

Why Jesus Christ Died

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Could we pray again? Lord, I've brought a bottle of water up here. I pray Lord, that I might be able to bring something of a refreshing, a refreshment to your people. We are thankful for the glorious gospel of the blessed God. We are thankful that You've not destined us, so many as have truly believed, that You've not destined us for wrath but for salvation. We are thankful tonight for the blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. A lot of songs have been sung today, but none of them are like the songs, none of them are like the songs that You've given us to sing. There's been a lot of talk in the world today, but none of it is like what You've given us to talk about. There's been a lot of attention to kings and noble men, but none of them compare with You, Lord Jesus. There's been a lot of things done today, many works have been done, people have done their job today, but none of it compares, Lord, with the work that You did on Calvary when You put away our sin, of the sacrifice of Yourself. We bless You, Lord, tonight and we wonder, Lord, today how many idols You've toppled in the hearts of men? How many of them brought into the Kingdom of God today, how many have been rescued from the devil's domain this day? And we pray Lord, that You'd bless us tonight right here as we're gathered in the name of Jesus. We ask You, Lord, for Your nearness, which is our good; Your presence, which is our peace. We ask You, Lord, for help and healing, for the inner man, for the outer man. We know You will, one day. In the days of Your flesh, You went about doing good, healing those who were oppressed by the devil. And we pray,, Lord, You'd do it again and again and again. And even here, in and through our lives, help us and nerve our faint endeavor. And we pray tonight, Your Kingdom come and Your will be done. Unite our hearts to fear Your name. Do not be far. We ask Lord, that You'd show us more of Your glory and that You'd show us more about Jesus. And help us, equip us, arm us to better work for You, to better walk with You, the better enjoy You. Amen.

I spoke Thursday night, something of the last words of Peter. And then last night, the last words of Joshua, "You are to cling to the Lord."(Joshua 23:8) And so I'm not going to be speaking on last things. That's the last of the last things. But rather, on the first things. Things that Paul says are of the first importance, that is, the gospel. And taking it from Galatians chapter one. Let's read the first five verses.

Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia : Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us(or deliver us) from this present evil age (or world), according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. (Galatians 1:1-5)

Paul opens this letter to the Galatians with this glorious gospel statement. Now why do you think he opened the letter like that? Surely it was because of the leaven that had been slipped in. Paul says he's telling them that some of them have come in among you and they have brought in a different gospel, which is not really a different gospel, but rather a distorted gospel. (Galatians 1:6-7) And so he wants to open the letter to them with a statement of the true

gospel. Like Psalm 1 says, the best way to expose a crooked stick is to put a straight one right down beside it. And so, I'd like to speak on verse four and five. These three words could be the title: Why Christ Died.

There's four reasons stated here. Number 1: Christ died, first phrase, He gave Himself for our sins. The second reason that He died, is so that He might rescue us from this present evil age. The third reason that Christ died is to fulfill the will of the God the Father. And the fourth reason that He died, is to bring glory to the Father. And so we'll be looking at it, those four points, phrase by phrase and almost word by word.

The first reason that Christ died is that He died for our sins, He gave Himself for our sins. That is, to pay off our sin debt, to pay off that penalty. It says that He gave Himself. I'm underlining the word "gave". Have you ever noticed all of that? Surely you have. In Mark or Matthew chapter twenty, it says, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom, give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28) In Luke twenty-two it says, "This is my body, which is given for you." (Luke 22:19) And in Galatians chapter two it says He, "loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20) In Ephesians chapter five it says He loved the church and gave Himself for her. (Ephesians 5:25) In 1 Timothy two it says that there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for us all. (1 Timothy 2:5-6) You have to conclude, don't you, that the Lord Jesus was not a selfish person. He is the glorious Giver.

Secondly, the Word "Himself." He gave Himself. One time Johnny, we were on campus preaching and talking about God sending His own Son and the objector says, "Well, that makes God the Father a murderer. He murdered His own Son." And we said, "Well, the Son did it by agreement and furthermore, the Son gave Himself, and furthermore, the Father and the Son are one, in essence." The Lord gave Himself. He did not give lambs, though He owned it all. Did not give gold, He owned it all. Did not give animals, not all the beasts on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or wash away it's stain. He gave Himself. Animals wouldn't do—they're not infinite and they're not man. And then, so, God sent His Lamb, who was man and God- man to identify and God to pacify, to satisfy all of God's righteous requirements. So He gave Himself.

