

Romans Session 47

How Christ Died For God 1

Rom. 25b-31 (NASB)

²⁵ *was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;*

²⁶ *for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

²⁷ *Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.*

²⁸ *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.*

²⁹ *Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,*

³⁰ *since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.*

³¹ *Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.*

Among the most obvious characteristics of modern society is selfism, manifested in self-centeredness, selfishness, self-gratification, and self-fulfillment.

People are absorbed in their own feelings, their own desires, their own possessions, and their own welfare. Sadly, selfism has found its way into Christianity and has almost become a hallmark of some purportedly evangelical churches and organizations.

Christ is portrayed as the answer to all problems, the source of peace and joy, success and happiness, the One who makes life worth living and saves from hell.

In the right biblical perspective, Christ is the answer to man's needs, the first of which is salvation from sin.

And it is certainly true, of course, that life in Him is the only escape from hell.

Obviously salvation involves man, and just as obviously it is the greatest blessing a human being can receive, the singly great blessing apart from which no other have any permanent value.

But in Scripture, salvation does not focus on man but on God.

God's Word makes clear that the foremost purpose of salvation is to glorify God.

Paul reminds us that:

Colossians 1:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.*

The Psalmist declares;

Psalms 115:1 (NASB)

¹ *Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Your name give glory Because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.*

And that should be the continual heart cry of every believer.

Since God is the one and only true God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the source and measure of all things, He alone has the right to be glorified. He alone has the right to man's worship and adoration.

Through Isaiah, God said;

Isaiah 45:5 (NASB)

⁵ *"I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me;*

Isaiah 45:21-23 (NASB)

²¹ *"Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me.*

²² *"Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.*

²³ *"I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.*

Because God is our sovereign Lord, Paul admonishes believers to honor and glorify Him in even the smallest and most mundane things we do.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NASB)

³¹ *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Our very reason for existence is to glorify God.

Instead of being consumed by our own interests and feelings and welfare, we should be lost in the wonderful privilege of living to give God praise and adoration.

In everything we do, we are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Matthew 6:33 (NASB)

³³ *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

In his book "Our Guilty Silence", John Stott says that the best example he knew of a person consumed with glorifying God was Henry Martyn:

Although a Senior Wrangler (a mathematics expert) of Cambridge University, and then a fellow of St. Johns College, he turned his back on an academic career and entered the ministry. Two years later, on July 16th, 1805, he sailed for India. "Let me burn out for God," he said in Calcutta, as he lived in an abandoned Hindu temple.

And as he watched the people prostrating themselves before their images, he wrote. "tis excited more horror in me than I can well express."

Later he moved to Shiraz, and busied himself with the translation of the New Testament into Persian. Many Muslim visitors came to see him and to engage him in religious conversations.

His customary serenity was only disturbed when anybody insulted his Lord.

On one occasion the sentiment was expressed that "Prince Abbas mirza had killed so many Christians that Christ from the fourth heaven took hold of Mahomet's (Muhammad's) skirt to entreat him to desist. "it was a dramatic fantasy. Here was Christ kneeling before Mahommed. How would Martyn react?"

"I was cut to the soul at this blasphemy, he said" seeing his discomfort, his visitor asked what it was that was so offensive. Martyn replied: "I could not endure existence if Jesus was not glorified; it would be hell to me, if He were to be always thus dishonoured."

His Muslim visitor was astonished and again asked why. "if anyone pluck out your eyes," he answered, "there is no saying why you feel pain, it is feeling. It is because I am one with Christ that I am thus dreadfully wounded." ([Grand Rapids: Eardmans, 1969], pp. 21-22)

Here was a man who could live in the most uncomfortable of circumstances without complaint but was heartbroken over a pagan society that dishonored his Lord.

Doubles David was a man after God's own heart because he could truthfully declare,

Psalm 16:8 (NASB)

⁸ I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Despite his sins and short comings, the major focus of his life was always on God.

