

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

I'm always humbled to be able to stand before you by God's grace and minister the word of God to you and this morning we have that opportunity again so will you take your Bibles, turn to the epistle to the Hebrews 9. We're going to be looking at verses 15 through 28. I've got a typo there. It's not 15 through 18, it's 15 through 28. So let's turn there and in a moment I'll read that text to you.

Before I do, I would like you to come with me to a typical university classroom, perhaps a comparative religions class or a philosophy class. Let me give you a little sample of what a typical Christian might expect in an interchange with a professor. Let's say the professor says, "Why do you people think Jesus had to die? How about you, Christian young person, why don't you tell me? You believe in Christ, don't you?" Yes. "Tell me, why did Jesus have to die?" Well, to pay the penalty for sinners. "So in other words, you mean God killed his own Son to save sinners?" Well, yes. "That is sick. You honestly believe that? You mean he made his Son to suffer and die a horrific death on a Roman cross in your place? And that kind of torture is what God thinks everyone deserves who doesn't believe that stuff, is that right? So your blood-thirsty, vengeful God, let me get this straight, he kills his own Son instead of you, is that right? And everyone who doesn't buy all of this is going to go to hell and be judged forever?" By this time, the class is snickering and laughing. "And let me ask you, you also believe that only those who trust in Jesus will go to heaven, is that right? There is no other way. Everybody else but you is deceived? Everybody else but Christians, deceived? Everybody else is toast?" And of course, the professor is going to say, "I don't know about you, class, but I don't want anything to do with a God like that." And they begin to clap. "My god is a god of love, not a god of wrath. In fact, I'm not even sure if God exists, but if he or she does, it certainly wouldn't be that kind of a God, and it's certainly not a God that would torture and kill his only Son and not a God that would send people to an eternal hell. My god loves everyone, especially those that love others, who show love and tolerance to everyone, who has given us many roads to approach him, many religions, many ways."

Well, if you're in that class, you suddenly feel like the biggest idiot on earth and typically most young Christian people, because they have a shallow understanding of the Gospel, they have a shallow understanding of the person and work of Christ, they begin to question their faith in the midst of that kind of persecution. Suddenly you're left speechless, you're left humiliated. By the way, young people, welcome to college. That's what you will find. That's what will happen on a regular basis.

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

And beloved, it's for this reason why it is so important for you to know and to understand and to love the truth about God, the truth about the Gospel, the truth about why Jesus had to die. Not so much to refute the babblings of a fool like that kind of professor, and I've had them before, but so that you can stand firm in the midst of those attacks and so that you will not forfeit the inexpressible joy of walking in intimate fellowship with the Lord your God and experience that joy even in the midst of that kind of laughter. For this reason, Paul said in Colossians 2:7, he says that we need to be "firmly rooted and built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." You see, we have to know these things, we have to know Christ, so that we can echo with the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:8 when he said, "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." And my friends, this is why the truths that God has revealed to us in the book of Hebrews pertaining to the supremacy of Christ and the superiority of the new covenant over the old are so exceedingly important.

And I especially hope that you young people will pay close attention. "Yeah, but pastor, come on. Nobody wants to hear about God's law, about wrath, about judgment, about bloody sacrifices, the day of atonement, propitiation, whatever that is. Nobody wants to hear about that stuff. They don't want to hear about a tabernacle. They don't want to hear about a Levitical priesthood." No, that's true. People prefer best-sellers like "The Purpose Driven Life," that clearly and cleverly distorts the Gospel. People want to hear about "The Shack," which is a blasphemous trivialization of the character of God where the author utterly eviscerates the Gospel by attempting to vindicate God the Father from pouring out his wrath upon his Son as the propitiation for our sin, and also pouring out his wrath upon the ungodly who refuse the provision of his grace. That's what people want to hear. And this kind of corruption of God and his Gospel is pandemic in our Christian culture today. Many people, church is all about being culturally cool, about being culturally relevant, not worshiping in spirit and in truth. People don't want to hear from God, they want to hear from Pastor Feelgood who won't bore them with an in-depth understanding of what God has accomplished on the cross and the reasons why Christ had to die, and so forth.