And then look at the next word...I'm just taking it as simple as I can, so I hope you can enjoy it. And the next word is the word "for". A pretty simple word, isn't it? But some have said it's the most powerful word in the language. "He gave Himself for our sins." A pretty simple word; we use it all the time. You know, "What will you give me for this car?" "For this car, I'll give you five thousand dollars." And so we use that word all the time.

It indicates an exchange, a substitution. You know, I get the car, he gets the five thousand dollars. And so this little word "for", it's teaching that the Lord died for us, He died in our place; it's teaching substitutionary atonement. He died for us, and Peter says, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God". (1 Peter 3:18) In another place it says, "He who knew no sin, was made to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2Corinthians 5:21)

The next word. "He gave Himself for our sins." For our sins. Sometimes the atonement is specified in very personal terms, very narrow personal terms, like Galatians 2:20, "He loved me (me) and gave Himself for me."

Sometimes it's specified in very broad terms. "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, (the world), not imputing their trespasses against them." (2Corinthians 5:19)

John 4:42 the Samaritan says, "Now we know, you are the Savior of the world". The world! We know it's not universal salvation, as we know not everybody is going to heaven, some are going to hell. And so world, it must mean not all without exception, but all without distinction. He redeemed a people for God with His blood, out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation. But here it says our sins, talking about who? Talking about the church, right? In Ephesians five it says, "He loved the church and gave himself for her." (Ephesians 5:25) It says in Acts twenty, "To shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28) He gave Himself for our sins. You're not going to get the comfort out of the atonement that you could or should if you don't believe that Jesus died personally for you personally!

The next word- sins, "He gave Himself for our sins." The problem is not economy, it's not education, is it? It's not environment, it's not hurts, not mistakes, not my upbringing. If you're going to get in on this, you've got to realize that you're a sinner because Jesus just died for sins. All that other is just symptoms. The supreme problem of the human race is sin, and the supreme problem of my heart is sin. So quit shifting the blame and say, "God be merciful to me, the sinner!"

And, you notice, it's plural. I mean, it's not just part of them, it's all of them- the small and the great, past and the present and the future. Jesus paid it all! Paid in full; my bad record taken care of because of what Jesus did for me on Calvary.

When I truly, sincerely, really, genuinely, genuinely believe on Jesus and what He did on the cross, a major legal transaction occurs, right? My guilt is put on His books and His righteousness is put on my books, and then I have a righteousness equal with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Bold I approach the eternal throne, best in this! "The Lord gave Himself for our sins." And I'm in free, absolutely, fully free forever! That's the gospel; or that's part of it.

If I'm that way accepted, so freely, so simply, if I'm accepted, if I've got the trophy before I run the race, does that mean that I can go on sinning and live anyway, anyhow? No.

That brings us to the second phrase, the second heading. It says, "So that, he might rescue us (or deliver us) from this present evil age (or world)." "So that." Look at those two words, "So that". You see, where redemption has been accomplished, redemption is then applied. When the Lord accomplished redemption on Calvary for the elect, then, in the fullness of time, the Holy Spirit of God is sent into the heart of that lost sheep and he's born again and rescued out of this present evil world.

If I got to stealing watermelons and got caught finally and couldn't pay and they threw me in jail and somebody came along and, out of great goodwill, talked to the judge and paid it all, justice would demand that the jail door be opened, right? My family might say, "Hey, it's not right for you to leave the door shut. It's already been taken care of."

And so it says, "so that, He might deliver us from this present evil world." Let's look at the word deliver or rescue. You know, what I'm trying to tell you is that there's power in the blood. You know, the Lord did not just go to the salvage yard and buy that old wrecked car. He bought it and takes it home and fixes it up better than it ever was in its original condition.

And so it says, over and over, verses like Titus chapter two, “He gave himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed and to purify a people for himself, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:14) Romans chapter eight, it says, “He who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him, then, really give us all things, all things pertaining to life and godliness?” (Romans 8:32) It says, “His name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people,” yes in their sin, but also, “from their sins”. (Matthew 1:21) So it says here, deliver or rescue. I like that. I mean, other religions, they’ve got their prophets and they’ve got their leaders and they’ve got their teachers. But our Lord Jesus is smarter than that, He’s a deliverer, He’s our rescuer. A firefighter, when he goes out on a call and there’s somebody still in there, he doesn’t holler in commands to them, “Come on out of there, save yourself.” He goes in and drags them out. And so it says here, “to deliver us”, to rescue us, to redeem us.

Thus we are no more, when we are born again then. No more slaves of sin, no more slaves of society’s standards and smiles, no more slaves of Satan. But rather, slaves to God and slaves to righteousness. And so, He delivers us from the present evil world.

Now, in the first phrase- we’ve been delivered from the penalty of sin. In the second phrase- we’ve been delivered from the power of our sins and eventually even from the presence of our sins, that is, in heaven. Right now, the work has been begun, right? And we’re just strangers and pilgrims and sojourners. Our citizenship is in heaven. And then the Lord comes back and restores all things. And in the regeneration, I mean the big regeneration, then we’ll be with Him and we’ll be like Him entirely, free from the presence of sin.

So, number one: why did Christ die? He gave Himself for our sins. Secondly, to deliver us from this present evil world. It says this present world, in contrast to the future world, in which righteousness dwells. And it’s called an evil world. Now do I need to convince anybody about that? This present evil world. You go back to the beginning, right after Adam and Eve sinned, we find them lying. And then you go to the next chapter and you find the first two brothers, one of them killed the other. And then you go three more chapters and we have the Genesis flood. Every thought of the intent of man’s heart was only evil continually, from his youth right on up. And then you go a few more chapters and God had to destroy Babel. You go a few more chapters and you find Sodom had to be burned down. And a few more chapters and the iniquity of the Amorites.

All of this, right back just from the beginning of the history of the world. And so man has gone on. He’s gone on loving darkness rather than light, loving self rather than God, drinking iniquity like water. And it doesn’t... see, it’s not that far from us; look at the twentieth century. Hitler slaughtered some twenty million; and then Stalin, some forty million; and then Mao, upward to seventy million.

And lest we think, “Why, those beasts!” look at ourselves. The nation hadn’t been in existence but four score and seven years, when we had our own civil war and killed a half a million. And not only that, what about abortion? In the last forty years we’ve killed over forty million of our own babies.

This present evil world-characterized by death, disease, deficiency, cruelty. Is that your world view? Or do you think the world’s a pretty nice place, it’s alright, “I’m comfortable”? This ought to be your worldview- “This present evil world”. We are looking for a new heavens and a

new earth, if you've been born again. The world is on a head on collision course with God. But for us, we have been rescued from this present evil world.

A third reason that Christ died, the third phrase here is- He died to fulfill the will of God our Father. That's the struggle of the universe, isn't it? I mean, it's one big power struggle- parents and children, husband and wife, king and subject. It's one big power struggle.

But for the Christian, that struggle is settled. Like Saul on the road to Damascus, the first thing he said was, "Lord, who are you and what do you want me to do?" I give up! "Not my will, but yours be done." That's why the Lord came. In a way, the Lord did not come to teach or preach or heal or even, ultimately, to die for our sins. But you take it way on back further, and the Lord Jesus came to carry out the will of God, which was redemption. When He came, He says, "Lo, I come to do your will, oh God." (Hebrews 10:7) And He did it.

So the gospel, it's not our idea. "Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan! Oh, the grace that brought it down to man! Lined out before the foundation of the world, carried out in time by the Son of God."

A fourth reason that Christ died, is this last phrase- to the glory of God the Father. The Lord came, the Lord came for God's glory. There is a purpose in the universe, isn't there brethren? Not just for our good, but for His glory, for God's glory. Think of how the death of Christ glorified the Father, how it glorified the mercy of God. Mercy at Calvary was great, and grace was free. How could it be that I, a child of hell, would in His image shine? That I've been snatched out of the fire when I've spent my years in vanity and pride? And here I am, I've got a little light, I've got a hope of heaven? What mercy has been bestowed upon us, what has been lavished upon us! This is the mercy of God because of the death of Christ.

