



## **50 Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die**

### Part 2

### **Introduction**

Today is week two of our journey through John Piper's book *50 Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die*. Again, I hope that in making the connection between the coming of Jesus and the cross of Jesus will make this year's celebration of His coming more meaningful for you and your family. I sometimes find myself drowning in the commercialism associated with Christmas and this study has helped me cherish the coming of Jesus. It has helped me to remember that the baby in the manger came to die that I might live. I hope it does the same for you.

### **6. Jesus came to show His own love for us**

- We already saw the incredible love of God the Father last week. A love so deep that he was willing to give a son so perfect to love a people so unworthy. The question is, does Jesus share this sentiment? Or is he only doing what his father told him to? We all know that "God so loved the world" but did Jesus? Yes he absolutely did. He loved us profoundly, personally, and particularly...

#### **Jesus' love for us is profound**

- ❖ Ephesians 5:2--*And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us...*
- ❖ Ephesians 5:25--*Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*
  - His plans for us are eternal (Ephesians 1:4-10)
  - He endured the weakness of flesh for us (Matthew 4:2, John 4:5-6)
  - He endured and withstood temptation for us (Matthew 4:1-11, Hebrews 4:15)
  - He endured the shame of sin for us (Hebrews 12:2)
  - He endured hatred for us (Hebrews 12:3)
  - He gave himself for us (Romans 5:8)
  - He overcame death for us (Acts 2:24)
  - He ascended to heaven and pleads for us (Hebrews 7:25, 9:24)
  - He purifies us (Ephesians 5:26-27)
  - He earns for himself righteousness and he gives it to us (2 Corinthians 5:21)
  - He unites himself to us (Ephesians 5:30-32)
  - He gives the Holy Spirit to us (John 14:16-17)

#### **Jesus' love for us is personal**

- Jesus' love would be cheapened if it weren't personal. We all know that millionaires give tons of money away every year to charities and we applaud them for the nobility and kindness of their gifts. Yet, we are not so foolish as to believe that they have any kind of deep personal love for those who are helped by their financial gift.
- Jesus' love is personal. He intimately knows and loves every single individual saved by his precious blood.



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- ❖ John 10:27-28--*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.*
- ❖ Galatians 2:20--*...And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*



#### Jesus' love for us is particular

- We all know that that which is particular is more meaningful and special than that which is common. The Superbowl trophy wouldn't mean anything if it were awarded to every NFL team, every year. It would be cheap and common. An olympic gold medal would mean nothing if every athlete competing was given one. Likewise, if Jesus blood is shed for everyone indiscriminately, even those who reject him, it is cheapened. Fortunately, we see in scripture that this is not so. We see that the blood of Jesus is shed specially for the church, those who will call upon him for salvation.
  - ❖ Matthew 20:28--*the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*
  - ❖ John 1:12-13--*But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*
  - ❖ John 3:16--*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*
  - ❖ John 15:13--*Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*
  - ❖ Ephesians 5:25--*Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*
  - ❖ Romans 10:13--*For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*
- Jesus' loving act of shedding his blood is not cheap and common. It is special and meaningful in that it is shed for the church, for those who call upon his name.



**As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be awed by the profoundness of his love, be touched by the personal(ness) of his love, and realize that if you are one who has by grace, believed in Jesus, you have received a particularly special gift.**

## 7. Jesus came to cancel the legal demands against us



#### The reality of our legal state

- Many today fail to even recognize that there is a legal demand against them. They have the faulty notion that as long as the good deeds outweigh the bad...they're covered. This is untrue for two reasons...
  - (1) Most "good" deeds aren't really good
    - God's definition of a "good" deed is significantly different than what we call a good deed. We usually describe anything done in a spirit of kindness, or helpfulness as good. God, however, describes such goodness this way...
      - ❖ Isaiah 63:6--*...all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.*
    - Goodness according to God is doing deeds so that...
      - ❖ 1 Peter 4:11--*God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*



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- ❖ 1 Corinthians 10:31--*whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

#### (2) God's judgment isn't based on such weights

- According to God, we're already guilty from birth
  - ❖ Psalm 51:5--*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
  - ❖ Romans 5:12--*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—*
  - ❖ Ephesians 2:1-3--*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*
- Good works do nothing to change this
  - John 6:63--*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all.*
  - Romans 3:19--*For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight,*
  - Hebrews 9:22--*and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*



#### How then are we to be delivered from our guilty verdict

- ❖ Colossians 2:13-14--*And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*
  - The old hymn says it this way...
  - *"My sin oh the bliss of this glorious thought, My sin not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross and i bear it no more. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord oh my soul!"*



#### As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that his death on the cross cancels the legal demands against all who place their faith in him.

## 8. Jesus came to be a ransom for many

- ❖ Mark 10:45--*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*
  - Some hear this verse and immediately start thinking about the movies. We have all seen this plot right? Bad guys have *Taken* some one and are demanding a ransom. If it's a good movie the hero might say something like, "I do have a very particular set of skills; skills I have acquired over a very long career. Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you."<sup>1</sup>
  - We then apply our movie ideas to the bible and end of thinking that the bad guy is Satan, the devil, and he is the one holding us ransom. He must have called God the Father on his cell phone and said if you ever want to see your precious church again you'll have to meet my demands. To which we imagine the Father handing the phone to Jesus who says to Satan...*"I do have a very particular set of skills; skills I have acquired over a very long career. Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you."*
  - As exciting as this story might sound it's not even close to true for the following reasons...

