

Why Did Jesus Die On The Cross?

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1 Cor. 15:1-3

Movies like Mel Gibson's "The Passion Of The Christ" generate much controversy...

- Regarding possible anti-Semitism.
- Regarding graphic depiction of scourging and crucifixion.

Sometimes the controversy centers around the reason Jesus died.

Was His death accidental, an unintended consequence of His teachings?

Was it God's will, recognized and accepted by Jesus in advance?

The gospel message is quite clear as to why Jesus died for us, yet there is a reason that is often overlooked. So let's review the Biblical answer to the question...

Why did Jesus die on the cross?

He died to atone for our sins.

This is the fundamental theme of the Gospel.

1 Cor. 15:1-3, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;"*

His suffering for our sins was foretold.

- Isa. 53:4-6, *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."*
- Isa. 53:10-12, *"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for*

sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

He was the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.

John 1:29, “*The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”*

In love, God offered Him as the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10, “*In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*

Through such suffering, to reconcile us back to God.

1 Pet. 3:18, “*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”*

Providing redemption from sin through His precious blood.

1 Pet. 1:18-19, “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

His death was no accident, but part of God’s predetermined plan.

Acts 2:22-23, “*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”*

He died that we might die to sin.

This reason for His death is often overlooked.

Yet, it is clearly stated by Peter.

1 Pet. 2:24, “*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*”

- He died for our sins that we might die to sin.
- He died for our sins that we might live for righteousness.

He died that we might die! And so we read such statements as:

- “*...if we be dead with him...*” (2 Tim. 2:11).
- “*...if ye be dead with Christ...*” (Col. 2:20).
- “*For ye are dead...*” (Col. 3:3)
- “*I am crucified with Christ...*” (Gal. 2:20).

Jesus died, not only to atone for sin, but to provide a means whereby we can die with Him to sin, and thereby live for righteousness.

Unless we also ‘die to sin’, has Jesus’ death on the cross fully accomplished its purpose? He died for our sins, but have we died to sin? In other words...

Has Jesus died for you in vain?

Have you died to sin?

When does God view you as...

- Dying with Christ?
- Being crucified with Christ?
- Being united with Christ in His death?
- Dead to sin?

Paul makes it very clear — when we are baptized!

Writing to Christians who had died to sin.

Rom. 6:1-2, “*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*”

Paul reminded them concerning their baptism into Christ...

They were baptized into His death.

Rom. 6:3, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*”

They were buried with Him through baptism into death.

Rom. 6:4, *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

Their old man was crucified with Him.

Rom. 6:6, *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”*

Their death freed them from sin, enabling them to live with Christ.

Rom. 6:7-8, *“For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.”*

They should therefore consider themselves dead to sin.

Rom. 6:11, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

If we have not yet been baptized into Christ, then we have not yet died to sin!

Are you living for righteousness?

That is why you died to sin.

1 Pet. 2:24, *“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”*

That you might be alive to God.

Rom. 6:11, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

That you might not let sin reign anymore.

Rom. 6:12, *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”*

That you might present your members as instruments of righteousness.

Rom. 6:13, *“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”*

That you might become slaves of righteousness.

Rom. 6:16-18, *“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart*

that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

Having died to sin, we are to mortify (kill) the flesh.

Aided by the Spirit of God.

- Rom. 8:13, *“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*
- Eph. 3:16, *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;”*

Seeking to bring the flesh under subjection.

1 Cor. 9:27, *“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”*

Abstaining from fleshly lusts.

1 Pet. 2:11, *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;”*

Putting to death (putting off) the sinful deeds of the flesh.

Col. 3:5-9, *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;”*

Having died to sin, we are to live for righteousness.

Putting on the new man, renewed in the image of Christ.

- Col. 3:10-14, *“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”*

- Eph. 4:22-32, *“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”*

Growing in the true knowledge of Christ.

2 Pet. 1:5-9, *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”*

How serious are we in this effort? As evidenced by:

Our willingness to learn and grow in the knowledge of Christ?

2 Pet. 3:18, *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”*

Our efforts to put off sin and put on Christ in our lives?

Rom. 13:13-14, *“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”*

If we are not diligent in putting off sin and putting on Christ, then His death for us was in vain!

Conclusion

When we consider the death of Jesus on the cross...

We should not just think of His death as atonement for our sins.

But also providing the means whereby we might die to sin and live for righteousness.

The grace of God in Jesus is not complete until we are living as we should...

- Tit. 2:11-12, *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”*
- Tit. 2:13-14, *“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”*

Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh (Gal. 5:24; Rom. 6:6). Are you Christ's?

