


A PRELUDE TO *BIBLICAL* EVANGELISM



A large, ancient tree with thick, gnarled roots growing over stone ruins. The tree's trunk is massive and textured, with roots spreading out across the ground and over the stone structures. The background shows more stone ruins and lush green foliage. The scene is set in a natural, somewhat overgrown environment.

THE FRUIT OF
THE RIGHTEOUS IS A
TREE OF LIFE,
AND HE WHO IS WISE
WINS SOULS.

PROVERBS 11:30 NASB

**PRINCIPLES
FOR
BIBLICAL
EVANGELISM
FOUND IN
JOHN 4, “THE
WOMAN AT
THE WELL.”**

TAKE

- TAKE THE INITIATIVE! JN. 4:6-9

OFFER

- OFFER GOD’S MERCY! JN. 4:10-14

IDENTIFY

- IDENTIFY SPIRITUAL NEEDS! JN. 4:9-10

CONFRONT

- CONFRONT SIN JN! 4:16-18

REJECT

- REJECT FALSE WORSHIP! JN. 4:19-24

REVEAL

- REVEAL CHRIST! JN. 4:25-26

CHRIST IN HIS PROPER PLACE


- **“JESUS IS THE ANSWER”** is a song that has bothered many for one glaring reason: *It never tells us what the question is*. In many ways, **ANDRAÉ CROUCH’S** well-worn anthem is emblematic of many modern evangelistic strategies—where the preacher skips over prerequisite details in his haste to get to the cross.
- At best, that approach is confusing—leaving the unbeliever to figure out on his own why Jesus **needed** to **live**, **die**, and **rise again**. At worst, it’s downright dangerous—especially when unbelievers see their primary problems as **unhappiness**, **hardship**, and **victimhood**. If sinners understand the cross as merely the **remedy** to those temporal problems, they don’t have the gospel at all.

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- A *biblical understanding* of Christ is fundamental to the gospel, but it's the wrong place to start the story. Without first understanding the *utter holiness of God* and the *total depravity of sinful man*, the person and work of Christ make no sense.
 - Until the sinner appreciates the infinite gulf between GOD'S HOLINESS and MAN'S GUILT, he can't properly appreciate his need for the redemption that Christ provides. *Powerful evangelism* brings the immense weight of those sobering truths to bear on the unbeliever, leading him to cry out to the Savior.

- The salvation Christ brings is *meaningless* to the sinner who doesn't understand *his own sin*. Instead of too quickly offering Christ as a remedy to temporal trials and the cares of this world, we need to help him see the *eternal cost of his sin* and *rebellion*. We need to cultivate in him *the conviction* of the thief on the cross, who confessed that *“And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.”* (Luke 23:41). That is a soul that's ready to hear about Jesus and the eternal value of His *life*, *death*, and *resurrection*.

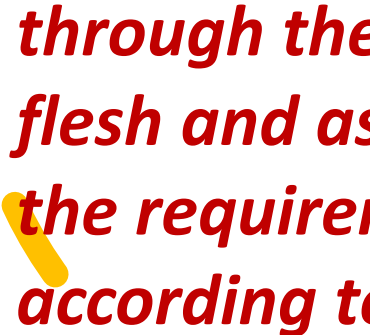
1. A SUBSTITUTIONARY LIFE.

- Have you ever wondered why the Savior had to live *thirty-three years* on earth *before* He atoned for our sins? Why didn't He head straight for the cross as soon as He arrived? The answer to that question can be found in:



- Notice (Gal. 4:3–5) *“So also, we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. 4, But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”*

- Jesus not only came to earth *as a man* but was born *under the Law*, in order that *“He might redeem those who were under the Law.”* As **PAUL** explains in Romans, *“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”* (Rom. 8:3–4).



• **LIKE EVERY OTHER MAN, JESUS WAS BORN UNDER THE LAW**. Like every other Jew, He was under obligation to obey and be judged by conformity to God's written Law in the Old Testament; **BUT UNLIKE ANY OTHER JEW, HE SATISFIED THE REQUIREMENTS OF THAT LAW BY LIVING IN PERFECT OBEDIENCE TO IT**. And because He lived in perfect obedience, ***HE WAS ABLE TO REDEEM*** all other men who were under the Law but not obedient to it, provided they had saving faith in Him.

• The New Testament doesn't leave the Law of the Old Covenant as a failed and abandoned project. God's Law—His righteous standards and commands—***exposes our guilt*** and ***need for an alien righteousness*** (Gal. 3:23–24). Just as ***ADAM'S ORIGINAL SIN*** was ***representative*** for all of his descendants, so ***CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUS LIFE*** is ***representative*** for all of His ***elect*** (Rom. 5:19).

