

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 1**  
**THE NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT**

**Atonement:** what does the word mean? The word "atonement" is used many times (71) in the Old Testament. The basic meaning of the Hebrew word which is translated atonement is "covering." The concept of atonement is central to the doctrines of Christianity. How many times would you guess that such a fundamental word such as "atonement" would be in the KJV version of the New Testament? (Once, Rom 5:11) The Greek word is "katallage" or "katallasso" appears 9 times in the N T and 8 of the 9 times it is translated "reconcile" or "reconciliation." The basic meaning of the word "katallage" is to exchange one thing for another. It would have been commonly used in discussions of accounting or bookkeeping to "reconcile the accounting ledgers." This would be an internal change rather than a covering. The differences in emphasis of the meanings of such an important concept is characteristic of the difference between the Old and New Testament. We see the Old Testament concentrating on the physical and the external, while the New Testament has an emphasis on the spiritual (substantiative) and the internal.

Sometime we say that atonement is "at-one-ment." While we have seen that it can mean either a covering or a replacement, the hoped for outcome would be at-one-ment. A word of caution in using this terminology. This idea of "at-one-ment" shows up in "New Age" writings.

New Agers say, "When I was a little child, I believed in God. When I began to mature, I stopped believing in God. Then I grew up and realized that I was God." If we are God, we need to know we are God. We must become cosmically conscious, also called "at-one-ment" (a counterfeit of atonement). This cosmic consciousness is also expressed as self-realization, god-realization, enlightenment, or attunement.

Let's go back to the Old Testament and look at the place where the first "covering" was used. *Genesis 3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

This was man's attempt to "cover up" the evidence or results of sin. We know that it was not sufficient and that only God can fulfill this need.

What was the nature or motivation of man's sin? In other words, what did the devil use as the temptation that lead to disobedience? Tried to be like God.

*Genesis 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

What was wrong with that? Did not God create man in His own image? Did not God want man to be like Himself? Is this not what salvation is all about? Aren't we to be conformed to the image of Christ who is the express image of God?

The problem was (and is) that mankind wants to be like God in His SOVEREIGNTY, POWER, KNOWLEDGE, etc. and God's plan calls for us to be like Him in His HOLINESS, LOVE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, PURITY, etc. Wanting God's power comes from PRIDE and wanting God's holiness comes from HUMILITY. This difference is similar to the "external" versus the "internal" difference of emphasis that we have mentioned regarding the Old Testament versus the New Testament. The OT is more about actions and appearance while the NT is more about the basics of our being - the spiritual substance of who we are. So mankind (in his lost condition or even in his immaturity) would be tempted to strive for the outward appearance related to such things as power, knowledge, sovereignty rather than the inward substance related to such things as holiness, love, purity and righteousness.

What did mankind have in terms of relationships before sin became a factor?

## **AT ONE WITH CREATION**

*Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

There was a direct relationship between man and nature. The words “man” and “ground” are from the same root Hebrew word. In fact the word “Adam” and the word “man” are the same Hebrew word. In the Creation account in Genesis, the name Adam did not appear in the KJV translation until Chapter 2 and verse 19. (Oneness with the earth itself.)

*Genesis 2:15-16 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou may freely eat expect of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”*

We see a symbiotic (mutual benefit) relationship with man and the area of the earth that he was occupying. The garden (earth) would provide his food resources and man would provide care for the garden (earth). (Oneness with the produce or fruit of the earth.)

*Genesis 2:19-20a And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field;*

The relationship of mankind with created animal life was one of mutual co-existence with man in the superior role as evidenced by his naming the animals. This role is in agreement with the statement in Genesis 1:26 regarding mankind having dominion over the earth and all living things. (Oneness with the animals.)

*Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

This is a summary statement of man’s relationship to all of nature. There was a harmonious relationship between man and nature.

