

Title: **WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO DIE?**

Text: Hebrews 2:9-10

Subject: *The Satisfaction of Christ*

Date: Tuesday Evening — October 7, 2008

Tape # Z-55b

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Introduction:

Without question, the most wondrous of all God's works is the work of redemption. When we attempt to contemplate upon what that work involved, we are lost in astonishment. When we think of the unutterable depths of shame and sorrow into which the Lord of glory entered to save us, we are awed and staggered.

That the eternal Son of God should lay aside the robes of his ineffable glory and take upon himself the form of a servant, — that the Ruler of heaven and earth should be "*made under the law*" (Galatians 4:4), — that the Creator of the universe should tabernacle in this world and "*have not where to lay his head*" (Matthew 8:20), is something no finite mind can comprehend; but where carnal reason fails us, God-given faith believes and worships.

UNFATHOMABLE AGONY

As we trace the path of our Savior from the throne of life to the tomb of death and behold him who was rich, for our sakes, becoming poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich, we cannot fathom the depths of the wonders before us. We know that every step in the path of our Redeemer's humiliation was ordained in the eternal purpose of God.

Yet, it was a path of immeasurable sorrow, unutterable anguish, ceaseless ignominy, bitter hatred, and relentless persecution that, at last, brought the Beloved Son of God, the Darling of heaven, to suffer the painful, shameful death of the cross! Who could ever have imagined such things as these?

Standing at the foot of the cross, as I behold the Holy One nailed to the cursed tree, covered with his own blood and the spit of an enraged mob, and see him made sin for us, forsaken and cursed of God his Father, yet, realizing that this is the work of God's own hand, I am lost in astonishment! I am filled with reverence and awe (2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13).

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Yonder (Amazing sight!) I see
The incarnate Son of God
Expiring on the cursed tree,
And weltering in His blood.

Behold, a purple torrent run
Down from his hands and head,
The crimson tide puts out the sun;
His groans awake the dead.

The trembling earth, the darkened sky,
Proclaim the truth aloud;
And with the amazed centurion, cry,
“This is the Son of God!”

WHY?

Awed as I am with reverence for my crucified Lord, still there is a question that I cannot suppress, a question that reason and sound judgment cannot fail to ask. The question is, Why? Why did the Son of God suffer such a death? Why did God so torment his beloved Son and kill him in such a horribly ignominious way?

- **Was it to save my soul?** I know that he died so that I might live. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring me to God. But was there no other way for the omnipotent God to save me?
- **Was all this done to demonstrate the greatness of God’s love to me?** Indeed it was (Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9-10).

(Romans 5:8) “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

(1 John 3:16) “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.”

(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. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God,

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but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”

Jesus, who left His throne on high,
Left the bright realms of bliss,
And came to earth to bleed and die,
Was ever love like this?

But, surely, God could have revealed his love to me in some other way. Why did he slay his Son? **What necessity was there for the Son of God to suffer and die upon the cursed tree?**

Only one answer can be found to that question. — **The justice of God had to be satisfied.** There was no necessity for God to save anyone. Salvation is altogether the free gift of his grace. But, having determined to save his elect from the ruins of fallen humanity, the only way God could save his people and forgive their sins was by the death of Christ. — “*Without shedding of blood is no remission*” (Hebrews 9:22).

SATISFACTION NECESSARY

Proposition: The justice of God had to be satisfied in order for God to save his people; and the only thing that could ever satisfy the justice of God is the blood of Christ.

WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO DIE? — That is my subject. I want to show you the answer from the Word. I want to show you clearly both the necessity and the blessedness of Christ’s satisfaction of Divine justice by his death on the cross. This is of utmost importance. It is the glory of the gospel and the glory of the Christian religion. **It is the satisfaction of Divine justice by the death of Christ the distinguishes Christianity from all other religions.** Take the cross out of Christianity, take away the satisfaction of Christ by his death upon the cross, and Christianity is of no more value and benefit to the souls of men than Judaism, Islam, or Hinduism. **It is of paramount importance because without satisfaction for sin, there could be no salvation from it.**

Among the countless damnable heresies taught in our day, none is more common and none more destructive to the souls of men than the denial of Christ’s satisfaction (Hebrews 10:26-29).