But dear friends, unless we know these precious truths, unless we embrace them, and unless we love them with all of our heart, we are going to gradually succumb to the pressures of this world and walk away from our commitment to Christ. It's inevitable. That's what will happen, and that's what these ancient Jews that first heard about this were tempted to do, and it will only be a matter of time that you will discover that you have a Christ-less Christianity that's utterly useless. But for those who know and love

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

Christ and have experienced his mercy and his power in their life, those people will have an insatiable appetite for the profound truths of God's plan of redemption and that's what we're talking about yet again today. Like those truths revealed here in Hebrews concerning the primacy of Jesus and his soul-sufficient death and mediation on our behalf. Magnificent truths given to us by our holy Creator that we might forever glory in the grace that is ours in Christ.

So with this in mind, let's examine the text before us this morning where the Spirit of God reveals to us three reasons why Jesus had to die. Imagine saying this to the professor. 1. To effect the provisions of the inheritance willed to his elect. 2. To ratify the new covenant through his own blood. 3. To make the payment God's righteous judgment demands. Now, remember that what we have before us is a continuation of the author's arguments to Jewish believers and unbelievers pertaining to the supremacy of Jesus as the Messiah and the sufficiency of his work on our behalf as a mediator of a new covenant which is vastly superior to the old covenant and has thus replaced it completely.

So with this in mind, follow along as I read the text beginning in Hebrews 9:15,

15 For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. 18 Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. 19 For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. 22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. 23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Now, remember the Jews were awaiting their Messiah but they could not bring themselves to believe that it was Jesus of Nazareth. They could not understand that he was coming the first time as a suffering servant. They wanted a conquering king and for this reason, they also could not comprehend how all of the feasts and sacrifices in the tabernacle in the old covenant, how all of those things were mere shadows that pointed to the reality that was now in Christ. By the way, these are matters that we have studied in detail so I will assume your understanding of them as we proceed.

So as we come back to verse 15, understand what he's saying. Notice again, "For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." Now this is a fascinating statement. He's saying that Jesus' sacrificial death brought forgiveness of sins retroactively. It's like his death worked backwards as well as forward.

Let me try to explain this to you. You see, God saved the Old Testament saints who were trusting that God would send a mediator on the same basis as he saves everyone, by grace alone, through faith alone, and ultimately in Christ alone. Basically what is said here is Christ bought back their sins committed under the first covenant. Now, the Jews would have understood this very clearly, perhaps better than we would at first glance, because the same was true with their high priest on the day of atonement when he went in to make atonement for the sins of the people. You see, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat covered their unintentional sins committed in the previous year. Likewise, the atoning work of Christ our Messiah is retroactive to redeem, as he says, "the transgressions committed under the first covenant." So you might say the Old Testament saints were saved on credit, if that makes sense. In fact, Paul speaks of this in Romans 3, beginning in verse 24. He says, we are "justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness," now catch this, "because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed."

Now, again, remember the sacrifices of the old covenant were merely symbolic of what Christ would eventually do. Moreover and this is very important, they only covered sins.

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

They did not remove them once-for-all. They were never a means of salvation. They were merely a symbol of salvation. They were only marks of faithful obedience of those who trusted in God to save them by his grace alone. Therefore, here's the argument, the effectiveness of the old covenant was inextricably linked to the sacrificial death of Christ. It all pointed to him. It all symbolized him. All of the symbolic sacrifices, therefore, would be absolutely meaningless apart from Christ. So here's the point: why go back to that? All of that is meaningless apart from Christ.

What an amazing plan of redemption, isn't it? By the way, I think this is another testimony of the inspiration of Scripture. Man would have never of conceived such a thing. We're always the hero of our own stories, right? But what's even more amazing is to know that ultimately Christ's sacrifice was made and applied before anyone was ever even created. Do you realize that? Hebrews 4:3 says, "His works were finished from the foundation of the world." And Peter says in 1 Peter 1, beginning in verse 19, that we were redeemed "with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

You know, as I think about this, I mean, these are such incredible doctrinal truths but one of the things that is implied in all of this is that there is only one way to salvation, right? You just kind of see this all the way through and this is a great argument for salvation in Christ alone. God accepts no other payment for sin. Only the precious blood of his sinless Son can atone for sins. That is his plan. He is the Creator. He gets to make the rules, not us. There is only one way despite what the professor might believe.

