

# FINDING HOPE TODAY - Part 6 - The Great Reversal

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## The Great Reversal

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Levels of \_\_\_\_ have risen significantly over the last several years.

One of the amazing realities about Christianity in its earliest years were the resources for \_\_\_\_ it offered people in the midst of hard times and rampant disease.

The Greek word that typically gets translated as “hope” really had a much stronger edge to it - it meant a profound \_\_\_\_.

**One** earth-shattering event - the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, offers a hope that the \_\_\_\_ has no way of offering!

**The culture and even many Christians have typically seen the Bible as a collection of stories about how we can *save* \_\_\_\_ through moral living.**

**What the whole Bible, including the Old Testament, shows us is a single, coherent story about how *God saves* the world through Jesus Christ in what could rightly be labeled the Great \_\_\_\_ of everything we human beings have ever expected.**

**God chose those no one else wanted, who seemed weakest, but He took it a step further to save them \_\_\_\_ their failures, helplessness and sufferings.**

*Though [Christ Jesus] was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*—Philippians 2:6-11 (NLT)*

**God raised Jesus from the grave not just in spite of his death but \_\_\_\_ of it!**

**The darkness and hopelessness of Good Friday, as Jesus hung on the cross, and everything he seemed to stand for was there on the cross dying with him, brings about the sunrise and \_\_\_\_ tomb of Easter!**

*So Jesus called [his disciples] together and said, 'You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the*

*slave of everyone else. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.'*

—Mark 10:42-45 (NLT)

**Instead of using power to *control* others, Jesus shows us using power to \_\_\_\_ others.**

*To sacrifice power in love is to exert the power of love to change things.*

—Tim Keller

*While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus said, 'this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has.'*

—Luke 21:1-4 (NLT)

**These Bible stories are not only about justice and inspiration but are written down and recorded for us in order to \_\_\_\_ us, to convert us to Christ *himself*, for all these little reversals point to the Great Reversal, the death and resurrection of the Son of God.**

*These things happened to [our ancestors] as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.*

—1 Corinthians 10:11 (NLT)

*[Jesus said] 'And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.' He said this to indicate how he was going to die.*

—John 12:32-33 (NLT)

**Instead of being lifted up to a throne, as they all expected, on Friday Jesus was lifted up on a cross, to \_\_\_\_ him.**

*God made [Christ] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

—2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

*But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for **our wrongdoing**.... (emphasis added)*

—Galatians 3:13 (NLT)

**He who was without sin, because of his great love for us, became \_\_\_\_ to pay *our* debt.**

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

—Romans 6:23 (NLT)

**On the cross, God took our curse of death because of our sin and through Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf, turned his act into a \_\_\_\_ for us.**

*The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus is good news because of the wondrous love he showed in exchanging places with us. He came from heaven to earth that we might go from earth to heaven. He was rich and became poor so that through his poverty we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). He became sin so that through his becoming sin we might become the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21). His curse is our blessing (Galatians 3:13-14). That is the gospel.*

—Tim Keller

**The Great Reversal flies in the face of the conventional \_\_\_\_ of our world.**

**Jesus made the wisdom of this world foolish because he made sure the gospel was for \_\_\_\_, not just the strong or brilliant or powerful or wise - it doesn't matter who you are, where you're from, or what you've done!**

*So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. Since God in his*

*wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense. But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.*

*—1 Corinthians 1:20-25 (NLT)*

**God's Great Reversal shows, ironically, that the world's understanding of greatness is actually a great \_\_\_\_ which leads to conflict and wars.**

**Other world religions teach that we can attain salvation by *ascending* to God through good works, by being a good person, by special rituals, but, in contrast, Christianity shows us salvation is through God *descending* to \_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ.**

***Jesus:** ... 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.'*

*—Matthew 16:24 (NLT)*

**Jesus is telling us that we can't save ourselves by trying harder or being stronger but by \_\_\_\_ our utter weakness, our inability to save ourselves, and, therefore, our need for Someone to step in and save us.**

**Just as Christ's weakness and shame on the cross was the only way to true strength and glory, so that \_\_\_\_ that we repent and acknowledge our sin and guilt.**

*Imagine an aging man whose hearing is failing but who is in denial about it. He usually complains that it is other people who are mumbling. But finally his wife gets him to go get his hearing tested. The clear verdict is that he*

*needs hearing aids, but when he sees what they cost, he is taken aback. 'We can't afford that,' he says. But his wife counters and says, 'Buy the best ones and consider it a gift from me.' That sounds nice, but the man realizes that to accept this gift is to admit weakness. It would be like saying, 'Thanks so much for this. Indeed I am an aging man who can't hear what people are telling me!' There is no way to receive some gifts without admitting your need.*

*—Tim Keller*

**The Gospel is the ultimate gift that requires the same kind of radical admission from each one of us, and the reality is that the ability to humble ourselves and give up control of our lives is \_\_\_\_ to do without God's help.**

*He was sold, to buy us back; captive, to deliver us;  
condemned, to absolve us; he was made a curse for our  
blessing, sin offering for our righteousness; marred that  
we may be made fair; he died for our life; so that by him  
fury is made gentle, wrath appeased, darkness turned  
into light, fear reassured, despisal despised, debt  
canceled, labor lightened, sadness made merry,  
misfortune made fortunate, difficulty easy, disorder  
ordered, division united, ignominy ennobled, rebellion  
subjected, intimidation intimidated, ambush uncovered,  
assaults assailed, force forced back, combat combated,  
war warred against, vengeance avenged, torment  
tormented, damnation damned, the abyss sunk into the  
abyss, hell transfixed, death dead, mortality made  
immortal. In short, mercy has swallowed up all misery,  
and goodness all misfortune.*

*—John Calvin*

**This incredible Great Reversal is the promise of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and he offers you this for your life today!**

**Next Week - New Series: True Lies**

# TRUE LIES

