

100 BIBLE LESSONS

These lessons were originally given at Manila, Philippines, in 1958 and 1959 by former missionary to China, Alban Douglas. Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 55 – THE DEATH OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

The two doctrines most opposed by fallen man are Incarnation and Expiation. "These two doctrines show the marvelous, inconceivable, infinite love of God to poor sinful humanity." (Dr. Adolph Saphir)

Substitution is the great doctrine of Peter, Paul, James and Philip in Acts. "There is not a ray of hope for man outside of substitution." (D.L. Moody)

Death was the supreme work of the Lord Jesus here on earth. We come to live and death ends our work. Jesus came to die. His purpose could be gained in no other way.

Sin involves the death penalty. Someone must bear it, either the sinner or a suitable substitute. There is no possibility of bribery here at heaven's court. The atonement is the heart of Christianity. Atonement settles the sin question.

It is said the C.H. Spurgeon the "Prince of Preachers" chose a text and made a bee-line for Calvary. Sin and the blood atonement is the central Biblical issue. The red line of blood passes right through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF HIS DEATH

1. Foretold by God.

Isa. 53:8, "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of My people."

Dan. 9:26, "After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself" ("Cut off" here is a prophecy of death.)

Zech. 13:7, "Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

2. His death was appointed by God.

Isa. 53:6, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Isa. 53:10, "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin."

Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

3. The meaning of His death.

(1) Atonement. Used 77 times, means a covering for sin. It is an Old Testament word that only occurs once in the New Testament and that is in Rom. 5:11.

(2) Propitiation. This carries the thought of a mercy seat.

1 John 2:2, "And He is the propitiation for our sins."

(3) Substitution. This is the idea of one taking the place of another. The innocent takes the punishment for the guilty.

John 10:11, "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."

(4) Redemption. The sinner in bondage is bought back by God with a certain purchase price.

1 Pet. 1:18-19, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold ... But with the precious Blood of Christ."

(5) Reconciliation. God and man were enemies but have now been made friends.

Rom. 5:10, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son..." Jesus death on Calvary reconciled God to man.

(6) Ransom. The price paid for the release of a prisoner (the one kidnapped by sin).

Matt. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." See John 19:18.

4. The mode of His death.

He died by crucifixion, Matt. 27:35, Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33.

It was prefigured to be on a pole – lifted up; Num. 21:8; John 3:14.

It was an ignominious death. Heb. 12:2, "...endured the cross, despising the shame."

It was an accursed death. Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

5. His death was voluntary. He volunteered to die for us. He was not forced to do it.

John 10:18, "No man taketh it (My life) from Me, but I lay it down of Myself."

6. The reason for His death.

Why did the Lord Jesus, the sinless One, have to die? We can understand how a guilty person would have to die as a result of sin. Jesus took our sin and died to satisfy the justice of a Holy God in heaven. Sin demanded a payment – the death penalty. Only Christ could pay it in full. All the attributes of God must be in harmony to make salvation possible. God's loving nature could not forgive sin until His legal nature was satisfied. In Calvary all the attributes of God found a perfect solution.

7. The result of His death. Salvation to all mankind that accept Him as a substitute.

1 Tim. 4:10, "...who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

II. OBJECTIONS TO THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST

1. Cannot man suffer for his own sins? Yes, but the full penalty is eternal death.

2. Can man atone for his own sin? No.

2 Cor. 5:21, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

3. The doctrine of the atonement was invented by Paul. No, it was preached by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself while He was still on the earth.

Heb. 2:3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord..."

John 12:24, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus was the corn about to die.

4. Will this doctrine not make men feel hopeless and sin even more? No. The cross teaches God's great hatred for sin. See Rom. 6:1-2.

5. Is this not unfair to make the innocent suffer for our sins against His will? It would be unfair if Jesus were forced to suffer for our sins against His will. However, Jesus volunteered to die for us. It was His own desire to choose to do so.

6. Could God not just forgive the sinner without the terrible death on Calvary? Sin has been committed against God. Why couldn't God just blot it out? He could not, for the law of God must be satisfied.

Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Ezek. 18:4, "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

Rom. 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death."

Repentance does not remove the need for punishment for sin. Sin has been committed and sin must be dealt with according to God's own precepts. The justice and honor of God are at stake and must be preserved. The holiness of God demands the death penalty for sin.

7. Is it not impossible to transfer guilt from a guilty one to an innocent one?

Human courts punish only the guilty one, but they could punish a substitute if such were desired, for the substitute voluntarily assumes the guilt of the sinner.

Isa. 53:4, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

Isa. 53:5, "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."

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."

8. If each sin requires eternal death, how could Christ suffer an innumerable number of deaths in the few short hours of Calvary?

It was not the amount of suffering that counted but the justice of God that had to be satisfied. The fact that a holy sinless One suffered, made the difference. The One who suffered was not a mere man. He was the God-man, 1 Tim. 2:5.

Isa. 52:14, "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men." This verse suggests a death so horrible that God pulled down the curtain of darkness at Calvary lest men see that marred face, Luke 23:44.

CONCLUSION

The death of Jesus Christ is sufficient for every sinner. He died for the sins of the whole world. He died for your sins and particularly for MY sins.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What must Jesus do in order to accomplish His mission on earth?
2. Give two Old Testament prophecies to prove your answer to question 1.
3. Give two Scriptures to show that God was willing to let Jesus die on earth.
4. Give 5 meanings of the death of Christ and an explanation of each.
5. Can man atone for his own sin? Why?
6. Why did Jesus die on Calvary?
7. What is the result of the death of Jesus Christ?
8. Couldn't God forgive sin without Jesus' dying? Why?
9. Is it possible to transfer guilt from a guilty person to an innocent one?
10. If the punishment for each sin is death, how could Jesus suffer innumerable deaths?