## **AT ONE WITH GOD**

*Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

It is clear from this verse that intended for man to be like Himself. What do we know about God? In John 4:24 we see that God is spirit. In Eph 1:21 and 22 we read about Jesus Who is far above all powers and principalities and might and dominion, etc. However, in a limited sense, man was given some dominion over the earth, cattle, fish, fowl, etc. We also find a characteristic of man that is like unto God in the first of Isaiah 1:18 where God issues a call to the people to “Come let us reason together.” There is no evidence that the animals are ever called to such a rational exercise. In at least three areas, man had oneness with God (spiritual, dominion, and the ability to be rational).

*Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

The life source for mankind is divine. The breath of life given to Adam (the man) was directly from God.

## **AT ONE WITH OTHERS**

*Genesis 2:21-24 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And*

*Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

Admittedly, there were not many others around at this time; however, there is an important social dimension in our lives and our relationship with our spouses is extremely important. Adam and Eve were **of** one and were **at** one with each other.

### **AT ONE WITH SELF**

Throughout the first two chapters of Genesis we see no evidence of disharmony with man being concerned about who he is or how he would fit into the overall scheme of things.

Sin entered the picture and all the harmony was disrupted. The disobedience that came from an inappropriate means of trying to achieve a good result turned the harmony, the unity, and the agreement man had with his environment, his God, his fellow humans, and with himself into disharmony, disunity, and alienation.

### **ALIENATED FROM CREATION**

*Genesis 3:14-15 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Enmity between man and serpents. This alienation from the animal world is specifically stated for serpents. There is also a distrust of most animal with regard to humanity. Animals will tend to run away from humans.

*Genesis 3:17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

The ground was cursed and the alienation was extended to the inanimate earth. While man would be able to gain sustenance from the ground, it would be difficult (in sorrow) and there would be other issues such as non-beneficial plants such as weeds, thorns, and thistles.

*Genesis 3:23-24 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

Mankind was expelled from the garden and he lost his balance between receiving from the land and taking care of the earth.

### **ALIENATED FROM GOD**

*Genesis 3:8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

Adam and Eve tried to hide from God. Before the sin factor entered, man did not let the fact that there is non-equality between God and man separate him from fellowship with God. Now there is a sense of loss in that the holiness of God seems to be unapproachable to Adam and Eve. Though they tried to make their own covering (atonement) they realized that it was not adequate. The same

can be said for the attempt people make to be “right with God” in their own strength. There is a realization that it is not adequate.

## **ALIENATED FROM OTHERS**

*Genesis 3:12-13 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

Failure to admit personal guilt is a sign of a poor relationship with others. Rivalry, jealousy, hatred and fear are symptomatic of and causative toward the alienation that comes from sin.

## **ALIENATED FROM SELF**

If we are out of harmony with God, then we will be out of harmony with everything around us. Many people deep down inside have self-esteem problems. The feeling of "I'm not OK" is to the soul what physical pain is to the body. This feeling is a signal that something is not the way it should be. Non-Christian psychologist would have us ignore the pain and tell ourselves, "I'm OK" or in other words, "It really doesn't hurt." From the physical side we realize how foolish that is, Ignoring pain could lead to serious complications. The same is true in ignoring the feeling that something is wrong in our souls. Only by correcting the lostness that produces the feeling can we really say "I'm OK" and it be true.

People will attempt to put on a false front and appear to be OK when they are not. This is much like the fig-leaf apron that Adam and Eve had. You know it is there but you can see through it. On the other hand it is important to avoid a false humility that puts our self down. If we have found ourselves in Christ Jesus and know that He lives in us, then we are OK and we should act accordingly.

