



The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever” (Revelation 5:13).

A tour group in Jerusalem listened to the guide. “This church, St. Peter in Gallicantu, was built over the home of Caiaphas, the high priest at the time of Jesus’ execution. The ancient stone stairway outside the church comes up from the Kidron Valley to the old city of Jerusalem—probably the same steps where the mob led Jesus from the Garden of Gethsemane.”

He paused for emphasis; “Recent excavations have revealed a dungeon or prison below the high priest’s home where prisoners were kept before trial. Before you descend down into this deep stone pit, I will share two Scriptures. He opened his Bible to Isaiah 53:8 and read, “He was taken from prison and from judgment: ...for the transgression of my people was he stricken.”

Without comment he turned to Psalm 88:4, 6: “I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.”

As the tourists followed the guide down to the dungeon, one lady spoke, “I am confused. My mind is wrestling with new concepts. Could each stone step be leading me nearer to the place where my Lord was cruelly thrust that dark Thursday night?”

Reaching the depths of the stone pit, the guide pointed up to the ceiling to a hole cut out in solid stone just wide enough for the body of a man. Could this have been where the soldiers thrust their prisoners who awaited trial?

What were the thoughts going through the mind of Jesus, if He was thrust into this dark hole, left alone, awaiting His trials? Psalm 88:7 reveals His agony: “Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.” In utter rejection He cries out, “Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me: thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth” (Psalm 88:8).

Was this awful separation from His Father, this suffering in the place of all sinners, part of the plan of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? (Revelation 13:8).

If you had stood on the rough stones of that pit, would your heart have overflowed with gratitude to a God so filled with everlasting love?

Preview

How can we understand the character of God when Satan has successfully spent 6,000 years defaming Him? How can we plumb the mystery of an all-powerful God who has given to every created being the power of choice in which He will never interfere? Our minds cannot fathom this unique blend of grace and justice—of a willingness to forgive and an unwillingness to clear the guilty. He will never force, but He stands at our heart’s door with the plea, “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20). When Adam and Eve sinned, why didn’t God abandon the guilty couple to

their choice, instead of persistently calling, "Where are you?" The answer is found only in the gift of grace seen in the person of Jesus.

Isaiah says: "He shall see of the _____ of his soul, and shall be _____ : by his knowledge shall my righteous _____ justify many; for he shall bear their _____" (Isaiah 53:11).

Points to Ponder

1. Consider the contrast between God's plea for sinners to accept His forgiveness and His wrath against rebellion and sin.

When God persistently calls, "Where are you?" what is it that draws us to Him? His love for us. When Christ reveals His love to us, we begin to see that the heavenly reward is of far more value than all our worldly possessions.

The promise is sure: "And I, if I be _____ up from the _____, will _____ all men unto me" (John 12:32).

2. Can we understand what exactly happened on the cross?

Was it the torture and the suffering that caused the death of Jesus? Was it the spear that killed Him? No, Christ died of a broken heart. He died in despair because He sensed the removal of His Father's presence. He felt totally alone while bearing God's wrath for all of humanity's sins. He feared that sin was so offensive to His Father that He could never hope to be reconciled to Him. In that dark hour, Jesus could not see beyond the tomb.

3. Have you noticed that Christ spoke of the first death as sleep? (John 11:11)

Jesus had no fear of physical pain or the first death. He explained what we are to fear in Matthew 10:28: "Fear not them which _____ the body, but are not able to kill the _____ : but rather fear him which is able to _____ both _____ and _____ in hell."

Yes, Christ felt the black despair that sinners will feel when God's wrath is poured out upon them. He spoke of this in the Garden of Gethsemane, "My soul is exceeding _____, even unto _____" (Matthew 26:38).

4. Why did the Father permit the Son to suffer for the guilt of sins He hadn't committed?

In ages past the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit formulated a plan to grant pardon to repentant sinners while still upholding the justice of God's law. This hope of eternal life was promised "before the world began" (Titus 1:2). The plan and the promise involved Christ offering Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. "God was in _____, reconciling the _____ unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). In other words, Christ's sacrifice took away the barrier between

God and sinful human beings. Jesus fully bore God's wrath over sin. He turned away God's wrath against sin and bore our punishment in His own body.

