

## Adult study of Jesus Christ

Last week we dealt with the name of Jesus in our study of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. We have seen that the name of Jesus means to believers the following:

*Who is he that saves us?* The Son of God; it is our Jesus our Savior.

*Whom does he save?* His people. That is, all and only the elect given to him by the Father.

*From what evils does he save us?* From all sins, and from the punishment of sin.

*In what manner does he save us?* In two ways, by his merit and efficacy, and in each way most perfectly.

Therefore, what does one say when one confesses, "*I believe in Jesus?*" One says the following:

**I believe** that there is a certain Savior of the human race as expressed in those whom God elected to receive the Savior.

**I believe** that this person, Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, is the perfect and only Savior, of whom the Father declared from Heaven "*This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.*" (Matt 3:17).

**I believe** that Jesus should be worshipped and honored as God demanded: "*That all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.*" (John 5:23)

**I believe** that this Jesus, by his merit and efficacy, delivers us from all evils, both of guilt and punishment, by commencing this salvation in us in this life, and consummating it in the life to come.

What does 'consummating it in the life to come' mean? It means that we apply Christ's merits to our lives today already, because of the promise of the resurrection of the saints that will come at the end of time. To apply Christ's merits to our sinful lives today means that we have to use faith as an instrument to apply to our lives those merits and efficacy of Jesus that he earned on our behalf and live as if our eternal lives have already been consummated.

Why would we do that? Because the Promisor of that consummation is the Almighty God, who does not lie or change his mind. Therefore, we should have no doubt that we will finally obtain it. Alternatively, we can say that nobody can snatch us out of God's hand.

It is, therefore, required of us to recognize the character and holiness of the Promisor and the cost at which our eternal lives have been returned to us; and live accordingly even though we are still trapped in these sinful bodies, which we will gladly shed at the time we gloriously pass through the grave to the bosom of Abraham.

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Enjoying the fruits of a promise to be consummated in the future is not an invention of the New Testament. It is rather a foundational premise of the entire Christian doctrine. The Old Testament saints were redeemed of their transgressions by the promised Messiah and they read about that in the Torah every Sabbath and saw that with their own eyes as the priests sacrificed regularly, thereby foretelling what the Messiah would sufficiently accomplish once only in the future.

Adam and Eve left the Garden with the promise that *your seed shall crush his head*, which we know did not come quickly in human terms.

Many other examples of promises bearing fruit that are consummated in the future exist in the Bible and in civilization, such as the baptismal covenants of parents to raise their children in the gospel, and so on.

**I believe** that he is not only the Savior of others, whom he has called into his service, but that he is also my only and perfect Savior, working effectually in me here, and carrying on until the day I am ready to join the other saints in heaven.

**I believe** that this Savior Jesus is the Messiah who was promised and prefigured so that when He arrived, the elect would recognize him. It is important that we take note of the manner in which God orchestrated how the Messiah would appear. Those who have such a hatred for God that they refuse to recognize that Jesus is the Son of God, even while facing Him on his Throne, will not recognize him; will not believe in him; and will not enjoy the intercession of the Mediator, leaving them to plead their case without the righteousness of Christ.

**I believe** that this Savior Jesus is the Mediator between me and the Father, *without whom* I would stand condemned to eternal punishment with the wicked because of my transgressions, but *with whom* I am without sin; cloaked in righteousness and holiness; pleasing to the Father.

The following Scripture passages support what we have confessed here:

John 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."

John 14:11 "Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me..."

John 10:30 "I and the Father are one."

John 6:29 "Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

John 3:36 "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

John 5:23 "That all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him."

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This is a sure and well-grounded argument in support of the true Divinity of the Son, for faith under this form is worship due to God alone.

The doctrine of the Mediator consists of two parts, namely, the Office of the Mediator and the Person of the Mediator.

### ***The Office of the Mediator.***

The office of the mediator consists of two parts, namely, his humiliation or merit, and his glorification or efficacy. With respect to his humiliation, Christ is meritorious (commendable, praiseworthy) and with respect to his glorification, he is efficacious (effective, successful).