Before God put Adam and Eve out of the garden, He did something for them. What was it that God did? Provided a "covering" of animal skin which was a more permanent cover than what man tried to make. This involved the shedding of blood and the sacrifice of an innocent animal to provide an atonement (covering) for man. However, we need to see that the fullness of the relationship that man had with God before the fall was not restored by the act of this "atonement". It was still just a covering that allowed man to operate in his environment but did not produce any internal lasting change in the basic nature of man. The New Testament idea of atonement (reconciliation) of causing a complete change in a person could take place only by what Jesus did on the Cross and through His resurrection. The idea of the covering is still there in that His blood provides for cleansing and covering and that we are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The real significance is in our identifying with Him in His death on the Cross (we died with Him) and in His resurrection (we rise with Him in newness of life).

The New Testament idea of “replacement” and an internal spiritual change helps us to appreciate a most important concept that we associate with salvation. “Jesus takes away our sins gives us His righteousness.” (*See 2 Corinthians 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.*)

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 2**  
**GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION**

All of God's acts in history point to an ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. That is a central truth of our faith and we will be exploring what that fulfillment is about as we consider God's Plan for our Salvation.

God created man in His own image. Some of the items of that image that we previously named included

- rational thinking or reasoning ability
- spiritual nature (part of our total makeup)
- having dominion over creation.

Man's potential to be more perfectly in the image of God was not realized because the growth or development process was interrupted by sin which broke the fellowship with God Who is our spiritual life-source. The image of God in man became distorted and incomplete. However, God's intent was to have fulfilled that which He said on the sixth day of creation, "Let Us make man in Our image." The way that He is carrying out that intent is none other than God's plan for our salvation.

I used to think that the ultimate aim of the Christian life was to end up in heaven. Heaven is our destination (*where we will be*), but our aim (the goal) of the Christian life is that we become like Jesus. We see that expressed in

*Roman 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

God's intent is for us to be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus. We read in Hebrews 1:3 that Jesus is the "express image" (engraving or exact replication) of God. (Aside: the Greek word for "express image" is *χαρακτηρ* (ch a r a k t e r).

*Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

Therefore, if the goal of our salvation is to be conformed to the image of Christ Who is the exact image of God, then we see that salvation is the means by which God is going to do what He set out to do as recorded in Genesis 1:26 "Let Us make man in Our image."

God's plan for our salvation was such that it involved His revealing Himself to mankind in the proper environment (which would include such things as timing and method).

God's Plan of Salvation for mankind is *unchanging* and *unchanged*: "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith -- and that not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not of works, so that no one can boast." (Eph 2:8-9)

**How was Noah and his family saved?**

He believed God and proved his faith by obedience.

**How was Abraham justified or declared righteous?**

Abraham believed God and God accounted it to him as righteousness.

**How do we know that Abraham believed God?**

By his obedience to God's commands.

**How are people saved today?**

Ephesians 2:8-9 is still in effect.

Although the Plan of Salvation and the terms and conditions of salvation have not changed, the revelation of that Plan has been **progressive** throughout the time God has been dealing with mankind. The **fullness** of that revelation was climaxed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The Plan of Salvation has been *entrusted* to various groups throughout history. In this trust relationship, the trustees were to be about the business of bringing the knowledge of the Plan to others (the beneficiaries). The first trustee of the Plan was **Adam**. The trusteeship was to pass to succeeding generations through the firstborn. Even the first handoff of the trusteeship was marred by sin and instead of the trust being transfer to Adam's first born (Cain) it was instead transferred to Seth. The trust transfer to the firstborn was carried out for succeeding generations then to Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah.

Several interesting points can be noted regarding the *Trusteeship of the Patriarchs*:

1. There were only ten trustees from the time sin entered the world until the flood.
2. God used the special consideration given to the firstborn as an object lesson:  
Jesus, the firstborn and only begotten Son was the faithful and true Trustee of the Plan of Salvation and would come to earth and redeem mankind.
3. The firstborn inherited everything and then distributed it to others as he saw fit.  
Someday, Jesus, the firstborn of God, will receive the kingdom of the earth and then will distribute the wealth of His kingdom among His brothers and sisters.

After Noah died, it would appear that the trusteeship beginning with Adam was handed off to Noah's son Shem. We this is implied in the blessing that Noah gave to his three sons.

