

## The Saving Work of Christ – Part Two

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We looked last time at the words of Jesus on the cross when he cried, “IT IS FINISHED,” and noted that Jesus did not say that he was finished for he was going to physically bodily resurrect from the grave and conquer death once for all for man. Rather, in finishing the work that God the Father gave Him to do on our behalf, Jesus conquered all of our enemies: death, Satan, eternal condemnation, sin, and the curse of the law that cannot save (Rom. 8:3-4). He did it all by becoming sin for us in our place on that cross, so that we can become the righteousness of God through him.

2 Co 5:21, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” NKJV

Phil. 3:9, “And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;” NKJV

Jesus conquered the three deaths that hang over the heads of us all, every one. What are these three deaths you ask? There is spiritual death, physical death, and eternal death. Sin separates all of us from God so that everyone is spiritually dead to God a part from salvation. The Scriptures declares that every unsaved person is dead in his trespasses and sin before God (Eph. 2:1-3). The first to experience spiritual death were Adam and Eve when they sinned against God. They discovered that sin separated them from God and even as God had warned them if they ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree (Gen. 2 17). Thank God that Jesus in paying for our sin, experienced spiritual death in the three hours of darkness when God the Father turned his back upon Jesus and poured. In doing so, the Father poured out his wrath upon Jesus to pay the price for all our sins. This is why Jesus cried out those words of “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME” (Matt. 27:46)? The prophet Isaiah in the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter prophesized it would please the father to bruise Jesus, and He was bruised for our iniquities.

“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;” Isa 53:3-5 (NKJV)

In pouring out the wrath of God upon His only begotten son as He did, God was satisfying His own justice demanded by His own Holiness. Yes Jesus took upon Himself the punishment we deserve for our sins.

After all of the physical suffering that Jesus endured with His beating, his beard pulled out, a crown of thrones pressed deep into his brow, being spit on, struck with a rod, abused by soldiers in their taunting games of hitting a blindfolded Jesus and challenging Him to tell who it was that had struck Him, and ultimately being nailed to a cross, yet His greatest suffering still awaited Him. After all of this He was for three hours forsaken by God His Father at a time when He needed His love and compassion the most. All of this took place so that Jesus could promise you and me “I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU” (Heb. 13:5). Then Jesus tasted the conclusion of physical death when He gave up the

ghost or His spirit to God and left His body on the cross to be buried. He, like all who die, was absent from His body as a spirit and soul in the resting place of all the dead.

Jesus also defeated eternal death by physically resurrecting His body from the grave. The Bible declares that all those who are unsaved at death will experience eternal death, eternal separation from God, with no relief, no hope, no deliverance, no end to their suffering. The Bible calls the Everlasting Lake of Fire or Hell the second death for it is a place where all unbelievers, having been resurrected to their physical bodies, will experience intense pain, total darkness, emotional and physical torment, and an ongoing process of death as the worm or maggot never dies as it attacks human flesh (Mk. 9:44-48; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:11-15). Not a pretty picture! However, we will see next week that while that is the bad news for all ages, God gave his gift of eternal life to you and me by sending His only begotten Son into the world to conquer all the aspects of death that every man must face, once for all and forever. Christ's death and physical resurrection is the good news of the gospel to all who will personally believe God and receive Jesus Christ into their hearts and lives as Saviour. Dear friend, have you made Christ your Saviour and your eternal friend? I pray you have.