

WEEKS 9 & 10 | THE WORK OF CHRIST

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

GALATIANS 4:4-5

To this point we have thoroughly examined what the Scriptures tell us about the person of Christ—who He is. However, were we to stop here our Christology would be incomplete. Jesus is significant not only because of who he is but also for what he has done. The remainder of our time will be spent looking at the work of Christ in all its aspects.

I. HIS DEATH

The author of Hebrews reminds us that “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Hebrews 9:22). Our redemption would require blood. Not the blood of bulls and goats (Hebrews 10:3), but the blood of a morally pure and perfect sacrifice (1 Peter 1:19). Only Jesus, the Son of God, could provide the atoning sacrifice we needed.

A. It's Necessity

1. Predicted in the Old Testament

- a. Psalm 22 (cf. Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) – Jesus’ death imbued David’s words with meaning that transcended the original setting and circumstances
- b. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 – A prediction of the Suffering Servant’s sacrificial death (53:3-12), resurrection (53:10-11), and exaltation (52:13)
- c. Daniel 9:24-26 – A prediction that the Messiah will be “cut off” after 69 “weeks” of years

2. Foreshadowed in the Old Testament

- a. The First Adam – Adam was “a type of the one who was to come” (Romans 5:14). Jesus, as the second Adam, recapitulated Adam’s task and temptation, succeeding where Adam failed (Romans 5:12-21)
- b. Israel – Jesus is portrayed as the head of true Israel, recapitulating Israel’s task and succeeding where Israel failed (Exodus 4:22 // Matthew 3:17; Matthew 4:1-11)

- c. The Passover Lamb – Paul identifies the Passover lamb as a type that foreshadowed Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- d. The Sacrificial System – Hebrews 9-10 show that the Levitical system was a shadow of a greater reality in Christ (cf. the tabernacle, high priest, blood sacrifices, the veil, etc.)

3. Predicted by Jesus

- a. At the First Passover – John 2:19-22
- b. After Peter’s Confession – Matthew 16:21
- c. During the Transfiguration – Luke 9:30-31
- d. After the Transfiguration – Matthew 17:12
- e. On the Road to Jerusalem – Matthew 20:17-19
- f. After the Last Supper – Matthew 26:30-32

4. Demanded by Divine Decree

Exegetically identified by the Greek verb δεῖ (dei), which states that something is “necessary” or “proper.” When used of God’s actions, it identifies that action as part of God’s divine plan and entails a moral obligation that it be fulfilled.

- a. Matthew 16:21 – From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.
- b. Matthew 26:52-54 – Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?”
- c. Luke 17:24-25 – For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.
- d. Luke 22:37 – For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.”
- e. Luke 24:44-47 – Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ

should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

- f. Acts 17:2-3 – And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

B. It's Nature

1. Physical Death

- a. Separation of his spirit from his body – Matthew 27:50; Luke 23:46; John 19:30
- b. End of Breathing – Matthew 15:37; Luke 23:46
- c. Physical Evidence – John 19:33-35

2. Spiritual Death

- a. What it was not
 - i. Not a rending of the Trinity – God is Trinity by nature; if the Trinity were rendered, God would have been destroyed.
 - ii. Not a separation of the two natures of Christ – If the Divine nature departed from the human nature, Jesus the person would not have been able to fully and exhaustively suffer the eternal punishment owed for sin. It was the divine nature that enabled him to do so. Trevor Craigen writes, “The Godhead was not reduced to two persons, even temporarily, nor did Jesus become less than God. Jesus, the God-Man died and His death consequently has infinite value as an atonement. Furthermore, His two natures were not separated but remained fully human and fully divine throughout.”¹
- b. What it was
 - i. A judicial and emotional separation of God the Father from Jesus (hence the language of “forsaken”).
 - ii. The judgment of sin imputed to Jesus – 2 Corinthians 5:21

3. A “Once for All” Death

¹ Trevor Craigen, “TH606 Theology II,” unpublished course notes, Spring 2005, 42.

- a. “Once for all” – ἐφάπαξ (*efapax*), cf. Romans 6:10; Hebrews 7:27; 9:12; 10:10
- b. “Once” – ἅπαξ (*hapax*), cf. Hebrews 9:7, 26, 27; 10:2
- c. “One Sacrifice” – Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 10:12-14

4. A Penal-Substitutionary Atonement

The Triune God satisfied the just wrath of God through the death of Christ on the cross as a substitute for sinners, thus freeing them from guilt, power, and penalty of sin. (Much more could be said on this—and it will, when you take Soteriology!)