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(Hebrews 10:26-29) “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. (28) He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: (29) Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

NOTE: “*Unholy*” in Hebrews 10:29 means “common”. Those who make the blood of Christ a common thing, without efficacy, without merit, are without hope! There is no other sacrifice for sin.

Perhaps Hebrews 2:9-10 more clearly states the necessity of Christ’s satisfaction for sin than any other single text — (Read those two verses with me.)

1. “**We see Jesus.**” — We see him with the eye of faith. We see him because he has been revealed to us by the Spirit of God. We see that he is Jesus, our Savior, the Christ of God. We see in him...

- The fulness of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9).
- The fulness of grace (John 1:14; Colossians 1:19).
- The fulness of redemption (Ephesians 1:7).

We see him as Christ, our Redeemer, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Lord our Righteousness. We see him as our all (1 Corinthians 1:31). Do you see him? If you do, flesh and blood has not revealed him to you, but my Father in heaven.

2. “**Who was made a little lower than the angels.**” — He who made the angels was made a little lower than the angels. He was made of the seed of woman, made to be a man, “*made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law*” (Galatians 4:4-5). This is the reason for the incarnation. This is why Christ was made a little lower than the angels...

3. “**For the suffering of death.**” — The Son of God came into this world for the purpose of suffering death! He did not come to be an earthly

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monarch in Jerusalem. He did not come to establish a new religion. He did not come to be a reformer, an example of morality and virtue. Christ, the Son of God, became a man so that he might die in the place of men and redeem them. He came here to die because there was no other way for his people to be saved and live. — We see this too, since he suffered and died in the place of his people, the Lord Jesus Christ is now...

4. **“Crowned with glory and honor!”** (Philippians 2:8-11). Christ is exalted! That Man who died for us at Calvary is now crowned with glory, given all honor, as the Lord of all. The God-man, the Man-God, who died for us now rules the world to save those people for whom he died (John 17:2). Now, look at the next line. Christ *“was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death...”*

5. **“That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”** — This statement, like all others, must be interpreted within its context and in the light of the entire Word of God. Is this a declaration that Christ died even for those for whom he refused to pray (John 17:9), for those who are not his sheep (John 10:11), for those who are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction (Romans 9:22), for those from whom he has hidden both his works and his grace (Matthew 11:20-25)? Of course not! Does this statement mean that Christ died for those who suffer the wrath of God in hell? No! That would be a declaration that there are some for whom Christ shed his blood in vain and would be a denial of the efficacy of his atonement. What, then, is the meaning of this statement? — *“That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”*

Christ died not merely as good example, or merely for the good of men, but as the Surety, in the room and place of men. However, the word “men” was added by our translators with no apparent reason, except to make the sentence read more easily. In the Greek text there simply is no word in this verse that should be translated “man.” The sentence literally should be translated, **“That he by the grace of God should taste death for every...,”** or “for all,” or “for every one.”

- For every one of the sons he would bring to glory (v. 10).
- For every one of the brethren he is not ashamed to call his own (v. 11).
- For every member of the church, in the midst of which he will sing praise (v. 12).

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- For every one of the children God the Father had given him to save, for whose sake he assumed flesh and blood (v. 13).
- For every one of Abraham’s seed, God’s elect, whom he took hold of to save (v. 16).

Why was the Son of God made so humble as to suffer and die for his people? What necessity was there for his humiliation and death in the room and stead of his people? Look at verse 10...

6. **“For it became him.”** — It was necessary, if God would save sinners and bring them to glory, that the Son of God must suffer in their room and stead all that the law and justice of God could demand. The Scriptures plainly declare that there was a necessity for the death of Christ (Matthew 16:21; 26:29; John 3:14). — *“The Son of Man must be lifted up!”* Why? What necessitated his death upon the cursed tree? —

- The decree of God (Acts 2:23).
- Christ’s covenant engagements (John 10:17-18).
- The prophecies of the Old Testament (Matthew 26:54).
- The election of grace.

I repeat — God did not have to save anyone; but since he has chosen to save some, the only way he could save them was by the satisfaction of his justice through the sacrifice of his own dear Son.

