

Last week we studied Jesus' crucifixion and the first part of His death and burial as the third and fourth degrees of the five degrees of His humiliation.

Jesus' crucifixion was a type of death that was required, so that He would suffer the burden of God's wrath for our sakes. God authored that it should happen this way and long before His crucifixion, He inspired the prophets to say so.

Jesus' fourth degree of humiliation was his death and we saw that it was humiliating for the Almighty God to die as a common creature and be laid in a grave.

We divided the study of Jesus' death into three parts, namely,

- 4.1. Did Jesus really die? which we studied last week.
- 4.2. Was it necessary that Christ should die for us?
- 4.3. For whom did Christ really die?

When we inquired whether Jesus really did die, we saw that his body and soul really separated, his soul going to that place where the souls of all the believers go, and his body going to that place where the bodies of all men go – the grave.

We also discovered that Jesus' Divinity never left his body or his soul because, although the God-man died, the Spirit of God raised His body from the grave. That same Spirit will raise our bodies from the grave on the Final Day.

Therefore, we see these parallels in Jesus' death and our death: Jesus' death and the understanding that His Divinity never left his body to raise Him up again shows us that we, in this life, should be dead to sin yet with a spirit that is alive because of righteousness. The God-man's Spirit (Divinity) raised Him up on the third day and that same Spirit, who dwells in us, will also give life to our mortal bodies at the end of time.

Rom 8:10, 11 and if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Jesus clarified the words of Rom 8:11 "the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus" when He explained His death and resurrection,

John 10:17, 18 "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸"No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

That clarifies the separation of our bodies and souls when we die. That clarifies the relationship we ought to pursue with Christ when we apply his sacrifice to ourselves with the instrument of faith.

Our bodies ought to be dead to sin but alive in the spirit through the righteousness earned by Christ's sacrifice.

4.2 Was it necessary that Christ should die for us?

Yes, it was, in order that He might make satisfaction for us, not only to suffer, but also to die, for the following reasons:

- a) *Because of the justice of God.* Sin is an evil of such magnitude, that, according to the order of justice, it merits, and demands, the destruction of the sinner. This severe punishment is necessary for an offense against the highest good, and can only be compensated by the destruction of the sinner. The destruction of the sinner results in his death, according to what is written, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23)

We could not have made the satisfaction for our own sins, without being destroyed in the process, and would after that not have been able to make satisfaction for others. Alternatively, if we were to make satisfaction for others, we would have been destroyed in that process and would not have been able to make satisfaction for ourselves.

In this hopeless state, Christ assumed our place, and took upon himself the nature of those who had sinned and deserved death not only eternally, but also temporary. We faced that destruction which consists of the dissolution of the soul and the body, which also destroys the body in death, as a

house is destroyed when the parts that make up the house are separated.

To have complete satisfaction, it was necessary that the Son of God's soul should be separated from His body, and die, in order that a sufficient ransom might be made, which could not have been effected by a mere creature. The bodies and souls of men should again be united that they may suffer eternal death or life, which will also, at length, come to pass.

b) *Because of the truth of God.* For God had declared that He would punish sin with destruction and the death of the transgressor. "...for when you eat of it you will surely die." (Gen 2:17) It was necessary that this threat from God should be fulfilled after sin was once committed.

Why is the persistence of God, that the sin in the Garden should be punished by death, both a source of fear and comfort to the believer?

In the first instance, it is a source of fear, because of God's promise in Gen 2:17. A sense of God's wrath struck fear in the hearts of Adam and Eve, because they were afraid when God inquired after their whereabouts. (Gen 3:10) Even today, we should fear the wrath of God because of our sins and we should only approach God with due reverence in the name of Christ.

In the second instance, it is a source of comfort in that we now know that God will not be swayed to break or compromise His promises. His first promise was made to Adam and Eve as they were driven from the Garden, namely, "He will crush [the serpent's] head." (Gen 3:15)

As sure as God will claim efficient satisfaction for the sins of man, equally sure are we that He will not let anyone "snatch us out of His hand." (John 10:29; 6:37; 17:2, 6, 9, 11)

Although Adam did not immediately die, he immediately became mortal, and by degrees died, while he already experienced the beginning of eternal death: "I heard ... thy voice and was afraid, because I was naked." (Gen 3:10)

There was already a struggling with death, and a loss of all the good gifts, which God conferred upon man.

Yet, the leniency, and compassion of the gospel was already present in its full glory and sufficiency, for God had not expressly declared that he should certainly die wholly and immediately. If there was not a full and sufficient gospel in the announcement of the wrath and punishment of God, all of mankind would have perished immediately and forever.

The Son of God offered, and brought in mitigation, and raised man to a new life, that, notwithstanding that he remained subject to temporal death, it was no longer injurious or fatal to him.

- c) *Because of His promises.* We have spoken about the comfort in God's promises in the previous paragraph. There are also the promises He made throughout the life of His church, to the fathers, through the prophets, as revealed in Isaiah 53. In verse 7, we read, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."

There are also the types and sacrifices, by which God signified that Christ should die such a death as would be a sufficient ransom for the sins of the world. This, now, was the work of no creature, but of the Son of God alone. Hence, it became him to suffer such a painful death on our behalf.

- d) *Christ foretold that His death was necessary.* "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." (John 16:7)

"Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." (John 13:8)

"But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (John 12:32)

We may draw the following conclusions from the necessity that satisfaction should be made to the justice and truth of

God, which could only be made by death and that by the death of the Son of God:

1. That we should avoid sin because it could not be expiated except by the intervention of the death of the Son of God.

Heb 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin.

2. That we ought to be grateful to the Son of God for this great benefit which He has, out of His great goodness, conferred upon us.

Col 2:7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

Heb 12:28, 29 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; ²⁹for our God is a consuming fire.

3. That all our sins, however great, however many, and grievous they may be, are expiated by the death of Christ alone.

Rom 4:22 - 25 Therefore also IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. ²³Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, ²⁴but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

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

Adult study of Jesus Christ

Gal 1:3 - 5 Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen.