



Peninsula City Church

The Reason...

The Death

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The Reason...

Introduction

Q. Why did Jesus have to die?

This is not an easy question to answer for many a person. However, some things do stand out though, and I will look at some here. As a local church, we have stated what we deem as central. Peninsula City Church maintains in its Statement of Faith within its Constitution that,

“We believe Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day, and personally appeared to His disciples (1 Cor 15:1-7; Rom 4:25).”

Today on this Good Friday, we will be looking at Christ’s death. The death of Jesus Christ has been called, “the central fact of history.”¹ However, why was it the case that He needed to die? This is the topic of this short message.

1. For our sin

Q. What was the reason behind the death of Jesus Christ?

Now there could be various reasons given for Jesus’ death, but the primary one is that,

“This includes you who were once far away from God. You were His enemies, separated from Him by your evil thoughts and actions” (Col 1:21 NLT).

The cause of that separation was our sin and sins, i.e. our evil thoughts and actions,

“He was handed over to die because of our sins, and He was raised to life to make us right with God” (Rom 4:25 NLT).

In the gospel of Matthew, we read that Mary will have a Son, but He will not be a normal Son. In fact, He will have a name that will reflect His reason. That is, as a Saviour from our sin.

“And she will have a Son, and you are to name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matt 1:21 NLT).

The reason that Jesus did this was that we were sinners unable to make amends for our sin. Therefore, He died for our sin that, we could be made right with God,

“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ” (2 Cor 5:21 NLT).

It has been said that,

“The cross is the reason God sent His one and only Son into the World... The cross is at the heart of soteriology (doctrine of salvation)... We constantly need to be brought back to the Main Thing – lest we lose our focus on what is, essential... often the Main Thing in theology turns out to be what we understand the least... The Cross of Christ.”²

Consequently, the reason behind the death of Jesus Christ was that the sin of humanity could not be dealt with any other way. Jesus had come to save His people from their sin. This was so that we could be made right with God. There is no other way to be made right with God the Father and be able to come to Him. In fact, Jesus made this statement Himself to His followers,

¹ Little, Paul E. *Know What You Believe*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), 73.

² Kendall, R.T. *Understanding Theology: Developing a Health Church in the 21st Century*. (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 1996), 98.

“Jesus told him (Thomas), ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me’” (Joh 14:6 NLT).

The requirement up until this point in history was that an animal would be sacrificed for a temporary cleansing from sin. However, things were about to change. Jesus was to be the offering for our sin. Isaac Watts, an early English Christ-follower, minister, and hymn writer, from the 17th century, wrote a hymn called “Not All The Blood of Beast,” which said,

“Not all the blood of beasts
On the Jewish altars stain
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or was away the stain.

But Christ the heavenly Lamb

Takes all our sins away;

A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.”³

Wow, what a rich and powerful message, this is that Christ has taken away our sin through His sacrifice. This is how we see things; it is from our human viewpoint. However, how did this appear from heavens perspective?

2. The kingdom of God perspective

Q. How did things look from heaven?

It has been said that there are two sides of the same coin. That is, two things can be regarded as two parts or two ways of seeing the same thing.⁴ Well so too does the death of Jesus Christ have two parts or two views of the His sacrificial death. The above perspective is how we tend to see things. Now this is good, and it is correct, but there is also another viewpoint. It is what may be called the heavenly perspective.

John, the apostle, wrote to in the Revelation of Jesus Christ that,

“They are the ones whose names were not written in the Book of Life before the world was made-- the Book that belongs to the Lamb who was slaughtered” (Rev 13:8 NLT).

The context is what John called the beast from the sea. This disgusting thing that took glory for itself and away from God. However, John does make an interesting statement as to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. He said that the Book of Life was written before the world was made. This was before sin had become part of the make-up of life on the earth. So, Jesus the Lamb of God had not been slaughtered yet. What this tells me is that, from a heavenly perspective, the sin of humanity did not catch God by surprise. God was still in charge of things, and when He gave humanity control of things here on earth, and then we sinned, but it did not throw Him.

