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Lesson 6
Christ's Salvation Work Makes Him Superior to Angels
Hebrews 2:10-13

The book of Hebrews this far has given us a glorious picture of the person of Jesus Christ. He is Lord, God, Ruler and King, and He will one day reign over men and angels in His kingdom. This, however, raises a problem. If Christ is such a great person, why did He have to die?

The Jewish mind had great difficulty with a suffering Messiah. They could accept God reigning and perhaps they would accept a God-Man reigning, but to think of a person who was God dying was more than they could comprehend. A crucified Christ was a stumbling block to the Jew. ***“But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness”*** (1 Cor. 1:23).

In Hebrews 2:10-18, the author seeks to show why Christ had to suffer and die. The essence of his argument is that our Lord did not stoop to save angels, but He became a man in order to minister to men. This is why Christ and redeemed men are superior to angels. ***“For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the seed of Abraham”*** (Heb. 2:16).

THE REASON FOR CHRIST'S DEATH (Heb. 2:10)

Background

The basic reason for Christ becoming a man was so that He, as a man, could suffer death. ***“But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one”*** (Heb. 2:9). Christ came into the world that He might go to the cross. He came that He might taste death for every true child of God. He made a perfect substitution for God's people. Christ atoned for the sins of any and every person who lays hold of Him by faith. What was it that caused the Son to submit to such humiliation in becoming a man and dying for sinners? It was God who was moved within Himself to show grace to His creatures. It was solely by the grace of God that the Lord Jesus was sent to the cross to die for sinners. ***“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life”*** (John 3:16).

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things...” -- It was fitting with the divine nature of God that He should become man and die for sinful men. God is the cause of all things and the sustainer of all things. He is the Sovereign One over all events and creatures. Absolutely nothing comes to pass without the will of God. God, in every detail, governs the world that He made. It is obvious that there is much about God's sovereign will that we cannot understand, for how can a finite mind comprehend the workings of an infinite God? ***“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen”*** (Rom. 11:36). But this we do know. It was God's eternal purpose, and

consistent with God's perfect nature to send His Son to die for sinners.

This is the only way men could be saved. God has ordained that sinful men can only be saved through the death of Jesus Christ. His very nature demanded that Christ taste death for sinners. A holy God hates sin and sinners. A just God must judge sin and sinners. A righteous God demands that His violated law be satisfied. A loving God moves to save men who deserve nothing from God. Only the death of Christ satisfied God and He accepts no one except those for whom Christ died. Those for whom Christ died are those who believe that Christ atoned for their sins and have turned from their old life to follow Christ.

"...in bringing many sons unto glory..." -- The divine purpose for God sending His Son, Jesus Christ, the God-Man, was that many sons would be brought into heaven. God's plan was to bring many sons into His presence. God had one Son but desired to have many sons, (and daughters) and this could only be accomplished through the death of Christ because all men and women are sinners by Adam. God is forming a new spiritual race of people who have been elected to salvation and purchased by Christ at the Cross. Who are these people? They are any and all who lay hold of Christ through faith and repentance.

The sons do not merely come into salvation but they are brought. It is God alone who brings sinners to salvation, for salvation: from beginning to end is all of God. The Father planned our salvation by election and appointment, and God has known from all eternity who would and would not trust Christ and be saved.

"Just as He (God) chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him" (Eph. 1:4).

"For thus the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU SHOULD BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.' And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region" (Acts 13:47-49).

The Son purchased our salvation through His substitutionary death for sin. ***"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God..."*** (1 Pet. 3:18). Christ tasted death to bring many sons into glory. Christ did not taste death for all men indiscriminately but for all men whom God has elected to salvation or all those who believe in Christ. It is through Christ's death that we can believe in Christ, for Christ purchased even our faith in His death. ***"Who (Christians) through (by) him (Christ) are believers in God"*** (1 Pet. 1:21). Election demands real saving faith, and saving faith demands election and the substitutionary atonement for sin by Christ.

"But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13).

If you will believe in Christ as your Lord and Savior, you will know the Father elected you and

the Son died for you.

How many will be saved? How many sons and daughters does God plan for His family? We do not know, but we do know it is many. God has saved millions and will continue to save millions. When compared to the vast multitudes of people from the beginning of time, the true people of God are few in number. **“...for many are called, but few are chosen”** (Matt. 22:14). Yet the total aggregate of those who are saved make up a multitude of people. Only God knows the exact number, but we are told it is “many sons.” The “many sons” are the “whosoever wills” and we must confess a great mystery that only God can solve.

“...to perfect the author (captain) of their salvation through sufferings.” -- Jesus Christ is “the captain” of God’s redeemed people. This word literally means “the beginning-leader” or “one who goes first.” Jesus Christ, the Son precedes many sons on the road to heaven. He is leading them on to glory as a captain leads his troops into battle. Christ is not only the way, but He is the road that leads to glory.

“Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh...” (Heb. 10:19-20).

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me’” (John 14:6).

Our only hope of salvation and our only source of strength to live is Jesus Christ. **“Fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith...”** (Heb. 12:2a). We must look unto Christ constantly by faith because He is the “beginner and finisher of our faith.” He purchased everything for us in His atoning death for sin.

