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Why Did Christ Die?



Part 24 (060416AM)

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God's Word captures many amazing, miraculous and profound events, but none are more precious than the marvelous record of Christ's Resurrection. Consider anew this morning the wonders of Christ's resurrection we have gathered here to celebrate.

We have come this morning to collectively affirm and proclaim the crowning proof of Christianity. All other words spoken, deeds done, promises made by Jesus and His Apostles are secondary to this the greatest event of all—Christ's Resurrection from the dead!

Without the resurrection, Christianity is like all the other false religions—all promises and no power. With Christ's bodily resurrection Christianity and its God are the absolute truth to believe and the absolute power to live!

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO DEATH

It all comes down to death. Death is the greatest enemy, and has overpowered everything in the world except one man named Jesus Christ. No matter how wealthy or wise, no matter how strong or smart none can elude the onslaught of death. No wealth can buy endless life, no strength can keep endless life, and no wisdom can unlock endless life. Death always comes and the bodies of all eventually turn to dust.

Man is not alone in the losing struggle with death. All animals and plants no matter what their size or habitat eventually die. Even entire species succumb to extinction. Man's cities, civilizations, and all their monuments spring up, flourish, decline and eventually fade away. Even the universe as vast and incomprehensible as it may seem—is running down and would face an ultimate "heat death" if God did not step in as He promises He shall, and make all things new.

Humanity everything we know about is suffering under the dreadful curse the Bible calls the "bondage of corruption" and every part of the physical universe is awaiting liberation by God.

- *Romans 8: 21-22 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. NKJV*

Because death has smitten all who ever lived[1], Christ's conquest of death sets Him apart from all others. Every religious leader except Christ merely died, none rose—not Buddha, Mohammed, Zoroaster, Confucius, Caesar, or Marx. They died and their bodies stayed in the grave; any other human who made a profound impact on the world in one way or another—all are dead.

But Jesus Christ is alive!

It is true that He died and was buried, in common with all other men, but unlike other men He returned from Hades, resurrected His own dead body, made it henceforth immortal, and emerged from the tomb, alive forevermore!

This was the greatest of all miracles, and could have been accomplished only if Jesus indeed is God, as He had claimed to be." [2]

So we must never underestimate the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

BUT IT'S MORE THAN A FACT

The world believes that Jesus died, but the world does not believe that He arose from the dead. Even in the church there is often a lack of genuine hope because of mere historic assent to the facts. Take the test that the Bible offers to us. Sort out

the truth you cling to. There is only one hope of eternal life and that is saving faith.

- Historical faith says, "Christ lives!"
- Saving faith says, "Christ lives *in me!*"

Which one describes you? Do you have saving faith?

So Jesus Rose Again, most of us here are absolutely convinced of that.

But there is another vital truth that Resurrection Sunday makes us ponder, and that is Christ's death on the cross. We could reduce Christ's death to seven words: **forgiveness. justification! regeneration! reconciliation! adoption! redemption! sanctification!**

And what do those seven truths accomplish? We could say that Christ's death for us gives to us His—

- **forgiveness.** A Sinner stands before God as a debtor and that debt is forgotten by His payment. Have you **experienced the relief of knowing that all your sins, everyone of them—past, present, and future, are GONE?**
- **justification!** A Sinner stands before God as accused and is declared righteous by His imputed righteousness. Have you experienced **the peace of justification, all guilt removed, all punishment forever taken away from God's sight?**
- **regeneration!** Have you **experienced the power of an endless life**, and every day partaking of the powerful presence within of the very Lord God Almighty?
- **reconciliation!** A Sinner stands before God as an enemy and is made a friend by His peace. Have you experienced **the wonder of friendship with God?**
- **adoption!** A Sinner stands before God as a stranger and is called a Son by His choice. Have you experienced **the joy of being adopted into Christ's family?**
- **redemption!** A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by His ransom. Have you experienced **the thrill of being liberated, set free, rescued by God forever?**
- **sanctification!** So Christ died to take our soiled and spotted lives that always get wasted and make them clean, focused and fruitful

Why did Jesus have to die?

That is the most important question each of us must consider this Easter season. The simple answer is—for sin. Now most humans do not consider themselves very bad sinners or even sinners at all.

Because we are in God's sight all sinners going our own way. We are so unlike God, so distant, so bad, so lost, and so evil. Someone has used a comparison to help us see why. Though none of us would ever think of ourselves as bad as Hitler, he stands in for a picture of us all.

Listen to this contrast between all that man can do in all his power and what Christ did in all His weakness—

Adolf Hitler spilled the blood of millions for his own sake. Jesus Christ shed his own blood for the sake of millions. Hitler set himself up as a god and the masses succumbed. Jesus Christ was God in the form of lowly man. Hitler created a living hell for the masses. Jesus endured hell to save the masses. Hitler's name is synonymous with power, evil, and genocide. Jesus' name with love, peace, and life [3].

So the answer for why Jesus had to die is that we all were sinners and that is what Christ's death was for, sin.