- a. Penal – Jesus fully suffered and exhausted the Divine *penalty* for the sins of his people (Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:13-15)
- b. Substitutionary – Jesus took our place and acted vicariously, i.e. one person doing something as a substitute for another (Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatian 2:20; 1 Peter 3:18)
- c. Atonement – Jesus offered himself as payment for sin that satisfied the wrath of God (Hebrews 9:26).

C. It’s Sufficiency

Scripture is clear and consistent: the death of Christ is the singular and sufficient sacrifice for sin. Thus, it removes all liability for believers to make any kind of payment for their sins—Jesus’ death fully atones for the sins of his people (Romans 5:19-21; 8:1; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 2:4-5; Hebrews 1:3; 5:9; 9:12, 25-28; 10:14).

D. It’s Accomplishments

1. It was propitiatory – From the Greek *hilasmos*, it means that Jesus’ death satisfied or appeased the wrath of God (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10)
2. It was redemptive – Jesus’ death paid the price to release us from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin so that believers would belong only to God (Psalm 34:22; 103:4; Mark 10:45; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 9:12-14; 1 Peter 1:18-19)
3. It was reconciliatory – By satisfying God’s wrath for sin, Jesus’ death removed what separated us from God and allowed us to be brought into a

right relationship with Him (Romans 5:6-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21;
Colossians 1:20-22)

II. HIS RESURRECTION

A dead savior cannot save. If Jesus had stayed dead, then “your faith is in vain. . . your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (1 Corinthians 15:14, 17). If Jesus was not raised from the dead, “we are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Corinthians 15:18). That was Paul’s conclusion, and why he goes on to forcefully argue for the truth of the resurrection. The resurrection is critical to our salvation.

A. It’s Necessity

1. Predicted in the Old Testament

- a. Isaiah 53:9-12 – . . . when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. . . Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he has poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. . .
- b. Psalm 16:10 (c.f. Acts 2:25-31) – For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.
- c. Psalm 2:7 (c.f. Acts 13:33-37) – I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”
- d. Psalm 22:22-31 - . . . For He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him. . .

2. Foreshadowed in the Old Testament

- a. Jonah and the Great Fish – Genesis 22 & Matthew 12:38-40
- b. Abraham receiving back Isaac – Hebrews 11:17-19

3. Predicted by Jesus

- a. At the first Passover early in his ministry – John 2:18-22
- b. After Peter’s Confession – Matthew 16:21
- c. After the Transfiguration – Matthew 17:9; Luke 9:30-31
- d. On the Road to Jerusalem – Matthew 20:17-19
- e. After the Last Supper – Matthew 26:30-32

4. Demanded by Divine Decree

Exegetically identified by the Greek verb $\delta\epsilon\iota$ (dei), which states that something is “necessary” or “proper.” When used of God’s actions, it

identifies that action as part of God's divine plan and entails a moral obligation that it be fulfilled.

- a. Luke 24:26 – “Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”
- b. Luke 24:44-47 – Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.
- c. Acts 17:3 – And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

B. It's Testimony

1. Jesus – Luke 24:39-43; Revelation 1:18
2. The Angel at the empty tomb – Matthew 28:5-6; Luke 24:1-7
3. The two men on the road to Emmaus – Luke 24:30-35
4. The 11 disciples – Luke 24:36-48; Acts 10:39-43
5. More than 500 believers – 1 Corinthians 15:4-7
6. Paul – Acts 13:31; 1 Corinthians 15:8
7. Peter (stated in his preaching) – Acts 2:32; 3:15; 10:39-43
8. Stephen – Acts 7:54-60

C. It's Nature

1. Resurrection from the dead – Mark 15:43-45
2. Resurrection with the same body that died – Luke 24:37-40; John 20:27

3. Resurrection of the same person who died – Luke 24:39, “it is I myself (*hoti autos ego eimi*)”
4. Reunion of Soul and Body – Acts 2:31
5. Bodily Resurrection – Matthew 28:5-7, 9; Jesus ate and drank after his resurrection, Luke 24:36-43; Acts 10:40-41
6. The first permanent resurrection – Acts 26:22-23; Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 15:20; Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 1:18
7. Resurrection with a glorified body – John 20:19, 26; Luke 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:42-54; Philippians 3:20-21
8. A Trinitarian act
 - a. By God the Father – Galatians 1:1; Acts 2:23-24; 3:15; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:20
 - b. By God the Son – John 2:19; 10:17-18; 11:25-26
 - c. By God the Spirit – Romans 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18