Well, now, the author gets into the three reasons why Jesus had to die. First of all, 1: to effect the provisions of the inheritance willed to his elect. Notice verse 16, he says, "For where a covenant is." Now let's stop here. A covenant, it could be translated "a testament." It's what we would call a will, alright? So "for where a will is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives." So in other words, in a will or a testament, the one who made the will who is often called the testator, must die before that will takes effect. So as we consider this statement here in verses 16 and 17 and how it's linked to verse 15, we can begin to see what the Spirit of God is communicating here through his inspired author. He's saying that the old covenant, the first covenant, was likened to a will like a testament. It was God's promise to the elect of Israel for an eternal inheritance and by extension, to all of the elect Gentiles who have been likewise grafted into the root of Abrahamic covenantal blessing. But as in the case of any will, it cannot go into effect until the person who made it, the testator, dies, right? That's the point.

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

So back to verse 15, "For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant." So again, as we see here, Christ is the testator. He died to effect the provisions of the inheritance to his elect. And again, notice at the end of verse 15, those who have been called are the ones that receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Now, this is a humbling statement. Think about this. Obviously not everyone has been called, right? But those who have been called, that is the elect of God, will receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. You see, Christ died for all whom the Father had given him. He died for the elect of God. In fact, the very purpose of the atonement was to unite those who had been chosen and called into union with Christ in his death. Remember the nature of the new covenant in the preceding chapter? It tells us that all those who are in it, he says, know God and his law is written upon their heart. These are the called ones.

So the writer is simply saying that the new covenant is for those who have been called. Said differently: there is no one in the new covenant that is not the called, the elect. Why? Because their mediator is Christ and Christ only mediates what his death provides. Great rich theology. Profound. Overwhelming. Humbling. Those who receive the promise of eternal life are those who know God, those who he has called.

There is a great summary of this, there are a lot of them, actually, in the New Testament, but I think of the one in Romans 8, beginning in verse 28. Paul says, "those who love God," and he goes on to say, "are those called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew," which literally means fore-loved, "He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified." What an amazing thought. There is going to be a resurrection. We have already passed from death into life all because of this great plan of redemption that's linked to Christ, the mediator of this new covenant.

My, I pray that you all have this kind of assurance. I pray that with every breath you breathe you celebrate the promise of an eternal inheritance. And how is that made possible? It is all because of the mediator of the new covenant who paid in full the penalty of sin for all he has called, the elect of God, those who will believe in him. And what God has revealed in these passages is literally a detailed explanation of how all of this is made possible. It is because of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and him alone. He alone, dear friends, is the mediator of the new covenant. We don't have a number of mediators from which to choose. There is only one. And there aren't many

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

new covenants. There is only one. There is only one way to approach our holy God, and guess what? It's his way. It's through Christ and Christ alone.

Think of the detailed instructions God gave the priests and the worshipers. We've gone through that before, how he wanted them to approach him. We don't do that whimsically. We don't come up with our own ways. God has given the plan and God also expects us to approach him in worship which is literally the idea of serving him in ways that show our respect and our reverence for his holiness. Do you recall the priests Nadab and Abihy? Remember them, the sons of Aaron who violated what God commanded them to do by offering strange fire before the Lord which he had not commanded them, Leviticus 10:1? Remember that story? Let me tell you what happened. Leviticus 10:2, "And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD." Do you get the idea that God is serious about doing things his way? "Then Moses said to Aaron," I suppose this is a way of comforting Aaron after losing his sons, he says, "It is what the LORD spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'"

Dear friend, God is a God of order. He is a God of precision and unfathomable holiness. And he has a plan and he has a purpose in everything and he has revealed them to us in his word. And this is why the New Testament writers constantly tell us, "Don't let anyone deceive you. Be careful." This is why we labor in the word, so that you will understand these things, so you will not be deceived by Satan's trickery manifested primarily in false religious systems and the empty philosophies of man which, by the way, you can find not just in college university classrooms, just go to your Christian bookstore and it's plastered all over the place; turn on Christian television or Christian radio.

So the Messiah had to die, not only to effect the provisions of the inheritance willed to the elect but, secondly, to ratify the new covenant through his own blood, his blood being a symbol of his death. Notice verse 18, "Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated," which means ratified, "without blood." Now let me pause here. The people would have understood this. Indeed, the old covenant was ratified by Moses with the blood of animals, that is, their death. I mean, not merely their physical blood. The animals weren't bled, they were killed. Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."

Now back to verse 19, he continues with the argument, "For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the covenant which God

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

commanded you.' And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." Oh, I can hear it now, "Blood, blood, blood! That's all we hear about in Christianity. So gory." Yes, and there's a good reason. This is part of God's plan. God wanted to place before us a constant reminder that the consequences of sin is death. This is serious. "The wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." But, dear friends, that free gift has been made available to us at a very high cost, the death of Christ. You see, the penalty for sin is death and the price of forgiveness is death, both symbolized by the shedding of blood.