- Why would God the innocent die for me the guilty?
- Why would God the offended die for me to offender?
- Why would God the Holy die for me the sinful?
- Why would God the Just die for me the unjust?

This morning we need to see ourselves as God saw us. If we were to define why Christ died on the cross theologically this is what God has told us in His Word:

1. *Because of our sin we are all debtors.*

So Christ died to take the hopeless debt we owe to God and pay with His own life our eternal death sin has caused us to be responsible to pay—**that's forgiveness.** A Sinner stands before God as a debtor and that debt is forgotten by His payment.

- **Ezekiel 33:10** "Son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'This is what you are saying: "Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?"' NIV
- **Ephesians 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace NKJV
- **Romans 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. NKJV

Have you **experienced the relief of knowing that all your sins, everyone of them—past, present, and future, are GONE?** Your sins are paid for, and your eternal life is purchased—and you have the receipt in your hand, written in the very blood of the One who paid the price. Christ's record of that payment is forever settled in this book the Bible!

2. *Because of our sin we are all guilty convicts in God's sight.*

So Christ died to take guilty convicts and destroy any record that that ever committed a crime and takes their place in the punishment—**that's justification!** A Sinner stands before God as accused and is declared righteous by His imputed righteousness.

- *Isaiah 53:6* All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. NKJV
- *Romans 5:1* Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, NKJV

Have you experienced **the peace of justification, all guilt removed, all punishment forever taken away from God's sight?**

3. *Because of our sin we are all dead in our trespasses and sin.*

So Christ died to take dead and rotting spiritual corpses and make them vibrant, full of endless life and brand new—**that's regeneration!**

- *Ephesians 2:1* And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, NKJV
- *John 10:10* The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. NKJV
- *Hebrews 7:16b* ...but according to the power of an endless life. NKJV;

Have you **experienced the power of an endless life**, and every day partaking of the powerful presence within of the very Lord God Almighty?

4. *Because of our sin we are all enemies of God.*

So Christ died to take enemies and make them friends—**that's reconciliation!** A Sinner stands before God as an enemy and is made a friend by His peace.

- *Romans 8:7* Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. NKJV
- *Romans 5:10* For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled**, we shall be saved by His life. NKJV: *John 15:14* You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. NKJV

Have you experienced **the wonder of friendship with God?**

5. *Because of our sin we are all strangers to God.*

So Christ died to take strangers and make them part of the family—**that's adoption!** A Sinner stands before God as a stranger and is called a Son by His choice.

- *Ephesians 2:12* remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. NASB
- *Galatians 4:4-6* But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, **that we might receive the adoption as sons.** 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" NKJV

Have you experienced **the joy of being adopted into Christ's family?**

6. *Because of our sin we are all slaves to unrighteousness.*

So Christ died to take slaves and make them freed forever—**that's redemption!** A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by His ransom.

- *John 8:34* Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. NASB
- *John 8:36* Therefore if the Son makes you free, **you shall be free indeed.** NKJV

Have you experienced **the thrill of being liberated, set free, rescued by God forever?**

7. *Because of our sin we are all defiled.*

So Christ died to take our soiled and spotted lives that always get wasted and make them clean, focused and fruitful—**that's sanctification!** Just before we read these verses, may I again remind you of the two sides of the coin of salvation. To best understand what God has done, let me contrast and explain justification and sanctification. Because we are saved (justified) this is how we should live (sanctified).

Justification is what Christ did for me on the cross—**sanctification** is what Christ is doing in me because of the cross.

Justification is immediate and was completely finished in me the instant I was saved—**sanctification** is an ongoing process never completed on earth until I meet Jesus face to face at death or His coming.

Justification is activated the moment I trust in the Person of Christ Jesus and His finished sacrifice of the cross—**sanctification** grows with each obedient choice I make empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Justification is my position declared right in God's sight—**sanctification** is my practice made right by becoming more conformed to His image.

- *Romans 6:13b* ...but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. NKJV
- *Romans 12:1-2* I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV
- *1 Corinthians 6:19-20* Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are

God's. NKJV

- **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. NKJV

Have you experienced **the stability of coming under new management?** Do you know the thrill of looking at your life and sensing His control? Do you see your hands as extensions of His? Your voice as a channel for Him to speak? Your days as no longer belonging to you but to be lived unto Him who loved you and gave Himself for you?

So That is why did Christ died—to save sinners from their sins and to rescue them from death, destruction, despair and doom.

So what can happen because of that truth here this morning? The best way to answer that question is to look at the verses immediately following the Resurrection account. Usually you can tell what is important to someone by what they do first.

- *Because of our sin we are all debtors.* So Christ died to take the hopeless debt we owe to God and pay with His own life our eternal death sin has caused us to be responsible to pay—**that's forgiveness.** A Sinner stands before God as a debtor and that debt is forgotten by His payment.

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- *Because of our sin we are all enemies of God.* So Christ died to take enemies and make them friends—**that's reconciliation!** A Sinner stands before God as an enemy and is made a friend by His peace.