The mercy, the goodness of God! Here's Rick and Chad Wiseman back there, father and son. For seventeen years they were separated because of raw sin- drink, drugs and on and on. And God came to Rick one year ago and saved him. And then four months later saved Chad. And there they are sitting together, partners in the Kingdom. They love one another's company. And on and on through all eternity the story could go.

Oh, the death of Christ, how it glorifies the grace of God! Free unmerited favor- free, free, free unmerited favor, grace!

The other day I...when we had a big snow storm up there and so I got the tractor out with the blade on the back and plowed our driveway out and then went down to plow the neighbors out. And I caught something there in his yard and it just sheared the blade right off. Not minor damage. And there I was, half dead anyhow, and what am I going to do? You know, you try to help somebody and how do you like that for rotten bananas?

And so I thought of brother Chris and Paulden, I mean he said over and over, "Brother, is there anything I can do to help you?" Okay. I called him and he happened to be in town, and he said, "I'll be right out there". He wouldn't let me touch it, you know, "You just get in the pickup and back up when I say." And so we got that thing lifted up, he did, in the back of his truck and we looked at it and realized, yea, this is some major repair.

And so we got the piece that was still on the tractor and got that all in the back of his truck and he says, "If anybody can fix it, Carol, Carol the welder can." And he got Carol in the truck on the phone and Carol said, "Yea, I'll come up". And there it was, bitterly cold, deep snow,

and they got that thing fixed ten o' clock that night. The next day it was delivered in my drive, in my yard, fixed. "What do I owe Carol?" "Nothing, it's taken care of." "Free?" "Yea, don't even try!"

And I tell you, that thing was just as sweet as could be. And that's just a little picture of God's marvelous, free, matchless, infinite grace! I mean, isn't this matter of restoration so beautiful? Of restoring, of healing, of salvaging, saving, making it better than even it was before!

I mean, it just... I remember one time, we were digging a ditch to put in some water lines and here, I lost one of my gloves, one of my new leather gloves. What good does one glove do me? And one of the kids found it in the trench before it got covered up with the dirt. And I remember thinking just how nice that was.

I remember one time growing up, I was, I was operating the tractor with the blade filling the tile ditches and I was coming home for lunch. And I, you know, had it in road gear, going down a field road. And I thought, here's some bumps here and some mud puddles that need to be filled in and so- I mean, talk about stupidity- I lowered that blade down in road gear, to fill that dirt hole. And, of course, it caught. And I ended up on the hood and the loader was broken, bad. And I took it home and I confessed to my father. He did not say a word, he just shook his head. And with some time and some welding rod he got it fixed better than it was before.

And it's just wonderful that God fixes lives. Think how the death of Christ magnifies the love of God. It's greater far, higher than a star, so high that it reaches up to the mercy seat. So deep was the death of Jesus, that it went deeper than the stain has gone. So wide that it reaches out to every tongue and tribe and people and nation. And so long that it goes out to all eternity.

As a matter of fact, this phrase here, "forevermore", they poorly translated it. It means ages of the ages. Think how the death of Christ magnifies the justice of God. Jesus paid it all. It wasn't like the Muslims, I mean, where they believe their god just forgives. But our sin that is actually paid for.

Think of the wisdom of God. That God, this just God, found a way to justify the unjust and still be just about it! That's the wisdom of God.

And think of how the death of Christ magnifies the power of God. Here's Adam, the perfect man, who fell in paradise. And yet here we are, formally slaves of sin, formally children of the devil, his servants, on his side and now we're serving God on His side and even being used by God. And we're going to stand- Adam fell, we stand.

In conclusion-this ought to be for our admiration. Oh the love that drew salvation's plan! The song writer says, "Hail Sovereign Love that first began the scheme to rescue fallen man! Hail, matchless, free, eternal Grace that found my soul a hiding place!" It ought to be, I say, for our admiration, it ought to be for our exaltation.