Back to verse 23, "Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens," referring to the old economy, "to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these," referring to the blood of Christ. So, again, his point is why go back to the symbol? Why would you do that? Jesus is the only one that can present us to the Father. We approach the Father solely through him. We have been hidden in him, Paul tells us. We cannot come into the presence of a holy God on our own because of our sin, but we can enter into his presence when we are clothed in the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. His sacrifice for our sin has paid the penalty in full and therefore God is perfectly satisfied.

Oh, child of God, this should cause us all to fall on our face in deep humility and say, "Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul!" Nancy and I often sing this when we pray before we go to sleep at night. Remember the little chorus?

"Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul,
Thank you, Lord, for making me whole.
Thank you, Lord, for giving to me,
Thy great salvation, so rich and free."

Folks, this is the Gospel and when you get it, really get it in the core of your being, your heart will overflow with worship and praise regardless of who's laughing at you. Your heart will echo what Jude said in that great doxology, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God, our Savior through Christ Jesus our Lord be glory, dominion, authority, before all time and now and forevermore, amen." And folks, we erupt with such a doxology because we understand that Jesus became a curse for us, because we understand that Jesus had to die to effect the provisions of the inheritance willed to the elect, to ratify the new covenant through his own blood and, thirdly, to make the payment

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

God's righteous judgment demands. By now, of course, the class and the professor are going medieval. They are apoplectic as they laugh.

Verse 24, "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself," why? "Now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own." Let me explain this. Remember, Jesus never entered into the Holy of Holies in the temple on the day of atonement to make a sacrifice, I mean, partly because he was from the order of Melchizedek, not from the order of Aaron, so he would have violated the law. But beyond that and more importantly, why would the reality offer a shadow of himself when he is the reality? No, Christ offered himself once-for-all because he was the only sacrifice that would satisfy the holy justice of God.

"Otherwise," verse 26, "He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world." In other words, he would have had to suffer over and over and over and over again since the sin of Adam and Eve, continually bringing his blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies. By the way, this is why the holy Mass of Roman Catholicism made official by the church at the Council of Trent in the 16th century is such a blasphemous heresy. They believe that the Mass is exactly the same sacrifice that Jesus offered on the cross, therefore, Christ's atoning work on the cross was insufficient as a final atonement that perfectly satisfied the justice of God, rather they argue that God must be perpetually satisfied every week in the Mass. Ludwig Ott, a Roman Catholic theologian, describes it this way, quote, "The holy Mass is a true and proper sacrifice. It is physical and propitiatory removing sins and conferring the grace of repentance. Propitiated by the offering of this sacrifice, God by granting the grace of the gift in the gift of penance, remits trespasses and sins however grievous they may be."

Let me let you understand this a little bit more by quoting John O'Brien, a Catholic priest, in a book that he's written called "The Faith of Millions." He explains the procedure of the Mass this way, quote, "When the priest pronounces the tremendous words of consecration, he reaches up into the heavens, brings Christ down from his throne, and places him upon our altar to be offered up again as the victim for the sins of man. It is a power greater than that of monarchs and emperors. It is greater than that of saints and angels, greater than that of the seraphim and the cherubim. Indeed, it is greater even than the power of the Virgin Mary. While the blessed Virgin was the human agency by which Christ became incarnate a single time, the priest brings Christ down from heaven and renders him present on an altar as the eternal victim for the sins of man, not once but a thousand times. The priest speaks and, lo, Christ, the eternal, omnipotent God, bows his head in humble obedience to the priest's command." Folks, that is just utter blasphemy. Yea, that is satanic.

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

In Romans 6 that we read earlier, verse 8 and 9, we read, "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him." What did Christ say on the cross? He said, "It is finished!" not, "It has begun." John MacArthur puts it this way. "Said simply, the Catholic Church won't let Christ off the cross. In the Mass, the substance of the bread and the wine are supposedly transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus rendering him as a repeated incomplete sacrifice for sins. He is not Lord and Savior, he is the eternal victim perpetually bound to the altar by the power of the priest visibly and ubiquitously symbolized in the Roman Catholic crucifix."