Have you experienced **the wonder of friendship with God?**

- *Because of our sin we are all strangers to God.* So Christ died to take strangers and make them part of the family—**that's adoption!** A Sinner stands before God as a stranger and is called a Son by His choice.

Have you experienced **the joy of being adopted into Christ's family?**

- *Because of our sin we are all slaves to unrighteousness.* So Christ died to take slaves and make them freed forever—**that's redemption!** A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by His ransom.

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- *Because of our sin we are all defiled.* So Christ died to take our soiled and spotted lives that always get wasted and make them clean, focused and fruitful—**that's sanctification!**

Have you experienced **the stability of coming under new management?** Do you know the thrill of looking at your life and sensing His control? Do you see your hands as extensions of His? Your voice as a channel for Him to speak? Your days as no longer belonging to you but to be lived unto Him who loved you and gave Himself for you?

What did Jesus do first - as soon as He stepped out of the Tomb? What were His Resurrection priorities, the things that He did right away?

The first five recorded meetings that Jesus had when He stepped out of that Tomb read like a ministry that we would sometimes also need from Him. So follow me as we see who Jesus sought out and why. Learn how He handles those sins and weaknesses – and then take heart, be encouraged. He is doing the very same type of visitation today as he did then.

We can see in **John 20:11-18** – **He came to save the DEFILED.** Remember that He appeared first to Mary, and to everyone who is defiled He gives purity when they come to Him.

- **John 20:11-18** But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." 14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you

seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her. NKJV

One of the greatest moments any descendant of Adam could have had was to be the 1st one Jesus appeared to after His rising. And to whom did He share this unusual blessing? To a single woman with a dark and troubled past – Mary Magdalene. What is amazing about that incredible honor is the list of who else was available to have been first.

Mary Magdalene should make us stand back and glorify the God who makes such masterpieces of His grace from such formerly defiled and sinful souls as some of us. Centuries ago a number of workmen were seen dragging a great marble block into the city of Florence, Italy. It had come from the famous marble quarries of Carrara, and was intended to be made into a statue of a great Old Testament prophet. But it contained imperfections, and when the great sculptor Donatello saw it, he refused it at once. So there it lay in the cathedral yard, a useless block.

One day another sculptor caught sight of the flawed block. But as he examined it, there rose in his mind something of immense beauty, and he resolved to sculpt it. For two years the artist worked feverishly on the work of art. Finally, on January 25, 1504, the greatest artists of the day assembled to see what he had made of the despised and rejected block. Among them were Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, and Pietro Perugino, the teacher of Raphael. As the veil dropped to the floor, the statue was met with a chorus of praise. It was a masterpiece! The succeeding centuries have confirmed that judgment. Michelangelo's *David* is one of the greatest works of art the world has ever known.[4]

So Jesus appeared first to one who was defiled and honored her as a trophy of His grace.

We can see in [John 20:19-23](#) – **He came to rescue the DEPRESSED.** Remember how He went to find His hopeless disciples who were in hiding? And to all of us who are so discouraged we are ready to run away He comes and says to them, "Fear not I am here and everything will be all right!"

We can see in [John 20:24-31](#) – **He came to save the DOUBTERS.** Remember doubting Thomas? Who sought whom? Jesus patiently gives him faith when he doubted, just like He offers to each of us who struggle. He says I am here, it is I – be not afraid!

Just think what He can do now that He is available anywhere, anytime, and by anyone. Wherever you are Jesus is passing by right now. He is offering you salvation. Pause on Thomas.

We can see in [John 21:1-14](#) – **He came to restore the DESERTERS.** Remember James and John who wanted His right and left spots? He gives them Humility when they ask Him and restores their desertion from their post.

We can see in [John 21:15-25](#) – **He came to save the DENIERS.** Remember fearful Peter who got caught in water over his head and cusses and swears that he didn't know Jesus, and then Jesus turned and looked at him? Devastated Peter slips out into the dark to weep the bitter tears of failure, but Jesus comes looking for Him and gives him forgiveness. That is just what He does for each of us when we fail Him!

Did one of Christ's meetings resound with you? Would you like to meet with Him today? On this day when we remember the greatest work of all time when Christ died and paid for sin on the cross—He is here, He is waiting and offering to meeting with you what ever your need may be today.

The pathway to true discipleship begins when a person is born again. It begins when the following events take place:

- When a person realizes that he is sinful, lost, blind, and naked before God.
- When he acknowledges that he cannot save himself by good character or good works.
- When he believes that the Lord Jesus Christ died as his Substitute on the Cross.
- When by a definite decision of faith, he acknowledges Jesus Christ as his only Lord and Savior.

[1] God took Enoch and Elijah, and very possibly they are killed in His stead by the Beast in Revelation 11.

[2] Henry Morris, Creation Trilogy, Notes on Christ's Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

[3] THE LAMB AND THE FUHRER, Jesus Talks with Hitler By Ravi Zacharias

[4] Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Mark—Jesus, Servant and Savior*, (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books) 1997.