*Genesis 9:26 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem;*

There does not appear to be any clear leadership during the next three and a half centuries coming from the descendants of Shem. Spiritual activity during this time was mainly from the descendants of Ham. The most notable being that of Nimrod who was the driving force for the happenings in the area of Babel.

In the tenth generation after Noah, God reinitiated the trusteeship with **Abraham**. Looking at the generations and the ages given when certain descendants were born, it would appear that Abraham was born about the time when Noah died. Seventy five years later God called Abraham to leave his home and go to Canaan. (See additional notes in Appendix A at end of this chapter.)

*GENESIS 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

The events that happened to Abraham, starting with the birth of two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, were part of the revelation process that tells us about the nature of God and man. God visited Abraham, He rejected Abraham's effort of fathering Ishmael to fulfill the promise of God and intervened in the natural course of human events in the birth of Isaac. He disrupted the normal choices of progression in using Jacob rather than Esau and He had to reshape lives in the process. All of these point to ways in which His plan would culminate in the salvation event that we see in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Throughout the history of the nation of Israel, God sent prophets to speak for Him to the people. The messages applied not only to their present day situations but also to the future and God's means of salvation. Salvation was to come from a special person whom the Jews called the Messiah -- the Anointed One. These prophecies had narrowed the choices to being a descendant of David, the greatest king Israel had.

Though God chose a single nation from which to bring forth the Messiah, His salvation was not limited to Israel but was and is available to all mankind.

*1 Peter 2:9-10 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

*Galatians 6:15-16 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God.*

Notice in Gal. 6:15 that the idea of a "new creation" is mentioned. The idea of something being thoroughly changed was what we saw to be the basic meaning of the Greek word that is translated "atonement" and "reconciliation" in the New Testament. This concept is a key factor in God's plan for our salvation. Those who participate in this plan of salvation are identified in verse 16 as the "Israel of God." This is "spiritual" Israel rather than "physical" Israel.

*Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

Much of the Bible consists of God's communication of Himself (and His salvation plan) to humanity. This communication was by prophets of old and then by Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus is the culmination of the revelation process. He is the most complete picture of what God is really like and who God really is.

*John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*

To know Christ Jesus is to know God. God's plan for our salvation and God's revelation of Himself are very much tied together. If the outcome of salvation is that we become like Him – that we be conformed to His image, then we must know Him, His person, His nature, and His attributes. Now we should conclude that since Jesus is the best picture of God we will ever have, then we must know Jesus. That brings us to the question "WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?"

In John's gospel we find many statements concerning the person of Jesus.

*John 1:1,14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Jesus is the Logos (word, speech, matter, reason) of God. Jesus is God's means of communication of Himself to man. That "communication" took on human form; that is, it came in the flesh.

Jesus was truly flesh and blood. Some have argued that Jesus was not really human – more like a ghost or phantom. The importance of His humanity prompted John to write in 1 John 1:1 "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands." Other Evidence of His Humanity: Gal 4:4: born of woman; 2 Cor 8:9; lived in poverty; Phil 2:7 demonstrated servanthood; Rom 8:3: was in the likeness of sinful flesh.

On the other hand, Jesus was truly God. Many people, especially those of other world religions see Jesus as nothing more than an inspired prophet and an extraordinary teacher. The New Testament writers proclaimed the divine nature of Jesus.

**Jesus Himself said that the Kingdom of God had come in His acts, His words, and His person.**

Mark 1:15 -The time has come, the Kingdom of God is near

Luke 4:16-19 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me . . .

Luke 7:18-28 The message Jesus sent to John the Baptist; The blind see, the lame walk . . . Jesus said that John was the forerunner of God's Messiah and since John preceded Jesus and pointed people to Jesus, then the implication was that Jesus was that One.