D. It's Results

1. Proclaimed Jesus' identity as Son of God, Lord, and Messiah – Acts 2:32-36; Romans 1:4
2. Furthered the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant – Acts 13:32-33
3. Confirmed the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant – Acts 13:34-37; 2:29-36
4. Proclaimed the Father's Acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice – Romans 4:25
5. Assured believers of eternal life – 1 Corinthians 15:17-18
6. Guaranteed our future resurrection – 1 Corinthians 15:20-54; Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 8:29-30; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
7. Guaranteed that Jesus will judge the world – Acts 17:31; John 5:24-30
8. Glorified the Father – Romans 6:4; Acts 2:23-24
9. Glorified the Son – John 17:5; 1 Peter 1:10-11, 20-21

10. Demonstrated Jesus' perfect obedience to the Father – John 10:17
11. Designated Jesus as head of the church and ruler over creation – Colossians 1:15-19; Ephesians 1:19-23
12. Facilitated the indwelling of the Holy Spirit – John 16:7
13. Provided regeneration for believers – 1 Peter 1:3
14. Secured justification for believers – Romans 8:31-34
15. Motivates holy living – Colossians 3:1-4; Romans 6:3-11; Ephesians 2:5-6
16. Provided assurance that God will keep all His promises – 1 Corinthians 15:19-20; Romans 8:23-25; 1 Peter 1:3

III. HIS ASCENSION

In his high priestly prayer in the Upper Room, Jesus spoke of a longing he had that would only come to fruition after his work on the cross was completed. He prays to his Father, “Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory I had with you before the world existed” (John 17:5). Jesus anticipated that moment when he would return to his rightful place with the Father, in heaven, and receive the glory that is rightful his. Jesus anticipated his ascension and the end of his incarnation.

A. It’s Necessity

1. Predicted in the Old Testament

a. Psalm 2:7 with Hebrews 1:3-5; 5:5

Psalm 2:7 – I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”

Hebrews 1:3-5 – He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”?

Hebrews 5:5 – So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”

b. Psalm 110:1, 4-5 with Acts 2:32-36; Hebrews 5:5-6

Psalm 110:1, 4-5 – The LORD said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool”. . . The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

Acts 2:32-36 – This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and

hearing. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.””

³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Hebrews 5:5-6 – So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”

c. Psalm 68:18 with Ephesians 4:8

Psalm 68:18 – You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train and receiving gifts among even among the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell there.

Ephesians 4:8-10 – Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

2. Predicted by Jesus

- a. John 7:33-34 – Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.”
- b. John 8:21 – So he said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.”

- c. John 14:19 – Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.
- d. John 14:28-29 – You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.
- e. John 16:5-7 – But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

B. It’s Nature

- 1. Physical departure – Acts 1:9-11
- 2. Reception in heaven – 1 Timothy 3:16
- 3. Session at the right hand of the Father (c.f. Matthew 25:31; Revelation 3:21)
 - a. Mark 16:19 – So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.
 - b. Acts 2:33-35 – Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,
 - ““The Lord said to my Lord,
 - “Sit at my right hand,
 - until I make your enemies your footstool.””
 - c. Acts 5:31 – God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
 - d. Acts 7:55-56 – But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”
 - e. Romans 8:34 – Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

- f. Ephesians 1:19-20 – . . . and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. . .
- g. Colossians 3:1 – If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- h. Hebrews 1:3-4 – He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.
- i. Hebrews 8:1 – Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven. . .
- j. Hebrews 9:24 – For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.
- k. Hebrews 10:12-13 – But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.
- l. Hebrews 12:2 - . . . looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- m. 1 Peter 3:22 - . . . who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

C. It's Results

1. For Jesus

- a. The end of his *kenosis* – Philippians 2:9-11
- b. His exaltation as Lord – Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3-5
- c. Recognition of his right to rule – Acts 2:33-35; 13:32-34; Ephesians 1:19-21
- d. His installation as Melchizedekian high priest – Hebrews 4:14; 5:5-10; 9:24
- e. Guarantee that his enemies will be defeated – Acts 2:33-35; Hebrews 1:13

2. For Believers

- a. Provision of a high priest and advocate before the Father – Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:5-10; 9:24; 1 John 2:1
- b. Guarantee that Jesus will return in the manner he ascended – Acts 1:9-11
- c. Affirmed our duty to be witnesses to the world – Acts 1:8
- d. Guaranteed our ascension – 1 Thessalonians 4:17; John 14:3

Guaranteed our future dominion over the earth – Hebrews 2:5-9