

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

LESSON 5

THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

Supplemental Class Notes

1. INTRODUCTION

2. MAN'S NEED FOR CHRIST'S WORK (section I)

A. THE CONDITION OF MAN-TOTALLY DEPRAVED

Start by having your students read Romans 3:10-12. Ask them to read their responses to I, A.

- None righteous
 - No one is right before God.
 - God's standard is perfection-Matthew 5:48.
 - All of man's deeds are as filthy rags to God- Isaiah 64:6.
- None who understands
 - Unredeemed man has no spiritual capacity to understand God.
 - Men are darkened in their understanding - Ephesians 4:17-18.
- None who seeks God
 - Men do not seek God because of their hard hearts.
 - Men only seek God in response to God seeking them - John 6:44.
- All have turned aside
 - Unrighteous men, who do not seek God and do not understand spiritual things, will turn aside and go their own way, apart from God (Isaiah 53:6).
- Become useless
 - Spiritually dead - Ephesians 2:1
- None who does good
 - Worthless for any good deed - Titus 1:16

Total depravity does not mean that man is void of any quality pleasing to man or that every person is as bad as he or she can be. However, it does mean that every part of man is tainted by sin (motives, actions, desires, etc.). Therefore, men are slaves to sin, totally separated from God, and in a condition in which it is impossible to please God.

B. THE CONSEQUENCE OF MAN'S CONDITION

Man is enslaved to sin and at enmity with God.

Definition: *Sin is anything contrary to God in thought, in word, or in deed.*

- In thought - Matthew 5:28
- In word or speech - Colossians 3:8
- In deed
 - Sins of commission: breaking God's law (1 John 3:4)
 - Sins of omission: not doing what you know is right (James 4:17)

Enslaved to sin:

Romans 5:6: *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."*

3. THE WORK OF CHRIST

- The need for a blood sacrifice
- Christ's humiliation
- The crucifixion and events around the crucifixion
- The judgment of God at the cross

A. THE NEED FOR A BLOOD SACRIFICE (sections II, C and II, D)

"Why did Jesus have to die? Couldn't He save the world without suffering and dying?"

God declared that death is required to appease sin. This is seen in the sacrificial system, where God required the killing of Passover lambs as a sin offering. It is also seen in God's verdict that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

Christ's death on the cross takes the place of our spiritual death by making atonement for our sins.

- Forgiveness requires the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22).
- God had set the requirement that the shedding of blood is required for the atonement of sin (Leviticus 17:11).

B. CHRIST'S HUMILIATION (sections II, A and II, B)

In order to be the perfect sacrifice for sin and mediator between God and man, Jesus had to be both God and sinless man. Moreover, in the greatest act of humility, Christ had to set aside His glory and independent authority and take on the form of a bond-servant (Philippians 2:8), being despised and forsaken of men.

C. THE CRUCIFIXION

The events around the crucifixion.

- The agony before His crucifixion - Luke 22:41-44
- His arrest - Matthew 26:50-58
- His trial - Matthew 26:59-8
- Before Pilate - Matthew 27:11-26
- His scourging - Matthew 27:27-31
- His crucifixion - Matthew 27:32-37
- His last words - John 19:26-30

Events that took place at His death included supernatural darkness, earthquakes, resurrections, and the tearing of the veil in the temple isolating the Holy of Holies (Matthew 27:45-53). The tearing of the veil demonstrated that access to God was now open to all men. Discuss these events with the class.

D. THE JUDGMENT OF GOD AT THE CROSS (sections II, E and II, F)

To understand the full burden of Christ bearing the sins of all who would believe, it is imperative to understand that God's justice required that the full punishment for all the sins committed be cast upon Christ. As Christ bore the sins of man, He became sin, and the Father executed His judgment on Him rather than on each individual sinner.

But even more profound is that God abandoned the Son at the time of Christ's sin-bearing. Note, during the crucifixion is the only time that Christ refers to God as "My God" and not as "Father." This separation of the Trinity, as God forsakes the Son, left Christ utterly alone as He bore our sins in His body.

- Christ bore our sin, became sin on our behalf - 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24
- Our iniquities fell upon Christ - Isaiah 53:6
- God was pleased to crush the Son as a guilt offering - Isaiah 53:10
- Christ was forsaken by the Father - Matthew 27:46

Forsaken: to leave behind; to abandon; to desert.

In some way and by some means, in the secrets of divine sovereignty and omnipotence, the God-Man was separated from God for a brief time at Calvary, as the furious wrath of the Father was poured out on the sinless Son, who in matchless grace became sin for those who believe in Him.

John MacArthur

The judgment of God upon Christ at the cross demonstrates God's immense love for His children (1 John 4:10), as well as being the only means by which they may be forgiven.

4. THE PROVISIONS OF CHRIST'S WORK (section III)

A. RECONCILED TO GOD

Romans 5:10

To "reconcile" carries the idea of bringing again into harmony, or bringing into agreement with. Being reconciled to God means we now have peace with God.

B. JESUS CHRIST: THE ANSWER TO ALL MAN'S PROBLEMS CONCERNING SALVATION

To put it as simply as I can put it, if Christ is not my substitute, then I still occupy the place of a condemned sinner. If my sins and my guilt are not transferred to Him, and He does not take them, then they remain with me. If He did not deal with my sins then I must deal with them. If He did not bear my penalty then I must bear it. There is no other possibility. It is either Him or me.

Some have suggested, by the way, that it is immoral to teach the doctrine of substitution. Some theologians have suggested that it is immoral to teach that God in human flesh took on sin and bore my sin and your sin. But it is not immoral because you are not pushing something on God that He wouldn't want. You are not tainting His holiness- not at all. The truth of the matter is that in the process of salvation, mark this, God is not transferring penalty from one man guilty to another man innocent. No, He is bearing the sin Himself for Jesus was God in human flesh. - John MacArthur

5. THE MOTIVE FOR CHRIST'S WORK (section IV)

Christ's giving of Himself to the point of death to save men demonstrates God's great love and mercy.

6. THE RESOLUTION AND CONTINUATION OF CHRIST'S WORK (section V)

As crucial as the death of Jesus on the cross is for our salvation, the process did not end there. Without the resurrection, Christ's life, sinlessness, and sacrifice would all be meaningless. Having a dead Messiah saves nobody.

- The power of the resurrection over death - Romans 1:4
- The necessity of the resurrection - 1 Corinthians 15:13-12