

Errors Of The Cross

Introduction. Our bedrock principle, from which we cannot move, is to preach about Jesus on the cross (1 Corinthians 1:17-18). But in discussing the actual death of Christ, we have to rightly divide the Bible (2 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Timothy 2:15). We want to not only guard ourselves from false denominational doctrine, but we also want to have a deeper understanding of Christ's work and our responsibilities. It is impossible to be taught wrong and believe right!

I. ***Our Salvation Is Finished***

- A. Some use John 19:30 to teach that when Jesus said, "It is finished," He meant our salvation is completed or perfected (cf. John 1:29). This naturally leads one to believe in "once saved, always saved."
- B. The death of Christ did not bring an end to sin's existence (Galatians 1:4; 1 John 5:19). Salvation was not finished at the death of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:14-24; 1 Peter 1:3; 3:20-21). The sufferings and agonies in redeeming man were over, but more had to be done after the ascension of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:44-47; Romans 10:14).
- C. Our salvation still is not perfected because we still have works to perform (Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:12; 3:10-11), including confessing and repenting of sins if we commit them (1 John 1:9). Jesus' work is still ongoing in this too (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1).

II. ***God Forsook Jesus On The Cross***

- A. Many advocate that like David's cry in Psalm 22:1, where this saying of Christ's is quoted from (Matthew 27:46), the burden of sin brings the sense of isolation, of being forsaken. It is furthermore advocated that this sense of separation, if even for a moment due to bearing our sins, brought a great anguish to His soul.
- B. Jesus was never separated from the Father (John 8:28-29; 16:32).
 - 1. Sin separates us from God (Proverbs 15:29; Isaiah 59:1-3; John 9:31; 1 Peter 3:12).
 - 2. However, Jesus had no sin. He did not transgress God's law (Hebrews 4:15).
- C. Those who teach that Christ was separated from the Father have forgotten that those who are righteous do not have to fear separation (Psalm 37:25; Hebrews 13:5-6; 2 John 9).
- D. The shout from Psalm 22:1 was to get the attention of the great multitude to recall the prophecies unfolding right before their very eyes (vss. 14-18).

III. ***Jesus Died In Our Place***

- A. Many Christians believe that God can extend mercy and forgive our sins without compromising justice because His Son died in our stead. Stated another way, they think Jesus came and bore the penalty of man's sin on the cross so that man can be delivered from the power and the eternal consequences of sin.
- B. To do something in someone's stead is to act as a substitute or fill-in. We never had a place on the cross; that was Jesus' work to carry out (Ephesians 5:2; cf. Matthew 16:24).
- C. Those who err in this area have misapplied some scriptures.
 - 1. Second Corinthians 5:21 cannot be teaching that Jesus took on anyone's sins (Hebrews 7:26-27; 9:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19).
 - a) Jesus as our sin offering or sacrifice was prophesied (Isaiah 53:10).
 - b) Hebrews 10:10-18 proves the fact of Christ being a sin offering.
 - 2. When Jesus "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" in Isaiah 53:4, the Bible is speaking of people being healed from physical infirmities (cf. Matthew 8:16-17).
 - 3. The "for it is written" in Galatians 3:13, when it is examined as the cursing applied to those hanging on a tree (Deuteronomy 21:22-23), has nothing to do with Jesus transferring our sins into His body.
 - a) Although innocent, Christ was treated in His death as if He had been guilty (Matthew 27:39-43). In the process of becoming our sacrifice for sins which removed our curse, the people perceived Jesus to be cursed by God.
 - b) If we understand sin is something one commits (James 4:17; 1 John 3:4), we should know sin is not something you "take on" (Ezekiel 18:20).
 - c) If you know Jesus is/was without any sin (1 Peter 2:21-22; 1 John 3:5), you know you cannot understand any verse to be saying He became sin!
 - (1) Physical death still occurs, so that was not removed on the cross (Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 2:10).
 - (2) The eternal consequences for sin still exist, so that did not end on the cross (Galatians 6:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; James 1:13-15; Revelation 21:8).

IV. ***Jesus Wanted To Get Out Of Suffering***

- A. Some say that the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane was a desire to get out of His death on the cross (Matthew 26:39, 42; Mark 14:26; Luke 22:42).

- B. The context of Gethsemane is of extreme sorrow. The "cup" is His suffering. This is a moment that reflects His humanity, but this was not a moment of uncertainty or fear. This shows that Christ was like us (Hebrews 4:15-16). The Son of Man knew there was no pleasure in pain and dying. Death is Satan's work (Revelation 20:10-15) -- there is no reason to rejoice in it. It is a necessary evil that Christ came to rectify (John 10:10)
- C. While Jesus responded like anyone to dying, it was not enough, because He was deity, to make Him want to circumvent God's will (John 5:30). He was not dragged kicking and screaming into the cross (cf. Philippians 2:5-8).
- D. He proved perfect obedience through His sufferings (Hebrews 5:5-9). "Learned" means "to acquire the habit of, be accustomed to" (cf. Philippians 4:11 Titus 3:14). He had to experience the true meaning of obedience in terms of the suffering it entailed
 - 1. Jesus set the bar for obedience, and He demonstrated that we too can be "faithful unto death" (Revelation 2:10; cf. Acts 7:60; Hebrews 11:37; Revelation 2:13).
 - 2. Another encouraging part of this event was that the answer of God to His prayer was to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43; cf. 2 Corinthians 12:9).

Conclusion. The law of harmony, presupposing the unity of truth, is the interpretation and application of a passage as it is consistent with other scriptural teachings. We cannot make any conclusion on a scripture if that conclusion is not consistent with the rest of the scriptures (2 Peter 3:16-18). It is impossible to learn error and teach truth.