**Jesus claimed a special relationship between Himself and God.**

*Luke 10:22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.*

*John 10:30 I and my Father are one.*

*John 14:6 no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

**Jesus also claimed to be divine in a series of “I AM” statements.**

Bread of life, Door, Resurrection and the Life, Light of the world, Good Shepherd; The way, the Truth and the Life. Before Abraham was, I AM.

The very name that He was given means “salvation.” Jesus was truly God and truly man. From the beginning, God's plan for our salvation was focused toward and on this person who was to be a substitutionary sacrifice for every person and would redeem lost humanity from enslavement to sin and Satan and secure for us salvation.

**APPENDIX A**

This is a list of the first born sons of Shem and the year number after the Flood in which they were born: Arphaxad (2), Salah (37), Eber (67), Peleg (101), Reu (131), Serug (163), Nahor (193), Terah (222), and Abram (???)

When we get to Terah we pick up some ambiguity in the times of the birth of his three sons. For example, in Genesis 11:26 it says “And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.” If we are not careful, we will say that all three had to be born in the same year and that Abram was the first born.

However, further investigation of the Scriptures (Acts 7:4) shows that Abram left the city of Haran after the death of Terah. Genesis 11:32 tells us that Terah died in Haran at the age of 205. We also know that Abram was about 75 years old when he came into the land of Canaan. That would mean that Terah was about 130 when Abram was born. Terah had a son when he was 70 and Bible scholars think that Haran was the first born. Therefore, it is probable that Abram was born about 350 years after the Flood.

If (as it appears) Abram was NOT the first born of Terah, then we see the sovereignty of God in action in choosing someone other than the first born for the “birth right” of being responsible for religious or spiritual things that was assigned to the descendants of Shem.

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 3**  
**THE CROSS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

**The Cross – Defeat or Victory?**

Several years ago an issue of U.S. News & World Report featured the changed direction of the so-called Unification church of Sun-Yung Moon. This organization was moving to become more politically active and to have influence on the morals of our country by political activism. Moon claimed that Jesus appeared to him several years before he changed direction of his organization and commissioned him to complete the work that Jesus had started but was *interrupted by the crucifixion*. Those who do not understand God's plan for our salvation see the Cross as defeat.

*MARK 8:31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*

Jesus knew that the Cross was part of God's plan for our salvation. He could have avoided the Cross by staying away from Jerusalem and not confronting the religious leaders. Had He done this, He would have missed the reason for His coming in the first place. The so-called Rev. Moon sees the Cross as defeat. He is not the first to think that. If we look at the events that happened and at those involved with the crucifixion of Jesus, we see that (to them) the Cross was a defeat of Jesus. Consider the following groups:

**The Religious Leaders: Pharisees and Sadducees**

Why did these people want Jesus out of the way? They accused Him of a whole litany of things that they considered to be wrong or sinful:

Breaking the Sabbath - Luke 6:7, 13:14; John 5:16, 18

Making Himself equal with God - John 5:18

Being a False Prophet - Luke 7:39

Consorting with Publicans and Sinners - Matt 9:11; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30

Blaspheming God by Forgiving Sins - Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21

Being in Collusion with Satan - Matt 12:24; Luke 11:15

Threatening to Destroy the Temple - Matt 26:61

Interfering with the Financial Transactions of the Temple Money Changers - Mark 11:18

**The Governmental Leaders: Pontius Pilate**

Tried to be neutral - Matt 27:23,24

Allowed himself to be manipulated to protect his self-interest - Mark 15:15

(Maybe some similarity of what is happening to today's world. The government is supposed to be neutral with regard to religion. However, the courts and the legislatures are often manipulated according to the whim of popular opinion or the most vocal activist group.)

**The Jewish Population**

Wildly enthusiastic - Matt 21:9 (shouted Hosanna)

Vehemently against - Luke 23:21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

Confused in their opinions - Deut 21:23 (A crucified Messiah was an oxymoron.)

Stumbled and fell - 2 Cor 1:23 (The Cross was a stumbling block to the Jews.)