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<sup>1</sup> *Taken*, 1998



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- (1) Satan isn't holding us ransom, he is in the same predicament.
  - some may think of Satan as the sovereign ruler of hell, while God is the sovereign ruler of heaven but it simply isn't so. In fact, Satan is doomed to spend the rest of his life burning in hell not ruling over it...
  - ❖ Revelation 20:10--*and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*
- (2) When Jesus speaks of ransom, he is simply saying that a price must be paid.
  - ❖ Romans 6:23--*For the wages of sin is death,*
  - ❖ Hebrews 9:22--*and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*
- (3) The emphasis of Mark 10:45 is really on Jesus lovingly serving and saving humanity by giving his own life.

 **As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be mindful that Jesus loves us so much that he willingly gave his life for us.**

## 9. Jesus came for the forgiveness of sins

### A misconception

- To us, forgiveness often means to simply "let go" or "get over" an offense. It is choosing not to seek justice for an offense. An example of this is that one night I was driving out of the parking lot at Restoration in my blue van. It was dark, raining, the parking lot lights were out and I could see a thing. Thus, as I was turning right I heard a terrible, terrible crunching/rubbing sound. I had rubbed the right side of my van against the front left bumper of Doty's car. Fortunately, there wasn't really anything wrong with Doty's car other than some paint from my van was now on his. I offered to pay to have his car painted and he would have been just to demand that I do so. After all, it was my fault. Yet, he chose not to pursue justice. He chose to "let it go" or forgive me.
- This is NOT what the Bible means when it speaks of Jesus forgiving our sins. God never lets anything go...EVER. Every sin that has ever been committed that will ever be committed EVER will be justly punished and the just punishment is death.
  - ❖ Romans 1:18--*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,*
  - ❖ Romans 6:23--*For the wages of sin is death,*
  - ❖ Revelation 21:8--*But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.*

### Real forgiveness

- What the Bible means by forgiveness is not that our sins will be "overlooked" or "let go," but that our sins will not be on OUR record. They were indeed punished with death. Jesus brings us forgiveness, not by convincing God to overlook our mistakes, but by taking the just punishment for our sins upon himself.
  - ❖ Matthew 26:28--*for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*



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❖ Ephesians 1:7--*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,*

#### The shame of sin


- Also worth noting is the reality that taking our sin upon himself wasn't pleasant for Jesus. It is easy, 2000 years after the fact, to think of Jesus as this stoic figure who is steely and unaffected by anything, but he wasn't that way at all. He was a real human being, with real human emotions. Remember how he responded to the death of Lazarus?
  - ❖ John 11:33-35--*When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, Where have you laid him? They said to him, Lord, come and see. 35 Jesus wept.*
- Likewise, bearing the punishment of our sin was not an easy, pleasant experience for Jesus.
  - ❖ 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.*

 **As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that Jesus endured a shameful, painful death so that you might be forgiven.**

## 10-11. Jesus came to accomplish our justification

❖ Romans 3:24--*[We] are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

❖ Romans 5:9--*we have now been justified by his blood,*

 **Definition of Justification**--*"an instantaneous legal act of God in which He thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and thus declares us to be righteous in His sight."<sup>2</sup>*

### (1) Forgiveness

- We have covered this today already, forgiveness isn't God choosing to overlook or ignore our sin. Forgiveness is God choosing to punish Jesus for them instead. So that we may have guilt before our holy God. However, forgiveness alone does not accomplish justification.
- "When a teacher cancels from the record an exam that got an F, it's not the same as declaring it an A. If the bank were to forgive me the debts on my account, that would not be the same as declaring me rich. So also, canceling our sins is not the same as declaring us righteous. The cancellation must happen. That is essential to justification. But there is more."<sup>3</sup>

### (2) Imputed Righteousness

- If we are to be declared righteous, we must possess righteousness. We must have an "A" to take the place of the "F" that was forgiven. How is this achieved? Is it possible for me to earn this "A"? The bible says...
  - ❖ Ephesians 2:8-9--*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*
  - ❖ Titus 3:5--*he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...*

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<sup>2</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 723.

<sup>3</sup> John Piper, *50 Reasons Jesus Came to Die*, (kindle edition).



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- ❖ Romans 3:28--*For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*
- How then are we to possess righteousness? The only way...Jesus must obtain righteousness and then impute that righteousness to us. This is exactly what he did...
  - 🕒 Jesus earned righteousness
    - ❖ John 15:10--*I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*
    - ❖ Hebrews 4:15--*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*
    - ❖ Hebrews 5:8-9--*Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,*
    - ❖ Hebrews 7:26--*For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.*
    - ❖ Philippians 2:8-9--*And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,*
  - 🕒 Jesus imputes to us that righteousness
    - Remember, imputation is not losing a limb. Having Jesus' righteousness imputed to you is like Jesus earning himself an "A" and then writing our name on his paper. This is what is being said by verses like...
      - ❖ Romans 5:19--*by the one man's obedience [Jesus] the many will be made righteous.*
      - ❖ Philippians 3:9--*not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—*
      - ❖ 2 Corinthians 5:21--*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
    - For those of us who have received who, by faith, have received Jesus' righteousness. Do you deserve it? Are you really worthy of the gift you have been given? Of course not. We know all too well what we really deserve don't we?
- 🕒 **As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, remember to be humbled and grateful for Jesus' righteousness imputed to you.**