The worldly spirit of selfism is perhaps the major reason most Christians are not aggressive in witnessing to the lost. It is the reason the church, for the most part, is not moving out into the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Christian who is primarily concerned about his own comfort and blessings, even his spiritual blessings, does not have his focus on God.

Consequently, his life will not be directed toward fulfilling God's Great Commission.

In the summer of 1865, Hudson Taylor became tremendously burdened for the Land of China.

His biographer reports that he also became greatly troubled about the church he was attending in Brighton, England. As he looked around the congregation he saw;

Pew upon pew of prosperous bearded merchants, shopkeepers, visitors;

Demure wives in bonnets and crinolines, scrubbed children trained to hide their impatience, the atmosphere of smug piety sickened him. he seized his hat and left.

Unable to bear the sight of a congregation of thousand or more Christian people rejoicing in their own security, while millions were perishing for lack of knowledge.

"I wandered out on the sands alone, in great spiritual agony." He said,. And there on the beach he prayed for twenty-four willing skilful labourers

Out of that prayer eventually came the China Inland Mission.

Due to that ministry and other like it, there are reportedly twenty-five million to perhaps fifty million believers in China today, despite its officially atheistic government.

God could use men such as Henry Martyn and Hudson Taylor because their attention was not focused on their own interests but on God's.

Salvation is first and foremost a way of glorifying God. The fact that it saves men from hell and gives them eternal life, marvelous and wonderful as that is, it is secondary to the glory of God.

The cross of Jesus Christ had the most dramatic effect on mankind in providing the way of redemption. But Jesus' death on the cross was primarily to glorify God.

He glorified God during His earthly ministry, enabling Him to say to His Father,

John 17:4 (NASB)

⁴ "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

Speaking to every believer, Pau writes;

Philippians 2:5-11 (NASB)

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Even when we think about heaven, we have a tendency to focus on the great blessings and joy we will have there. But the Lord brings believers to heaven first of all in order that they might glorify Him forever.

That is the purpose for which man was created, and that will be the eternal purpose of all who are re-created by God's grace through faith in His Son.

On his death bed David Brainerd said, *"My heaven is to please God and glorify Him, and give all to Him, and to be wholly devoted to His glory. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honor to God.*

It is not matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there, but to live and please and glorify God, (Jonathan Edwards, the life of David Brainerd {Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980 reprint}, pp. 330-31).

There will, of course be bliss beyond description in heaven, but even that bliss will itself be an eternal testimony to the grace and glory of God.

One of the most significant passages that teaches that truth is the present text (Rom 3:25b-31)

At first reading this passage seems terribly intricate, complicated, and baffling.

But its basic truth is simple, while also being the most profound truth in all of Scripture:

Justification for sinful mankind was made possible by God's grace through the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross, and it is appropriated by men when they place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior.

The cross affects those who trust in Jesus by giving them eternal life. Through His death and resurrection, God delivers us from the wrath to come

Romans 5:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

⁹ *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.*

2 Corinthians 5:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ *Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,*

Titus 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

The cross affected Satan by breaking his power and dominion over the earth.

The writer of Hebrews writes;

Hebrews 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,*

And He delivered us:

Colossians 1:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ *For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,*

¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

The cross obviously affected Jesus Christ Himself. In obedience to His Father's will, He suffered the agony of taking sin upon Himself and paying its death penalty, and He was resurrected in order that He might return to the never again to be broken presence of His Heavenly Father.

John 14:28 (NASB)

²⁸ **"You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.**

The cross also affected the Father and the Holy Spirit, because of their perfect oneness with the Son.

In Roman's 3:25b-31, Paul directs our thought specifically to four ways in which the cross of Jesus Christ Glorifies God;

- 1st By revealing God's righteousness (vv25b-26)
- 2nd By Exalting God's Grace (vv27-28)
- 3rd By Revealing God's universality (vv29-30)
- 4th By confirming God's law (v31)

We will take these up next