7. **When Paul says, “it became him,” that it was necessary for God to slay his Son to save his people, lest we begin to think that this implies some weakness in God, he immediately describes our God with these words — “for whom are all things and by whom are all things.”** Here the Lord God is described as that One who is both the ultimate end and first cause of all things (Romans 11:36).

- **All things are for him** — He made all things for himself, for the glorifying of all the perfections of his nature (Proverbs 16:4; 2 Corinthians 5:18).
- **All things are by him** — All things in nature, all things in providence, all things in redemption, and all things in grace are the work of God.

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8. **“In bringing many sons unto glory.”** — This is an intimation of God’s gracious designs toward his elect. Those whom Christ came to save are many, and they were already the sons of God by eternal adoption and divine predestination long before Christ came to redeem them (Galatians 4:4-6). In the covenant of grace, our God declared, *“I will be their Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters.”*

- We were **chosen** to be the children of God from eternity.
- We were **given power and authority** to become the sons of God and given the nature of God’s sons in regeneration (John 1:12-13).

(John 1:12-13) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

- We were openly and **manifestly declared** to be the sons of God when we believed by faith in Christ.

Faith in Christ does not make us God’s sons. Adoption did that. Faith receives the adoption of sons and looks upon God through Christ as our Father (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15-16).

(Galatians 4:4-6) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

(Romans 8:15-16) “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”

- **The sons of God are many**, a great multitude which no man can number, ten thousand times ten thousand! — The many chosen of God! — The many for whom Christ gave his life a ransom! — The many for whom his blood was shed for the remission of sins! — The many made righteous by his obedience! — The many for whom many mansions are prepared in the Father’s house!

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“God has chosen them *‘through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth’*, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ! Christ died for them, and by means of his death, they receive the promise of eternal inheritance, and the inheritance itself. God calls them by his grace to eternal glory, and makes them *‘meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light’*”

(John Gill).

9. **The Person by whom God’s elect are brought to glory is Christ, “the Captain of their salvation.”** He is called “*the Captain*” of our salvation because he is the One in charge of it, the One responsible for it, the One whose arm alone has accomplished it.

10. **As the Captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ was “made perfect through sufferings.”** That is to say, the way, the means by which our great Savior saved us and perfected, or completed his work as the Captain of our salvation, was by his perfect sufferings and death as our Substitute. Apart from his sufferings for the satisfaction of justice there could have been no salvation. — “*Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*” (Hebrews 5:8-9).

It was necessary for Christ to suffer and die on the cross under the wrath of God to save his people. He did not have to save us. But if he saved us he could not save in any other way. Justice demanded it (Proverbs 16:6; 17:15; Romans 4:5; 1 Peter 3:18).

(Proverbs 16:6) “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.”

(Proverbs 17:15) “He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.”

(Romans 4:5) “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

(1 Peter 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:”

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This is what the Spirit of God teaches us in Hebrews 2:9-10: — Since it was the design, purpose, and pleasure of the Almighty to bring some of the sons of men into eternal glory and happiness as the sons of God by Christ, it was necessary for Christ, the Son of God, to suffer all that the law and justice of God required for the punishment of sin, dying under the wrath of God as our Substitute.

I do not say that the satisfaction of Christ procures the love of God for us. It does not. The death of Christ is the fruit of God's love, not the cause of it.

“Twas not to make Jehovah's love
Toward his people flame,
That Jesus from the throne above,
A suffering man became.

“Twas not the death which he endured,
Nor all the pangs he bore,
That God's eternal love procured,
For God was love before.”

But I am saying that it is the death of Christ and the satisfaction of justice by his death that opens the way into the embraces of God's arms. We could never have been reconciled to God without the shedding of Christ's blood.

“Let me observe to you something relating to experience, which you would do well to lay up in your minds. It may be of use to you hereafter, when you may be tempted to doubt of your interest in Christ's satisfaction. **Have you any reason to believe that you have, at any time, had communion with God, in private or in public, in your closet, or in the family, or in the house of God, under any ordinance, either the ministry of the Word, or prayer, or the Supper of the Lord?** Then you may be assured Christ has made satisfaction for you; or you would never have enjoyed such communion”

(John Gill).

