

Series: John
Title: Substitution
Text: John 11: 45-57
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John 11: 45: Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46: But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

This happens every time the gospel of Christ is preached. Some believe, some believe not. Some are made glad by God's grace. Others get mad because salvation is all of God's grace. Our Savior said,

Luke 12:51: Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

We have seen it throughout John's gospel. When he healed the man at Bethesda, some rejoiced in Christ—others got mad saying he violated the sabbath day. After he fed the multitudes and preached that he is the Bread from heaven—his disciples rejoiced while many went away and walked no more with him. After he stood at the feast of tabernacles declaring he is the Tabernacle, the Rock from whom the water of life flows—then we read:

John 7:43: So there was a division among the people because of him.

After he gave the blind man sight

John 9:16: Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

He preached that he is the Shepherd who laid own his life for the sheep and shall lose none.

John 10:19: There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

But our Savior is not frustrated by men's rejection—he severs his people on purpose to declare he is the LORD. Pharaoh would not bow to God—he opposed Moses—would not take his hand off God's people—God said to Pharaoh,

Exodus 8: 22: I will sever the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarm of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. 23: And I will put a division between my people and thy people:...

Ex 11: 7: But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

What did those do who went away?

John 11: 46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees,...

They turned from Christ THE WAY and went *THEIR WAYS*. They left God who is Wisdom and went to spiritually dead, blind, self-righteous Pharisees. They left Christ the Life for dead religion. They left the Righteousness of God for their filthy rags.

John 11: 47...And told them what things Jesus had done

They were scared to death of offending the Pharisees. They feared men rather than Christ our God. So they went to tell on Christ to score points with religious men they feared.

John 11: 47: Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

This is the way of carnal man—“*what do WE do?*” Carnal man cannot, will not, cease looking to his own doing that he might be saved by the doing of Christ alone.

Here is the absurd reasoning of the carnal mind for which they rejected Christ—“*For this man doeth many miracles.*” Until the Spirit of God reveals Christ in the heart, the sinner only sees a man—“*this man...*” But they knew the Lord Jesus worked MANY miracles that no other man ever did. Christ had just raised a dead man to life. They knew and said, “*What do we do? For this man doeth many miracles.*” But we see in these men why every natural, unregenerate sinner hates Christ?

John 11: 48: If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him:

It was bad enough that *they* would not believe on him. But they tried to stop others from believing on him. They said, “*all will believe on him*” and they meant, they will stop believing them. The Lord said to them,

Matthew 23:13: But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Here is the rub:

John 11: 48: And the Romans shall come and take away both OUR place and nation.

They thought that was THEIR PLACE AND NATION. *They* built *their* church. *They* established *their* righteousness. *They* converted themselves and *their* converts. *They* were the builders of *Israel*. If they come to Christ they would have to confess all their very best religious deeds were only evil works.

John 5: 39: Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40 :And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

John 11: 49: And one of them, *named Caiaphas*, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50: Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51: And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; 52: And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. 53: Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. 54: Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

When preaching verse by verse through the scriptures, we find the gospel of Substitution declared over and over. Christ repeated it over and over and here we find it again.

Caiaphas’s heart was to crucify Christ. That is all that he meant when he said, “It is expedient [profitable] for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” But God determined before that these men would nail Christ to the cursed tree. Therefore, the Spirit of God moved him to speak this. In these words we hear the gospel of Substitution.

IT WAS EXPEDIENT FOR US

Without controversy, it was expedient for us that Christ become the Substitute of his people. Except Christ has laid down his life for his people there would have been no profit for any sinner in the world. Christ willingly becoming the Substitute to die for his people is the only way *holy God* can receive the ungodly sinner. God is holy. We are ungodly, sinful, vile. “There is none righteous no not one.” It was expedient, profitable, for Christ to die for the people because we could not profit ourselves by attempting to make ourselves righteous before God.

Job 9: 30: If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; 31 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. 32 For *he is* not a man, as I *am*, that I should answer him, *and* we should come together in judgment. 33 [without Christ the Substitute, the one Mediator between God and men] Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, *that* might lay his hand upon us both.

It was expedient—profitable, necessary—that Christ lay down his life in place of his people. We were condemned already. Therefore it was a MUST in order for God to be just and Justifier of his people that Christ become the Substitute and die for—in place of—his people.

John 3: 14: And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18: He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Except Christ had died “*for the people*” the whole nation, including every sinner in that nation and every sinner in every nation, would have surely perished. It is certainly true of God’s elect that “*it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.*” Apart from Christ laying down his life, every sinner in this world would have perished. But because Christ died for the people, those for whom he died shall never perish.

FOR THE PEOPLE

The good news of substitution is that Christ died for the people. Christ laid down his life in place of the people. He took the place of a particular people—God’s elect. He put away our sin and made us righteous. Therefore, not one for whom Christ died shall perish.

Substitution is the gospel. Christ died for a particular people is the good news. By his finished work, not one shall perish—that is the message we preach. Most preach that Christ died for all men without exception. Most preach that Christ merely made salvation available. But, they say, it is up to the sinner to make Christ’s blood effectual by believing on him. That is not the gospel. It is another gospel that is not another! The most attacked doctrine is the doctrine of particular redemption, limited atonement—the successful Savior saving his people by his death as our substitute.