Oh, dear friends, especially those of you that might be listening who are a part of a Roman Catholic background, Scripture knows nothing of the perpetual offering of Jesus Christ. Again, notice verse 26, at the end it says, "but now once at the consummation of the ages," that's referring to his death on the cross, "He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Now, think how this would have impacted the Jews. You see, this is utterly astonishing to them because they understood that the old covenant sacrifices could never put away sin, which means to remove sin. All they could do is cover sin and they could only do that temporarily. So this is an astonishing statement. The author is saying here that the sacrifice of Christ put away sin permanently. Said differently, Jesus brought his own blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies where he satisfied the just wrath of God and therefore removed sin permanently once-for-all. And for this reason he was, as the writer says, the consummation of the ages. Jesus had to die to make the payment for God's righteous judgment, God's judgment that he demanded, and of course, this was a penalty that we could not pay therefore we had to have a substitute, the God-man Jesus who died in our stead.

Dear friends, especially you young people, please understand that to the natural man, the things of the Spirit are foolishness. We know that. They have no capacity to understand these things. Not because they are intellectually deficient but because the Spirit of God has not done a work in their heart so they have no spiritual discernment. And obviously, people today don't want to hear about a holy God who pours out his wrath on sinners. They don't want to hear about a bloody cross. They don't want to hear words like repentance and faith or the Gospel. And think about it: our educational system teaches our children that there is no God; that there is no Creator; that we are nothing more than sophisticated germs that somehow emerged from gases in some primordial swamp billions of years ago. And certainly there is no absolute truth, there is no transcendent meaning or purpose in life. They are spiritually dead. By nature, they are at enmity with

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

God. So, of course, they know nothing about how we are to relate to him, how we are to approach our Creator. And then if that isn't bad enough, Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:3 that the Gospel "is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

Dear friends, what you are hearing this morning are the most magnificent, the most important, and I might add, the most damning truths in the universe. They are damning if you reject them because this is the truth of the Gospel of God. This is what our imaginary Christ-hating college professor doesn't understand.

Let me give you a little theological summary for a moment. As we look at Scripture, we see that God's holy and infinite justice could not be satisfied apart from a holy and infinite ransom, and only by his own provision could such a remedy be accomplished. So both the human and the divine natures had to be supernaturally woven together in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why the virgin birth is so important to understand. And had there been another way, an easier way, certainly the mind of God would have conceived it rather than sending his own Son to suffer and to die. But no, God could not deny his own justice. The Incarnation and the sacrificial death of his Son was the only way. Nothing but perfect righteousness could satisfy the penalty for violating perfect holiness. Hebrews 2:9 tells us, "we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone." And as a man, he became our substitute. This was the only way a holy God could show mercy to sinful man.

You see, there was a great theological dilemma here that had to be resolved and God alone could resolve it. We know that all sin must be punished. Remember Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul who sins will die." Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." So here's the dilemma: how can a holy God extend mercy and grace to those who have violated his holiness? To merely forgive sin and shower sinners with undeserved blessing would require him to abdicate his holiness and to ignore sin. He couldn't do that. And so the resolution is found in Christ. God paid the penalty himself. He caused mercy and justice to come together on the cross and as 1 John 2:1 says, "if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins." He is the satisfaction, the one that placates the wrath of God. He is the only source of divine mercy.

Beloved, this is why God had to become man. By the way, this is the very heart of the Christmas story. It's all about satisfaction and substitution. Jesus Christ had to be born of

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

a virgin in order for him to be both the Son of man and the Son of God. He had to be Immanuel. He had to be God with us. A son of the virgin according to the flesh but Immanuel, God with us, according to the spirit. You will recall maybe later on in Hebrews 10:5-7, we learn that in eternity past, the Father prepared a human body for the Son, a body that would never be tainted with sin. He had no sin nature and therefore he could become the perfect sacrifice to appease the holy justice of God. This was the will of the Father and Jesus came to do that will, knowing perfectly well why he was taking upon himself, as Paul said in Philippians 2:7, "the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

You see, the concepts of satisfaction and substitution are at the very heart of the doctrine of atonement. Atonement meaning to provide a moral or legal repayment for a fault or an injury. And atonement always, therefore, involves two things: it requires satisfaction, satisfaction of the offended holiness of God accomplished only by, 2, an acceptable substitute for the guilty party. And this is why as we read here, Jesus had to taste death for everyone.