### *His Humiliation*

These are the five degrees of humiliation:

1. Born as man.
2. Suffered under Pontius Pilate.
3. His crucifixion.
4. To die and be buried.
5. To descend into hell.

#### 1. Born as man.

To assume the likeness of man was the first degree of humiliation. For the Almighty God to assume a human nature, to become that which He created to worship and glorify him, was indeed a humiliation.

#### 2. Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

Why was it necessary that Jesus suffer under Pontius Pilate? So that He, though innocent, might be condemned by a civil judge.

John 19:4 Pilate came out again and \*said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him."

John 19:14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he \*said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"

John 19:15 So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate \*said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

John 19:16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

It was also necessary that Jesus suffer under Pontius Pilate so that he could free us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.

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Isa 53:4, 5 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him and by His scourging, we are healed.

2Co 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"

Pilate is mentioned in the passion of Christ for the following reasons:

1. Because Christ obtained from this judge the testimony of His innocence.
2. That we might know that He, though declared innocent by this judge, was nevertheless condemned, and that by a regular judgment (which is by order of nature and under God's providence "over time".)
3. That we might witness the fulfillment of prophecy. (Ezek 21:27) "A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I shall make it. This also will be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I shall give it to Him."

(Gen 49:10) "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."

The scepter is the sign of a ruler, which points in this case to the rule of Judah that reached its peak with the rule of David and Solomon. Although there is not complete unity on the exact translation of the word Shiloh -- referring to the one that will come -- all agree that it refers to the Messiah. This passage is a promise that the rule will not depart from Judah until the rule merges with the perfect rule of Christ.

Pilate was the ruler appointed by God to judge Jesus (John 19:10 – 11) "'Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?' Jesus answered, 'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.'" and is mentioned here that we may be fully certain, that Jesus is the Messiah that was to come.

Why was it necessary that Christ should suffer under a judge and be condemned by the ordinary course of the law?

1. That we may know that He was condemned by God Himself, on account of our sins, and that He has, therefore, made satisfaction to God for us, that we may not be condemned by His severe judgment, just as He suffered death for us, that we might be delivered from it.

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For God directs, and presides over ordinary judgment.

2. That there might be clear testimony of Christ's innocence from the very judge by whom He was condemned. Therefore, it was not proper that He should have been secretly carried away by the Jews, or put to death by a mob assault, for example. When there was lawful process and trial, and an investigation of all the accusations brought against Him, the Father willed,
  - 2.1. That He should be examined and His innocence be made known.
  - 2.2. That, in spite of an earlier vindication, He was nevertheless condemned, not for His own, but for our crimes. It is for our benefit that there is no ambiguity about the unjust sentence to death, which is in the place of our most righteous condemnation. What could be more unjust than to be found innocent, and yet sentenced to death? What could be more unambiguous that Christ has been put to death for others, than to be found innocent on all accusations brought forth, and yet sentenced to death?
  - 2.3. That He should be put to death, as well that the prophecies might be fulfilled, to make it clear that both the Jews and the Gentiles were the executioners of this wicked deed.

This circumstance in the passion of Christ is to be clearly understood that we may know that this Jesus who was condemned by Pilate, is the Messiah, and that we, through Him, are delivered from the severe judgment of God.

Hence, we are now led to ask, *What is it to believe in Jesus Christ, who suffered under Pontius Pilate?* This, that it does not merely include a historical faith, but it involves such a belief in Christ as to lead us to open our hearts to His passion.

It is to believe,

1. That Christ, from the very moment of His birth, endured, and sustained miseries of every kind, and that He, especially at the closing period of His life, suffered under Pilate the most severe torments of both body and soul. He felt the dreadful wrath of God, in making a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and in appeasing the divine anger, which had been excited by sin.
2. That He endured all this on my behalf, and has thus satisfied also for my sins by His passion, and merited for me remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.