(People are very much influenced by peer pressure and the emotion of the moment. A persuasive speaker can incite a group of poorly informed people to follow what seems to be the majority opinion. This coupled with fear of what might happen if one were to go against the popular tide will lead to situations like Nazi Germany, Communist Russia, and the crucifixion of Jesus.)

### **The Disciples of Jesus:**

Dismayed - Matt 26:51 (Peter cut off the ear of servant.)

Frightened - Matt 26:56 (The disciples ran off in fear.)

Confused - Luke 24:21 (They believe that Jesus was to deliver Israel and now He was dead.)

Looking for a *nationalistic* rather than a *spiritual* salvation - Act 1:6

They had focused on the physical and not the spiritual. Saw the Cross as defeat of the purpose of Christ's coming.

(Is focusing on the physical rather than the spiritual, on the immediate rather than the eternal, on the external rather than the internal still a problem in the church today?)

To most Christians, the term "THE CROSS" signifies (in the widest sense)

1. The entire redemptive work accomplished historically in the DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION, ASCENSION of the Lord Jesus.
2. The union of believers with the Lord Jesus through grace.
3. Includes the operation of the Blood in relation to forgiveness of sins.

In a narrower sense, the Cross can be taken to mean the primarily the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and the Blood is spoken of separately. In this narrower use of the terms, we could state that the Blood deals with what we have *done* and the Cross deals with what we *are*.

*1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

Objectively, the Blood deals with our sins. The Lord Jesus has borne them on the Cross for us as our Substitute and has obtained for us forgiveness, justification, and reconciliation. But we must go a step further in the plan of God to understand how He deals with the sin principle in us. The Blood can wash away my sins, but it does not wash away my "Old Nature." That needs the Cross to crucify me. The Blood deals with the sins, but the Cross deals with the sinner.

Who is a sinner? The usual answer is "one who sins." While this is correct, the fact that a person sins is merely evidence that he is a sinner"

*ROMANS 5:19 (First part) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, Through the disobedience of one man, the many were constituted or appointed or categorized as sinners. Therefore, one who is of Adam's race is a sinner by his very nature (not **because** he has committed sins) and is in need of redemption.*

This says there are good sinners and bad sinners, there are moral sinners and corrupt sinners, but they are all alike sinners. We sometimes think that if only we had not done certain things *all would be well*. However, the problem lies far deeper than in "what we do;" it lies in "what we are." You cannot change "what you are" by "what you do!" This irrefutable fact is why salvation by works does not work.

*Roman 5:19 (second part) so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*  
Here we see not only something about Adam but also about Jesus. How does this fact lead to our practical deliverance from sin? How can we be free from sin's dominion? In other words, how can we get out of Adam?

The answer to the above questions is found in considering another question, namely: How did we get into Adam? (By birth) Bondage to sin came by birth; therefore, deliverance from sin comes by death.

*Romans 6:1,2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*  
How can we die? Killing ourselves is not the answer! (Interesting aside: One cannot commit suicide by crucifixion,)

*Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*  
God has dealt with us "in Christ." Now, if God has dealt with us "in Christ" then we have to BE in Him for whatever He does to be effective. How are we to "get into" Christ?

*I Corinthians 1:30 But (because) of him (God, the Father) are you in Christ Jesus, Who (Jesus) of (the origin of which is) God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*  
God (of his own rich free grace and goodness, without any regard to any motive, merit, or desert of ours) did it for us. He provided the way of our salvation. We had no means to accomplish it. It is a divine act and it (the way) is already done. Since we are "in Christ" when God deals with Christ He has dealt with the whole race. When Christ was crucified, we were crucified. This was in the past and is already accomplished.

*1 Corinthians 15:45-49 So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.*  
Notice the two titles used for Christ: THE LAST ADAM and THE SECOND MAN. As the Last Adam, Christ is the sum of humanity (Jesus was truly man); and as the Second Man, He is the Head (beginning) of a new race. We have two unions, one relating to His death and the other to His resurrection- He was crucified as the Last Adam and was resurrected as the Second Man.

