



50 Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die

Part 3

A word of comfort

- Friday morning in Connecticut the reality of the total depravity of man was manifest in horrific ways. I believe Al Mohler is right when he says that mothers of the child victims will resonate with Jeremiah 31:15 which says...
 - ❖ Jeremiah 31:15--*Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.*
- It is not likely that we will have the opportunity to minister to the families of the victims in person, but there are many all around us who are shaken. People that we work with, go to school with, and live near will be hurting and we, the body of Christ, must be ready to comfort them with compassion, prayer. Some of these same people will cry out “where is justice!?” and we, the body of Christ, must assure them that our God is just and this sin will not go unpunished. God will bring about a justice that is so total, so complete, so righteous that it satisfies the wounded soul. Let’s be ready to minister the grace of God to those in need in the days ahead.

Introduction

This week we continue in our series, *50 Reasons Jesus Came to Die*. Again, our purpose in going through this series is to make the connection between the cradle and the cross. That we would be reminded that the baby who has come, has come to die and in doing so he has accomplished much. So much that it is worth celebrating. Let’s look at reason number 12...

12. Jesus came to take away our condemnation

- ❖ Romans 8:1--*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*
 - This verse often loses some of its impact on us because we don’t feel condemned. If you were to walk up to an innocent man and exclaim, “REJOICE! You won’t be sentenced to death!” The only impact it would have on him was that he now thinks that you’re completely nuts. Only the guy on death row is grateful for such an exclamation. Let us remind ourselves that we were indeed the guy on death row. We were condemned. We were doomed to face the very wrath that we described two weeks ago...
 - ❖ Genesis 7:21-24--*And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. 22 Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23 He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth.*
 - ❖ Numbers 16:31-35--*31 And as soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. 32 And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. 34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up! 35 And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering the incense.*
 - ❖ Ezekiel 9:4-6--*And the Lord said to him, Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it. 5 And to the others he*



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said in my hearing, Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. 6 Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women,

- ❖ *Isaiah 13:6-16--Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come! 7 Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every human heart will melt. 8 They will be dismayed: pangs and agony will seize them; they will be in anguish like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at one another; their faces will be aflame. 9 Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. 10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light. 11 I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant, and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless. 12 I will make people more rare than fine gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir. 13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken out of its place, at the wrath of the Lord of hosts in the day of his fierce anger. 14 And like a hunted gazelle, or like sheep with none to gather them, each will turn to his own people, and each will flee to his own land. 15 Whoever is found will be thrust through, and whoever is caught will fall by the sword. 16 Their infants will be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished.*



Who now condemns us?

- ❖ *Romans 8:33-34--Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 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.*

(1) **Satan**--Satan would love to condemn you. He would love pile all your sins up like a giant heap of garbage before God and thus prove your worthlessness and guilt. This good news is, Jesus' death and resurrection accomplishes this for those of us who are in Christ...

- ❖ *Revelation 12:10-12..the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them!*

(2) **The World**--they will call you all sorts of things. They will condemn us as a narrow minded biggot, a hypocrite, they will say that our belief in Jesus is a result of your pathetic inability to cope with the troubles of life on your own. The good news is, their condemnation means nothing because the God of the universe declares us to be holy, blameless, without spot or wrinkle.



As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that he was born to free us from all condemnation

13. Jesus came to abolish circumcision and all rituals as the basis of salvation



Did those things ever save?

- No, O.T. believers were justified the same way that N.T. believers are...Faith alone.
- ❖ *Romans 3:20-22--For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, **although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it**— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.*
- ❖ *Hebrews 11:4-7--By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. 5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had*



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taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. 7 By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.



What was the purpose of these things?

- Before the coming of Jesus, O.T. believers were given pictures or shadows of what to look for in a savior so that they would recognize him when he comes. However, they treated these shadows of salvation to come as salvation itself.
 - (1) Circumcision:
 - A sign that they belong to God and must trust in him.
 - A sign that the flesh must be put off or put to death
 - (2) Sacrifices for atonement
 - An exercise to remind them of their need for forgiveness, and their inability to achieve their own righteousness
 - An exercise to teach and remind them that innocent blood must be shed to achieve forgiveness
- Unfortunately, they often missed the point of these things. They were intended to help O.T. believers understand, recognize, and believe in the savior to come. Yet they were very often viewed as a means or a basis for salvation.



What does it mean that they were abolished as the basis of salvation?

- Most of the first Christians were Jewish and many of these Jewish Christians believed that these rituals were still necessary. In fact, they believed that one was incapable of being a real Christian without them.
 - ❖ Acts 15:1--*But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.*
 - ❖ Acts 15:5--*some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.*
 - ❖ Acts 15:7-9--*And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, 9 and he made no distinction between us and them, **having cleansed their hearts by faith.** Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? 11 **But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.***
- What Peter was saying was that Jesus came and died to destroy the notion that works of any kind have anything to do with a person being saved. Men and Women are saved by the grace of God ALONE through Faith ALONE. Christ ALONE is the basis of our salvation.