SIX STATEMENTS

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Let me draw this message to a close by making these six statements. Here are six statements that simply cannot be refuted and must not be ignored.

1. **All men and women by nature, since the fall of our father Adam, are sinners, alienated from God.**

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). As sinners, we are alienated from the life of God and have become enemies unto God. The wages of our sin and enmity to God is death.

Every transgression must receive its just recompense of reward (Hebrews 2:2). All sin must be punished, either in the sinner or in the sinner’s Substitute. The law, being broken, accuses of sin, condemns the sinner, and demands death. Unless satisfaction is made, the sentence of the law must be executed. The sanction of the law is death. It can never be abrogated, changed, altered, or abated. God will never relax his justice! — *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die!”* (Ezekiel 18:20). **But...**

2. **It is the will and good pleasure of God to save sinners.** — *“He delighteth in mercy!”*

God has decreed the salvation of some. Christ came to save some. There are some people in this world who must be saved because it is the will of God to save them; and God’s will cannot be frustrated (John 10:16).

- Every chosen sinner must be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
- Every predestined son must be saved (Romans 8:29-30).
- Every heir of the covenant must be saved (Ephesians 1:3-7).
- Every child of Adam whose name was written in the Lamb’s Book of Life from the foundation of the world must be saved (Revelation 13:8).

There is no possibility that even one of God’s elect will perish! **However...**

3. **It is impossible for a holy and just God to save any sinner apart from the satisfaction of justice.** — *“Without shedding of blood is no remission”* (Hebrews 9:22).

God declares, *“I will by no means clear the guilty”* (Exodus 34:7). I know that God is omnipotent, almighty, and sovereign. He does what he will! Nobody on this earth declares that glorious truth more fully, more

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frequently, or more forcibly than I do. But God cannot do that which is contrary to his nature and character. **We do not rob God of his sovereignty** when we repeat the declaration of Scripture and say, “*God cannot lie.*” He who is the Truth cannot lie! Neither do we rob God of his sovereignty when we assert this truth of Holy Scripture — **God cannot forgive sin without the satisfaction of justice.** The just, holy, and true God must punish sin.

Illustration: *Darius’ Dilemma* (Daniel 6:7-14).

4. **The only way the justice of God could ever be satisfied is by the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ** (Job 34:23; Romans 3:24-26).

God could not die, and man could not satisfy; but the God-man both died and satisfied. Two facts demonstrate clearly that there was no other way for justice to be satisfied. Only the death of Christ upon the cross could do it...

- **The love of God the Father for his Son proves it.** Would God almighty slay his darling Son, if there were any other way to save his people consistent with his justice?
- **The prayer of Christ in Gethsemane proves it** (Matthew 26:39). If the salvation of his people could be accomplished by any means other than his death upon the cross, would not God the Father have granted his tormented Son the desire of his soul?

What can justice satisfy?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!
What can God’s law magnify?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!
Oh, precious is the flow,
That makes me white as snow!
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

5. **It is impossible for God, in his holiness, to punish any sinner for whose sins justice has been satisfied by the blood of Christ** (Isaiah 53:11 Romans 7:14) — The law has no claim upon an executed felon!

Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again at mine!

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6. **Every sinner who trusts the Lord Jesus Christ has been chosen, redeemed, and called, and must be forever saved!**

APPLICATION

- What a horrible evil sin is. — Nothing but the blood of Christ could make satisfaction for it.
- God almighty will punish sin. — The death of Christ as the sinner's Substitute demonstrates the strictness of God's holy law.
- Yet, there is a way open for sinners to come to God. Christ is the Way. He has made satisfaction for sin. If you trust him, if you come to God by faith in him, he made satisfaction for your sin!
- Admire and adore the perfections of our God (Psalms 85:10-11). — Admire his love! — Adore his mercy! — Rejoice in his grace! — Stand in awe of his wisdom, holiness, justice, and truth!

(Psalms 85:10-11) “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*. (11) Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.”

All the attributes of the infinite God shine forth gloriously in the satisfaction of Christ. — “*For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*” — Wisdom found a ransom. — Holiness approved of it. — Justice is satisfied with it. — Truth proclaims it.

Amen.