Suffering was absolutely necessary for Christ if He was to redeem a new race of people. Sinners have to be delivered from sin, and wherever there is sin in the righteous government of God, there is suffering. Sinners could not suffer for their own sins, so Christ suffered for them. The only way Christ could bring into existence a spiritual race was through suffering and death.

Somehow Christ was made perfect through suffering. This has confused some people because they want to know how a perfect person could be made perfect. The key is that “perfect” means “complete” or “mature”, with the idea of moving towards a goal or an end.

If “perfect” means “complete” then it refers to Christ’s official installation into the office of High Priest over His people. It involves a position. The endurance of suffering perfectly fitted Christ, or completed Him, for this office.

If this word “perfect” also means “maturity”, then it means that Christ’s suffering in life and death somehow matured Him and made Him fit to be the Savior of men. This idea involves Christ’s experience as a man. This is not moral and ethical perfection, for Christ was a perfect person.

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

“...WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT, FOUND IN HIS MOUTH...” (1 Peter 2:22).

Christ was always perfect but not always mature in His humanity. An apple could be perfect in all its stages of growth and still not be mature. Time and experience makes for maturity. Christ, who was perfect, had to mature in his humanity that He might experience all that any man might experience. He had to experience the pressures and problems of men if He was to be a faithful High Priest. Christ had to learn obedience. ***“Although He was a son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered”*** (Heb. 5:8). Christ experienced suffering in mind, body and spirit. He was tempted constantly that He might mature in His humanity and qualify to go to the cross as the perfect man.

Had God sent Christ into the world as a mature man one week before His crucifixion, He would have been the perfect sinless Savior who died for our penalty and guilt of sin. Yet, He would not have been able to understand our infirmities, weaknesses and shortcomings because His humanity would not have had time to experience the realities of being a man. Christ would have been able to fit us for heaven someday, but never able to make us ready for earth right now.

People often say to me, “How can God expect me to live a Christian life in my situation? After all, I’m only human. Christ has never been where I am. What does He know of what I’m up against?” He knows, because in his humanity He suffered more than any man,

THE RELATIONSHIP CHRIST HAS TO MEN (Heb. 2:11-13)

“For both He who sanctified (Christ) and those who are sanctified (Christians) are all from one Father...” Christ is the sanctifier. Sanctification in its basic meaning is “to set apart”, and in the book of Hebrews it is always by the Son on the ground of the cross (Heb. 9:12-14; 10:9-10,14; 13:14). Sanctification is more positional than experiential, although the experiential aspect cannot be eliminated. Jesus Christ, through His death for sin, has set true believers in Christ apart to Himself and opened the way to God through Him. Christians have been set apart to be a worshipping people of the One, true God.

“...are from one Father...” -- Christ and believers are all out of one source; that source is God, the Father. The Messiah in his human nature was begotten of God into the same race as we have been begotten. Christ is one with His people in their humiliation. It is not that we are lifted up to Christ’s level, but that He came down to our level.

“...for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren...” -- Because the sanctifier (Christ) and the sanctified (Christians) are partakers of the same human nature, Christ is not ashamed to call us His brethren. Christ stooped as low as He could to make us His brethren.

The God of heaven and earth took upon Himself a human nature and went to the cross to get for Himself many sons. He who is the Creator calls sinful but redeemed men His brethren. Christ

was not ashamed to go through humiliation, suffering and death to purchase the people of God.

Christ called us brethren, but we should never call Him our brother. Nowhere in the Bible is Christ declared to be our brother. Christ is our Lord, God, Master and King!

“Saying, ‘I WILL PROCLAIM THY NAME TO My brethren; IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING THY PRAISE.’” -- The author now quotes from Psalm 22:22 to show that the Old Testament taught that Christ would become a man and call the redeemed His brethren.

“And again, ‘I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM.’” -- This is a quote from Isaiah 8:17 to show that even Jesus, as a man, had to learn to do the will of the Father if he was to be truly identified with man.

“Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner’ (John 5:19).

“Jesus therefore said, ‘When you lift up the son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me’ (John 8:28).

If Christ had to learn obedience and how to trust the Father as a man, how much more do we have to learn this lesson as sinful men redeemed by grace?

“And again, BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.” -- This is a quote from Isaiah 8:18 to show that Christ does have spiritual children that He redeemed through His death.

Christ could not save the elect children that God had given Him in the eternal covenant of grace without first becoming a man and dying for their sins as the Kinsman-Redeemer. Why did Christ have to die? This was the only way God could save sinful men!

CONCLUSION

Are you saved? Are you among God’s elect? Did Christ die for your sins? Only God knows the answer for sure, but God makes the offer of salvation to all men, for all men are responsible before God to accept the gospel of Christ.

“Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.” (Isa. 45:22).

“Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters...” (Isa, 55:1).

“Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28).

“... God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent” (Acts 17:30).

Any person who will believe that Christ died for his sins and will confess Him as Lord shall be saved.

God is offering Christ to you this today. Will you accept Him? You are a morally responsible human being. You can accept Christ and be saved or you can continue to reject Him and stay lost. The moment you receive Christ you can have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. When you receive Christ, then you know that Christ died for your sins and you were and are numbered among God's elect. You will never be saved until you, by an act of your will, receive Christ as Savior and Lord.