Nuts & Bolts

1. God's character reveals a blend of grace and justice.

a. How does God show He still loves His backsliding children?

Jeremiah 3:12-14: _____

b. How mercifully does God plead with sinners?

Isaiah 55:7: "Let the wicked _____ his way, and the unrighteous _____ his _____; and let him _____ unto the Lord, and he will have _____ upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly _____."

2. What is God's reaction to continued rejection of His revealed will?

2 Chronicles 36:16: "They _____ the messengers of God, and _____ his words, and _____ his prophets, until the _____ of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no _____."

3. What precious gifts has God given us because of Christ?

1 Corinthians 1:30: a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ d. _____

4. Even when we were God's enemies, what did He do through the death of His Son?

Romans 5:10, 11: "For if, when we were enemies, we were _____ to God by the _____ of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be _____ by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now _____ the _____."

5. What does the Bible call God's plan to restore us to Him?

2 Corinthians 5:19: _____

6. We can choose to accept Christ's sacrifice and receive forgiveness or reject it and experience God's wrath.

John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath _____ life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see _____; but the wrath of God _____ on _____."

7. Because Christ's sacrifice took away the barrier between God and sinner, how does God feel about that sacrifice?

Ephesians 5:2: It is a " _____ savor."

8. How do the Scriptures show that the sins we've committed have been transferred to our sin-bearer, Jesus?

Isaiah 53:4-6: "Surely He hath borne _____ griefs and carried _____ sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for _____ transgressions, he was bruised for our _____; the chastisement of _____ peace was upon Him; and with his stripes _____ are healed, ...the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of _____ all."

9. What did Christ's death or ransom accomplish?

1 Corinthians 6:20: "For ye are _____ with a price; therefore _____ God in your _____, and in your _____, which are God's."

10. Adam's rebellion brought sin and death. How did Christ reverse the trend?

1 Corinthians 15:22: "For as in Adam _____, even so in Christ shall _____ be _____."

11. Christ's life and death bridged the gap between us and God. What can His perfect life do for us?

Romans 5:10: "For if, when we were _____, we were _____ to God by the _____ of his Son, _____, being reconciled, we shall be _____ by his _____." When we submit to Jesus, our heart is united with His heart, our will is merged in His will, our mind and thoughts become one with His. Through His power, we live His life! When God looks at us, He sees Jesus' perfect righteousness, not our sin.

12. How does Christ's resurrection give meaning to His life and death?

1 Corinthians 15:14: "If Christ be not _____, then is our _____
_____, and your _____ is also _____."

1 Corinthians 15:17: "If Christ be not _____, your _____
is vain; ye are _____ in _____."

Words to Remember

Atonement: Reconciliation between God and sinners accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ.

Reconciliation: Restoration of relationship between God and humans on the basis of what Christ accomplished on the cross.

Propitiation: Expiation or purging of sin through Christ's sacrifice.

Substitution: Christ dying on behalf of the sinner.

Vicarious: Sinless Christ taking the place of the sinner and dying for the latter.

Ransom: Price paid for the redemption of sinners.

The Difference Between

The first death: An unconscious sleep from which all will awake when Jesus resurrects them—the saved at the first resurrection; the wicked at the second. Jesus referred to this as sleep.

The second death: The final punishment and destruction of unrepentant sinners.

I Truly Believe

Place a check in the box preceding the statements that express your response to this study topic.

- I thank God for Christ who suffered and died for me.
- I'm so happy Jesus rose from the grave and is now in heaven as my Friend and Mediator.
- By God's grace I claim Christ's victory over sin.
- I long to be in heaven with Jesus, along with the redeemed, to worship Him as my Lord and King.

My Prayer

Dear Father,

I thank You for giving Your Son to die in my place. I praise Him for His perfect example of obedience. I thank You that He is now in heaven, soon to return to take us home with Him. Give me the grace and power to do Your will, that I may win others for Your kingdom. Amen.