As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that the baby in the manger is your salvation. The flesh profits nothing, that baby is EVERYTHING.



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14. Jesus came to bring us to faith and keep us faithful

Jesus came to bring us to faith

- Many people think that faith is something that we inherently possess and must choose what we place our faith in. However, the scripture makes it clear that our faith in Jesus is not our own. We do not inherently possess it. Rather scripture describes humanity apart from Christ this way...
 - ❖ Jeremiah 17:9--*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*
 - ❖ Romans 3:10-12--*None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.*
 - ❖ Romans 8:7-8--*For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*
 - ❖ Ephesians 4:17-18--*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*
- These truths lead the old baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon to say, "All people are spiritually dead, unable to see, desire, or respond to the gospel message."¹
- Where then does faith come from? How are we to believe in Jesus if we cannot on our own?
 - ❖ Romans 10:17--*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*
 - ❖ 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.*

Jesus keeps us faithful

- Scripture makes it clear that only those who persevere in the faith are real Christians and will inherit eternal life. The question is, how are we to do this? By our own efforts? Or will Christ keep us faithful?
 - ❖ Jeremiah 32:40--*I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.*
 - ❖ Philippians 1:6--*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*
 - ❖ 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24--*Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.*
 - ❖ Jude 1:24-25--*Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

 **As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that he didn't leave our destiny up to us. It wouldn't have gone so well. Be grateful that he brings us to faith and keeps us faithful.**

15. Jesus came to make us holy blameless and perfect

¹ <http://www.ligonier.org/blog/charles-spurgeon-calvinism-total-depravity/>



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How does this work really? What has Jesus really done?

- Do you feel holy? Are you living a perfectly righteous life before God? No, you aren't. Every single one of us can relate with the apostle Paul as he says...
 - Romans 7:24--*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*
- Because of this, we all relate to, love, and cling to those verses in scripture that teach and remind us that we are being made holy. That Jesus is working in us and will continue working in us. Verses like...
 - ❖ Ephesians 4:11-13--*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,*
 - ❖ Philippians 1:6--*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*
- We see from these verses that Jesus is making us holy. He is working in us and will continue working in us. What's cool is this...The fact that Jesus will finish his work of making us holy is so certain, so absolute, so guaranteed, that God sees us as holy and declares us to be holy even now.
 - ❖ 2 Corinthians 5:17--*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*
 - ❖ Hebrews 10:10--*And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*
 - ❖ Hebrews 10:14--*For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*
 - ❖ 1 Peter 2:9--*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*
 - ❖ Colossians 1:22--*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,*

 As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us be thankful that the baby Jesus came to guarantee that our sinful, wicked, broken souls will one day stand before God blameless, righteous, and holy.

16. Jesus came to give us a clear conscience

We once had a clear conscience

- To understand this really, we have to go back to the very beginning. The place where our conscience was seared. Because it was not always so.
 - ❖ Genesis 2:25--*And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

Our conscience was seared

- ❖ Genesis 3:7-8--*Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

The guilt is passed on to every generation



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- This guilt doesn't only belong to Adam and Eve, it is passed on to every one. Why? Because a guilty conscience is simply the result of being guilty of sin and every one of us are indeed guilty of sin.
 - ❖ 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—*



Coping with guilt

- Thus from an early age we learn and develop mechanisms for dealing with guilt. We see even Adam and Eve had to do something to deal with their guilty conscience...
 - ❖ Genesis 3:7-8--*Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*
- We still do this today. We all understand that we are simply not good enough. There is a guilt and shame built in to the very essence of who we are. It constantly nags us. If we don't come up with some way of coping with it it will drive us mad.
 - (1) So we **cover** our guilt like Adam and Eve did. I'm not speaking of clothes but rather with all kinds of nice deeds. We try to do enough things to soothe our conscience but it never seems to be enough. Even if we experience temporary relief from our guilt it doesn't last, and before long we need to do more nice things to soothe our guilty souls.
 - (2) We try to **deny or ignore** our guilt. I can't help but think of all the self-help books available telling you that "you're good" or "you're special." Hogwash! The truth is you're guilty and you know it. If what they claimed was true, we wouldn't need spend millions of our dollars on books trying to convince us of it. No one needs to read a book on how $2+2=4$. Why? Because it's true and we all know it is! These books are selling lies and we all deep down know that they are lies. Yet, we buy the books because we are desperate to believe them so we can be rid of our guilt.
 - (3) We **drown out** our guilt. We fill our lives with so much work, entertainment, and activities that we simply don't have time to deal with the guilt that nags us. Yet it remains. Avoiding dealing with an issue does not make it go away. This is especially true in this situation.



A clear conscience restored

- There is but one way that our guilt is removed. There is but one way to cure the conscience...
 - ❖ Hebrews 9:14--*how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*
- In Jesus, there is no guilt now to hide, cover, deny, or drown out. In Jesus, we are free from the occupation of covering our shame and free to serve the living God with rejoicing.



As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, be grateful that he came to free you from the bondage of your guilt that you may now know, love, and serve God freely.