³ Watts, Isaac. “Not All The Blood of Beast.” In *Isaac Watts Remembered: 1674-1748*. By David Guy Fountain. (Herts, UK: Gospel Standard Baptist Trust, 1978), 30.

⁴ “be two sides of the same coin.” <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/be-two-sides-of-the-same-coin> (26th March 2018),

This kingdom of heaven perspective can also be seen from Jesus' words to those around Him when He said,

¹⁷ “The Father loves Me because I sacrifice My life so I may take it back again. ¹⁸ No one can take My life from Me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what My Father has commanded” (Jn 10:17-18 NLT).

Thus, Jesus knew why He had come to earth and was prepared to sacrifice His life. Why would He do that kind of thing? The reason is that He had the kingdom of God perspective. Jesus was not caught off guard and then merely killed or murdered, but He voluntarily laid down His life. That is, His life was not taken from Him; it was willingly sacrificed for our sin. He was God's way of dealing with our sin.

This whole perspective had the aim of reconciling humanity with Himself. God made the first move in the act of reconciliation, as we could not do it ourselves. But, it took the means of Christ's blood on the cross to do so.

¹⁹ “For God in all His fullness was pleased to live in Christ, ²⁰ and through Him, God reconciled everything to Himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross” (Col 1:19-20 NLT)

Wow, we are now at peace with God through the death of Jesus Christ for our sin. This is liberating news. It is what is called, ‘The Good News.’ In other words, the coming of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice revealed the evil nature of sin. Then He took our place that we may receive the forgiveness of sin.

Some concluding thoughts

So, coming back to the opening question,

Q. Why did Jesus have to die?

Yes, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the plan of God. This was God's only plan; there was never any plan B, it was always the plan that Jesus would come as the Lamb of God. Jesus sacrificed Himself voluntarily as He came to save His people from their sins. Jesus was the only worthwhile and acceptable sacrifice for our sin so that we could be made right with God.

Consequently, Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice that we might be forgiven since; we were separated from God the Father by our evil thoughts and actions. His death was also that we might be reconciled with the Father through the willing sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Thus, He brought us out from under the slavery to sin, thereby, protecting us from the destroyer, and reminding us of the cost involved.

As a result, of this choice by God to send Christ, and Christ's willingness to come, we now have peace with God. It has been said that,

“Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us” (Rom 5:1 NLT)

Have you made your peace with God yet? If so, live a life because of that amazingly liberating truth. Remember that this new life demands that we now live life in light of the cross, and taking up our own cross and dying to selfishness daily. If you have not made your peace with God and would like to do so on this Good Friday, you can. You might be thinking why would I do something like that. Well, it has been said that the cross tells us,

- “Each person is valuable to God

- Sin and evil is intolerable to God
- God's love is deep, His justice is wide, in perfect balance
- One divine person, Jesus Christ, can pay the debt for the human race
- Assurance of forgiveness is not presumption but based on fact
- We are ransomed, redeemed, restored, renewed
- The estrangement from our creator has been healed
- We can be a child of God, a member of His family."⁵

As Isaac Watts said in his hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,"

"Love so amazing, so divine

Demands my soul, my life my all."⁶

If you have not made your peace with God, why not, talk to God right now and make your peace with Him,

"Dear God, I humble myself before You this Good Friday, I admit that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness for my sin. I understand that Jesus Christ died in my place as the sacrifice for my sin. I thank You, Jesus, that You died for my sin. I want to make my peace with You God, because of what Jesus Christ did in dying on the cross on the first Good Friday. Please help me to trust You as the One who has forgiven me from my sin. I ask that you, please give me the strength to live a life that shows that I have made my peace you God from this day forward. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

⁵ Little, *Know What You Believe*, 85.

⁶ Watts, Isaac. "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." In *Isaac Watts Remembered: 1674-1748*. By David Guy Fountain. (Herts, UK: Gospel Standard Baptist Trust, 1978), 109.