So, my dear professor friend and my dear classmates, while you might think I'm a fool, what I believe with all my heart is what God has said in his word. Jesus had to die to effect the provisions of the inheritance willed to his elect, he had to die to ratify the new covenant through his own blood, he had to die to make the payment of God's righteous judgment, what it demands, because forgiveness requires the shedding of blood. Sin is so hideous that it demands the payment of death of an innocent substitute and only Christ could meet that requirement, therefore, the only way anyone can enjoy the blessing of the new covenant is through faith in the atoning work of Christ alone. And the moment when a person whole-heartedly places their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope of their salvation, at that very moment, they become the undeserved heirs of the promise of the eternal inheritance. And dear professor and my classmates, I invite all of you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

Verse 27, "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." Let me pause here. What he's saying here is: either you will atone for your own sins for eternity or you can trust in the one substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, who made atonement on your behalf.

Verse 28, "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

This is a fascinating text. The Jews would have understood it in ways, again, like we would not be able to. Let me put it in context for you. Here the writer is alluding to the great relief that the Jewish people had when they saw their high priest emerge from the Holy of Holies alive because if he didn't emerge, there was a reason, he approached God in the wrong way and therefore God had killed him. And the thing that would be doubly tragic is now their sins would not be atoned for.

But, oh, child of God, think what is being said here. What a thrill to keep our eyes fixed upon the eastern sky knowing that our great High Priest is going to emerge from the heavenly of heavens, that the heavenly Holy of Holies, he's going to emerge as the one who has paid the penalty for our sin. He is going to appear, as the writer says, a second time for salvation without reference to sin. There is a reason for that, all that is taken care of. And he's coming to those who eagerly await him because our sin has been removed once-for-all. Hallelujah, what a Savior! Amen? Hallelujah, what a Savior!

May I encourage you, young people, especially you, please hear me. 1 John 5 came to my mind as I was thinking this through, beginning in verse 19. John says this, "We know that we are of God," and there's something else he says that we know, "that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding." Why? "So that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, guard yourselves from idols." Those idols in this context was a reference to all of the false beliefs and practices promoted by false teachers who promote the philosophies of man and how all of those things are superior to the revelation of God, and so forth. And of course, the most popular and damning of all lies is this, "Well, if there is a God, I'm sure I'll make the cut. I'm sure he'll be pleased with me." No. He won't. He is only pleased with his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ and those who have cried out for undeserved mercy and been placed into the death of Christ Jesus.

This is so perfectly pictured in Jesus' story, remember the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector that went into the temple to pray? The Pharisee comes in and he gives thanks for being spiritually superior to all others because he is not like the swindlers, the unjust, adulterers, or even like the tax gatherer. And he bragged about his faithfulness in fasting and tithing. Boy, self-righteous pride is such a damning thing, isn't it? But the tax gatherer, the most hated man in all of Israel, perceived to be a traitor and a cheat, he saw himself very differently. He was so overwhelmed by his sin that he wouldn't even look up into heaven and instead in the profound pathos of his conviction, he beat on his breast and he said, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner." Do you realize the word "merciful" is the same word used in Hebrews 2:17, and it means "to make propitiation." He was saying, "God, I have broken your law. I am guilty in more ways than I'm even aware of. I

Website: otcr.org
Online Sermons: otcr.org/sermon/643/Three-Reasons-Jesus-had-to-Die.html

Three Reasons Jesus had to Die

By David Harrell

Bible Text: Hebrews 9:15-28
Preached on: Monday, April 3, 2017

deserve your wrath. But, God, I am placing myself under the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat, the place of propitiation, the blood of the sacrifice. I have nothing to bring to you on my own except my sin and so I'm throwing myself on your mercy. Please be satisfied by the blood of an innocent substitute that pictures your all-sufficient grace." Oh, I pray that this will be the expression of your heart. By the way, Jesus said, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled but he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

Dear Christian, in closing this morning, may I challenge you to apply these great truths of the Gospel to every difficulty in your life. For example, if you have a life-threatening illness, know that your help and your hope is in Christ because of what he has done. If you have a life-consuming problem, remember that because of Christ you have access into the very presence of God and, therefore as the writer of Hebrews says, you can draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for you. If you have some life-dominating sin, consider yourself to be dead to sin but alive to Christ Jesus. And as we read earlier in Romans 6, "therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies that you should obey its lust." Dear friends, whatever the problem, Christ is the answer. So celebrate the Gospel and apply it to everything in your life and watch what the Lord will do for his glory and for your joy.

Let's pray together.

Father, thank you for the truths that we have examined this morning. I pray that they will be clear, that they will be compelling, and most importantly that they will be convicting because we want to know and serve the living Christ and how we long for you to come quickly. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. For it is in your name that I pray, amen.

We pray you've been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.