Paul quotes David and he says, "Oh, how blessed is the man whose sins are covered, whose iniquities are forgiven. How blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes righteousness, without works." (Romans 4:7-8) How blessed is the man? I do not know how to describe it! A thousand tongues could not! It ought to be this theme- why Christ died- it ought to be for our proclamation.

You know, in the last twenty years, there's been a big emphasis on the ten commandments are the thing we... that's the tool, that's the message we ought to use in evangelism. But what do you see? You see the Lord used it once, at least, maybe twice, like

Mark was bringing out. But what do you see that the Lord used? What was His message? It was things like, "You must be born again." (John 3:3,7) It was things like, "Except you become like little children..."(Matthew 18:3) It was things like, "If you don't give up everything and follow Me, you can't be My disciple".(Luke 14:33) It was things like, "If anyone will come after me, he must deny himself, pick up his cross daily and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)

Well Paul, what did you preach? Well he says right down here in verse sixteen, "He set me apart, He called me and revealed His Son in me, so that I might preach Him." (Galatians 1:15-16) Paul, that's what you preached to the Galatians. Well, what about, what did you preach to the Philippians? "I preached that, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved.'"

Well, what did you preach to the Athenians? "I preached that God has fixed a day in which He'll judge the world in righteousness through the man that He's appointed, Jesus Christ, having furnished proof to all men that He raised Him from the dead." (Acts 17:31)

What did you preach to the Corinthians? "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Corinthians 2:2) What did you preach to the Ephesians? "The unsearchable riches of Christ." (Ephesians 3:8) Paul, how would you sum up your message? He says, "Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21) Well, Paul, what did you preach at Caesarea? "I told Felix, I told him about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come and faith in Jesus Christ." (Acts 24)

What is the summary of our great commission? Repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations. I say, it ought to be for our admiration, our exaltation. It ought to be for our proclamation. And it ought to be an exhortation or an admonition to us, to not be conformed to this present evil world. I mean, we've been delivered from it, right? Rescued from it, that's what it says here. And so don't be conformed to it.

It ought to be an admonition to keep yourself, James says, pure and undefiled religion is this, to keep himself unspotted by the world; unspotted, untouched. (James 1:27) Don't touch it! Stage rule- don't go off track like these Galatians did. The song writer says, "Just a few more rolling sunsets, most will land me safe on heaven's coast."

So press on in the gospel. This ought to be for our expectation. I mean, we look for a new heavens and a new earth. This world is not our home. It doesn't satisfy! We're just, I say, strangers, pilgrims, sojourners. We've cast our anchor in another realm.

It ought to be for our examination. I mean, am I rescued, am I delivered or not? If I look like the world and walk like the world and I'm friends with the world, smell like the world and talk like the world, I must be still part of the world and not yet rescued from this present evil world.

And also, this should be for our invitation- an invitation to come and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins.

Can you put up with another blade illustration? The next neighbor I went to, I got to the head of his driveway and I thought, "You know, I better call that fellow before I just go up there and plow his lane out." I got him on the cell phone and I said, "I'm down here at the head of your lane with a tractor and a blade. I'll just go up and back and plow your snow out, unless you tell me no." And he said, "Oh, I believe we're alright just where we're at." And that was it. I went back home. And you have to feel, you know, a little bit of insult. I mean, there I was, willing and able to help him and he says no!

And if we feel that way towards things here on earth, what do you think that the heavenly Father feels? What do you think that God feels? Everything He's done, everything, everything is ready, the door is open to provide for your supreme problem and deal with your sin and take you to a place called heaven and give you eternal life right here and now. And you're going to say "No"? You're going to say, "I'm doing alright, I'm pretty well where I want to be"? May it never be!

Come on, repent. Leave your sin behind. All sin, all known sin, leave it all behind. Let goods and kindred go! There's more to life also! And believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Lord, I believe that I am a sinner and I deserve to go to hell. I have no reason that you should take me to heaven, but I believe that you died for sinners just like me. I believe you died to pay my sin debt. I do believe, I will believe, that Jesus died for me."

Plus nothing. That was a Galatian error. It was Jesus, plus. And the gospel is Jesus only.