- Christ's lifelong mission until Calvary was to **FULFILL GOD'S LAW** on behalf of His sinful people. That's why He told John the Baptist that it was necessary for Him to **"fulfill all righteousness"** (Matt. 3:15) and preached that He **"did not come to abolish but to fulfill"** the Law (Matt. 5:17).

- **BUT CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUS LIFE MUST STILL BE APPLIED TO THE PEOPLE HE REPRESENTS.** Satisfactory payment is needed to deal with our immense guilt, and that's exactly what happened at the cross.

2. A SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH.

- No verse better encapsulates the transaction of Calvary than (2 Cor. 5:21) ***“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”***
- The benefit of God’s imputing believers’ sins to Christ and His righteousness to them is that they become righteous before Him. They are ***“found in Him, not having a righteousness of [their] own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith”*** (Phil. 3:9). The very righteousness God requires before He can accept the sinner is ***THE VERY RIGHTEOUSNESS, HE PROVIDES.***
- On the cross ***God treated Jesus*** as if He had lived our lives ***with all our sin***, so that ***God could then treat us*** as if we lived Christ’s life of ***pure holiness***.

- Our iniquitous life was legally charged to Him on the cross, *as if He had lived it*, so that His righteous life could be credited to us, *as if we lived it*. That is the **DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY IMPUTATION**—the high point of the gospel. That truth, expressed so concisely and powerfully in this text, *is the only cure for the sin plague*.

- Christ's atoning death brings perfect harmony between God's inflexible **justice**, and the **rich mercy** He graciously extends towards sinners. Calvary has **NEVER** been about God giving us a mulligan—a second chance after initial failure. **GOD CANNOT BE COERCED INTO LENIENCY AND IGNORANCE OF OUR CRIMES. HIS WRATH MUST BE SATISFIED.**

- **WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT THE CROSS WAS MEANT FOR US.**

God's wrath that was pointed directly at us was suffered by our righteous substitute who hung in our place—**“so that He would be just and the justifier”** (Rom. 3:26). God can now demonstrate mercy toward believing sinners without violating His righteousness. His wrath against them has been satisfied in His perfect substitute. **GOD IS CONCURRENTLY PERFECTLY JUST AND GLORIOUSLY MERCIFUL.**

3. A GUARANTEED RESURRECTION.

- While the story of redemption may reach its climax at the cross, it doesn't end there. The apostle **PAUL** said that gospel preaching is empty without the proclamation of Christ's resurrection:

- ***“Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13, But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 14, and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.”***
(1 Cor. 15:12–14)

- Our preaching is *pointless*, and our *eternity is doomed* without the **RESURRECTION**. THAT'S BECAUSE **OUR OWN FUTURE RESURRECTION IS CONTINGENT ON THE REALITY OF CHRIST RISING FROM THE DEAD.**

- ***THE HISTORICAL FACT OF THE RESURRECTION*** has profound implications for all who are united to Him through repentance and faith. When Paul says that Christ was ***“raised because of our justification”*** (Rom. 4:25), he reminds believers that Christ’s resurrection is proof that ***God the Father was satisfied with His payment for our sins***. The resurrection is God’s declaration that Christ is precisely who He said He was (Rom. 1:4). That assurance also provides us with ***the certainty of our own future resurrection from the dead***.

- ***“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 21, For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22, For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23, But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming.”*** (1 Cor. 15:20–23)

- Just as **ADAM** was the progenitor of everyone *who dies*, so **CHRIST** is the progenitor of everyone *who will be raised to life*. In each case, one man doing one act caused the consequences of that act to be applied to every other person identified with him. . . . **THOSE WHO ARE IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST . . . ARE SUBJECT TO RESURRECTION TO ETERNAL LIFE BECAUSE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUS ACT.**

4. PREACHING CHRIST.

- **ANDRAÉ CROUCH** was right when he said that Jesus is the answer. But the evangelist should first help the sinner to ask the right question before offering the solution. Christ should be preached when the sinner *sees God's wrath*, *seeks God's forgiveness*, and *searches for a Savior*. And when we do proclaim the person and work of Christ, we should include **ALL THREE FACETS OF HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY.**

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- **FIRST**, His *fulfillment of the Law* as a substitute for sinners who broke it.
 - **SECOND**, the *punishment He suffered* as a substitute for sinners who deserved it.
 - **THIRD**, His *literal resurrection* that secures our future bodily resurrection.
 - We must remember, however, that not all sinners experience the profound eternal benefits of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Christ's finished work, places demands on all who hear it preached. **SO, WHAT IS HIS EXPECTATION? HOW SHOULD SINNERS RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL? IN SHORT, REPENTANCE FROM SIN AND FAITH TOWARD CHRIST.**