For whom did Christ lay down his life?. Listen to what this Pharisee unknowingly said, “*he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.*”

Christ laid down his life for *the children of God*. For the children of God in the nation Israel and for the children of God scattered abroad in every nation. When the scriptures says that God so loved the world, it is declaring to us that God loved his children scattered in all parts of the world. He died, not merely for the children of God in Israel, but also for the children of God in every nation.

Someone will object, “But are not all the children of God?” It is true that all are created of God. It is true that that all are responsible to give God glory and obey him. But it is the children chosen of God in Christ by divine election for whom Christ died.

God made his children his by divine election of grace. By his prognosis—that is what foreknowledge means. It is by God foreknowing is people, electing and predestinating his people to the adoption of children in eternity in Christ, that we are made God’s children. It is of God’s grace not based on anything in us. When it says he should die for that nation, it was not everyone in Israel, but the children of promise, God’s elect.

Rom 9: 6: Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8: That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

As Gentiles we are thankful our text also says, “*And not for that nation only [not for the children of God in that nation only], but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. [God’s elect in Gentile nations]*”

The issue is not men being offended or not. This issue is that Christ accomplished redemption by his death on the cross for each one for whom he laid down his life. The issue is that Christ did not merely make salvation available. The issue is that Christ accomplished redemption for each sinner for whom he died. His blood was the purchase price. He bought each one for whom he died from under the curse and condemnation of the law. He satisfied justice. Christ accomplished the redemption of each child of God for whom he died—that is the issue. Let sinners get mad. They can stay mad and go to hell. The issue is the glory of God. That makes his people glad!

Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE

Notice this phrase in the text, “that also he should gather together in one the children of God.” That is what Christ came to do by his death on the cross and that is what he accomplished.

Ephesians 1: 9: Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might **GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE** all things [his elect] in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

In the end Christ shall gather together in one all his people in Christ. But that is what Christ did on the cross by laying down his life for his people. Notice the phrase in Ephesians 1: 10 “in the dispensation of the fullness of times.”

Galatians 4: 4: But when **THE FULNESS OF THE TIME** was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6: And because ye are sons, [already by divine elect, by blood redemption] God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7: Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

On the cross, by laying down his life for God’s elect, Christ gathered together the children of God, even in him. He reconciled us to God by his blood making his people one with God by his death on the cross.

Romans 5: 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

That was the glory God gave to his Son when he chose him and sent him to redeem his elect. God the Father sent him to gather us together in himself, his people and God the Father who we offended. Christ came to make us one with the Father by reconciling us by his death for us.

John 17: 1: These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4: I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5: And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. 6: I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. 7: Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8: For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which

thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10: And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them...20: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21: That they all may BE ONE; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may BE ONE IN US: that the world [God's elect] may believe that thou hast sent me. 22: And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may BE ONE, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE: 23: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made PERFECT IN ONE; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The glory God the Father gave the Son before the world was is the glory of gathering together his people in one, even in him, by his death on the cross as our substitute. The glory he gives us in regeneration is the gospel. It is the light of the good news that he accomplished making us one in him by laying down his life for the children of God. He perfected us forever by his one offering making us one with the Father in him. The law is satisfied. Righteousness is brought in. God can receive us and be one with us in Christ. He gave us that glory when he made us hear and understand the good news of the gospel. Christ gave that glory to his disciples who he called while he walked this earth and he gives it to all his people when he calls us to him. It is the glory of the gospel of his gathering all his elect together in one, even in him, making us one with God in him by his precious blood which made us righteous.

It is that gospel by which we are born again of the Spirit and made one in spirit by his Spirit. The glory of Christ who gathered us together in one, even in him, on the cross is the gospel. He gathered us together. He made us one with God our Father. By that gospel—by his Spirit—he gathers us together making us one with him through faith. By being born of the same Spirit he makes us one with our brethren born of him. It is the gospel of him gathering us together in one on the cross that makes us one in heart in spirit. When he gives us this glory—calls us by his gospel—is this good news that makes us one in him in spirit.

Ephesians 4: 4: *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;* 5: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6: One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

What have we seen here? Christ laid down his life for the children of God. We were made God's children by divine election when he chose us freely by grace in Christ before the foundation of the world. It was the children of God for whom Christ died. He redeemed us that we might receive the adoption of sons. "And because ye are sons"—because we were already children by election and redemption—God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying Abba Father.

The issue of particular redemption is that it declares Christ accomplished the work the Father sent him to accomplish! He did not make salvation possible. He finished the work! The Lord Jesus accomplished gathering together the children of God by his death on the cross. And having accomplished redemption and reconciliation for each sinner for whom he died, he shall call his redeemed making us one with the Father in him and with our brethren by his Spirit.

John 17: 4: I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have FINISHED the work which Thou gavest Me to do.

In our text, unknowingly, this Christ-hating rebel spoke the gospel—"*He prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.*"

How do men regard this gospel if not for the Spirit making us one? "*Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.*" Did Christ run after them trying to get them to like him? No. They rejected the Lord so the Lord walked no more among them. "*Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews.*" But he never leaves his people who he gathered in one. "*But went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.*"

Amen