apostle Peter was talking about when he wrote in 1 Peter, chapter 2, verses 2 and 3:

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

And Peter's last words in his second epistle were these:

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.

Amen (2 Peter 3:18).

This is what we call *salvation in the present tense*. *This is the doctrine of sanctification*. It describes the changes that take place in our lives after we are saved. And as our justification is the result of the Word of God in our lives, so sanctification is also through the Word of God.

Let me give you a passage where the Apostle Paul spoke of sanctification. It is found in 1 Cor. 6:9-11:

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Sanctification is that work of God by which we are being made increasingly holy. This is what Peter was speaking about in 1 Peter 1:14-16:

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all

manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:14-16).

Notice that Peter introduced this statement with the words, “as obedient children.” Obedient to what, or to whom? He meant obedient to God, and the only way we can know what that is, is by the Word of God. That is why the Apostle John placed such an emphasis on keeping the commandments, because it is through obeying the Word that we are being made holy.

But I still have not reached the end of the question, “Why did Christ die?”

We have seen what salvation is in the past tense: JUSTIFICATION. We have also seen what salvation is in the present tense: SANCTIFICATION. But there is also salvation in the future tense, that which is going to be the final stage of our salvation. And now I want to take you to the text I announced for tonight: Romans 8:28-32. And here we are going to find a third word that is extremely important in answering the question, “Why did Christ die?” (Read the passage: Rom. 8:28-32).

The word comes right at the end of verse 30: “glorified.” And it is defined in the middle of verse 29. What does it mean? It means that we are in salvation, all of us, predestined by the sovereign decree of God *to be made like the Lord Jesus Christ*.

And so our word for the third and final tense of salvation is the word GLORIFICATION.

I have told many of you this that I am about to say, and probably some of you have heard me say it more than once. But it bears repeating over and over. It is what Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer used to tell us when he was teaching us about the coming glorification of the people of God. He said this: “God is so delighted with His Son, that He intends to be fill heaven with people who are just like He is” – just like the Lord Jesus Christ is.

In two of our verses in 1 John which deal with this, the Apostle John said, in effect, “I know what is coming, and yet I don’t really know all that it means.” I am referring to 1 John 3:1-3. (Quote.)

And notice that in verse 3 the Apostle John linked together the doctrine of

glorification with the doctrine of sanctification; he linked together salvation in the future tense with salvation in the present tense.

So what is the ultimate, the completed answer to the question: "Why did Christ die?" He died to make us just like He is. But in order for that to take place, people would have to be justified through Christ, and then sanctified through Christ, in order to be glorified like Christ.

We have been justified. We are being sanctified. Some day, when the Lord comes, we will be glorified.

Jesus Christ is a Man in heaven, a glorified Man. We are going to have bodies like His (what we have now glorified). We are all going to be ourselves, but in character, and perhaps somewhat in appearance, like our beloved Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. At least we will have a body like He has. Cf. Phil. 3:20-21:

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Let me ask you tonight, Is this your hope? Can you say that you have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ because you are trusting Him as your Savior. There is only one Savior for all men, and He is the Lord Jesus Christ. There is salvation in none other. So it behooves all of us to make sure that we know Christ and that we can say what the Apostle Paul did in the last epistle he wrote which was a part of the total word of God. I am referring to 2 Tim. 1:12b:

For I know Whom I have believed [notice the knowledge of Christ], and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

Let us make sure that we know Him so that we can have that same assurance as we await the coming of the Lord.