*ROMANS 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*  
We are included in both aspects. We died with Him as the Last Adam; we live in Him as the Second Man. The Cross is seen, therefore, as the mighty act of God which translates us from Adam to Christ.

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 4**  
**A SUBSTITUTE SACRIFICE**

**B**asically, human beings have a problem and that problem is a result of our Basic Nature when it encounters the principal of Universal Justice. The bottom line of Ezekiel 18:4,20 is simply “The soul that sins, it shall die.” This is the fact of Universal Justice. It is the system within which we live. It is like the law of gravity, we can understand it but we cannot change it.

This “law” is stated by Paul in Romans 6:23(a) as “The wages of sin is death...” The fact that the sentence or outcome is characterized as *wages* indicates that this outcome is earned and not a capricious declaration; that is, it is Justice. The fact that it is Universal is seen in Romans 3:23 where Paul writes “For all have sinned. . .” All are affected by this “law” since all have sinned.

Starting in the Garden of Eden we see the idea of Sacrifice/Substitution coming into focus. God killed an animal to provide a covering for Adam and Eve. The animal was sacrificed as a substitute for Adam and Eve. The result was a more permanent covering for mankind. This act did not change the basic nature of man but did allow man to function in the world in which he was placed. This is a picture of ATONEMENT as revealed in the Old Testament as a *covering* for man's guilt (nakedness) by a substitute that died because of man's sins. The sacrifice of animals was practiced by people prior to the forming of the Nation of Israel and the institution of a formal sacrificial system (i.e., giving of the Law).

The best known Sacrifice/Substitution that was instituted for the Children of Israel (prior to their becoming a nation and prior to the giving of the law) was the Passover Lamb. This observance is initially described in Exodus 12:1-14. This was a substitute for the first born of every family. Blood was to be placed on the door post and this obedience was satisfactory to God. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

We see the requirements for the Passover Lamb in the Exodus passage. We can compare that to the Lamb of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

<u>Passover Lamb</u>	<u>The Lamb of God</u>
year old male	The Son of God
without defect*	Sinless**
slaughtered late afternoon	Died for our sins

\*A defective sacrifice could not be a substitute for a defective people.

\*\*See Heb 9:13-14 and 1 Peter 1:19

**COMPARING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS**

The highlight of the Jewish sacrificial system is the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). A detailed description is found in Leviticus chapter 16. The purpose of this ritual was to *purge* or make a *covering* for

- The Temple including the Most Holy Place, Tent of Meeting, and the Altar.
- The Priests by making an offering of a young bull for his own sins. (Heb 5:1-3).
- The People by making an offering of a goat.

## THE RITUAL OF THE TWO GOATS

*Leviticus 16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.*

One for the Lord and one for the Scapegoat:

"One for the Lord" was killed as a sin offering for the people. Blood was then taken behind the curtain and sprinkled on the "mercy seat" or "atonement cover". This word "mercy seat" is translated as "sacrifice of atonement" or "propitiation". (See Romans 3:25)

The mercy seat was sprinkled with atoning blood as a kind of symbol that the righteous sentence of the Law had been (as a type) carried out so that what might have been a *judgement* seat becomes a *mercy* seat. In fulfillment of the type, Christ is Himself "that which propitiates" and is also the "place of propitiation" that is, the mercy seat sprinkled with His own blood. (Notes from The Scofield Reference Bible on Romans 3:25)

That same term (propitiation) is used in I John 2:2:

*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

God's holiness demands punishment for man's sins. God, therefore, out of love (John 3:16) sent His Son to make substitutionary atonement for the believer's sin. In this way the Father's righteous demands are satisfied: His wrath against the Christian's sin has been turned away and directed toward Jesus. Forgiveness is not limited to one particular group only; it has worldwide application as stated by John. It must, however, be received by faith. Thus this verse does not teach *universalism* but that God is *impartial*. (Notes from The NIV Study Bible)

The Blood and the Cross are the means of the fullness of atonement in that the Blood provides the "covering" for our sins while the Cross provides the "replacement" of our sinful nature with the righteous nature of Jesus, the Son of God.

## THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

*Hebrews 9:11-14 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

Let's look a little closer at the idea that in the Old Testament, the animals offered for sacrifice were to be without blemish and see how that relates to the necessity of Jesus living a sinless life. Looking to Hebrews 9:14 we see mention of Jesus being without spot (unblemished).

*Hebrews 7:26-27 For such an high priest became us (is suitable or necessary for our needs), who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*

We see that a consequence of Jesus being without sin is that He did not need to offer up a sacrifice for Himself. Since Christ can be crucified only one time, then we conclude that it was necessary that He NOT need to die for His own sin.

God's plan for our salvation is a two-fold solution in that it addresses both the issue of "what we do" and "who we are". The first we labeled SINS (unrighteous acts) and the second, SIN (the old sin nature).

We just concluded that the issue of SINS was taken care of by the fact that Jesus did not commit any sins. But, what about the Old Sin Nature (OSN)? How do we deal with that issue for Jesus? We affirmed that Jesus was human as well as divine. So, what do we say about the OSN with respect to Jesus? Simply this: **He did not have an OSN!** This is why the Virgin Birth is so important. Our OSN is inherited from Adam. But Jesus was not of Adam's race; He was born of the Holy Spirit and of woman. He obtained His humanity based on His being born of woman and obtained His divine nature by virtue of His being born of the Spirit. (Inheritance comes through the father and not through the mother unless there are no males in the family.) Since He was not born of Adam He did not inherit Adam's problem.

## THE SCAPEGOAT

We haven't said much about the second goat that was used in the Day of Atonement ritual. The second goat was not killed but was used in a ceremony that symbolized the taking away of the sins of the people. In the ritual, the high Priest laid both hands on the head of the goat and confessed over him all the iniquities of the Israelites. This symbolically transferred them to the goat. [Consider the accusations brought against Jesus before His trial; these were symbolic of the sins of the people that the high priest was transferring to Jesus.]

The goat was then led away into the wilderness and turned loose, thus symbolically removing the sins from the people. We understand that Jesus also fulfills that role for us in His work of the Cross.

Think about the hymn: "I lay my sins on Jesus. The spotless Lamb of God."

Consider also the Scriptures that speak of this role:

Isaiah 53:11 He shall bear their iniquities

Hebrews 9:28 Christ was sacrificed to take away the sins of many . .

1 Peter 2:24 He bore our sins in His body on the tree

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, hath He removed our sins

In the Old Testament the sacrificial system was a "shadow" or it was symbolic of the real thing. The sacrifice/substitution was REAL in Christ and what He did. The Old could not do the job completely; therefore, it had to be repeated each year. Hebrews 10:4 tells us that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. But God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh condemning sin in the flesh. Christ offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 10:12)

The one verse that really captures the essence of the substitution that took place is found in 2 Corinthians 5:21: For He (God) hath made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us. Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

God is not reluctant to forgive. Augustine once said: "For it was not after we were reconciled to Him through the blood of His Son that he began to love us. Rather, He loved us before the world was created ..." The sacrifice of Jesus does not appease God or turn a hostile God into a friendly one. Rather it removes the barriers that result from our sin.

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 5**  
**REDEMPTION/RANSOM**

**H**ISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF REDEMPTION/RANSOM

Old Testament

Redeem - To free by avenging or repaying  
Redemption - Right or price of setting free  
Ransom - To free, the covering (price)

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New Testament

Redeem - To acquire at the forum (slave auction) or to loose by a price  
Ransom - A price

One of Israel's major historical points of reference was deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Did the Egyptians have a legal right to hold the Children of Israel? (No) How did God bring about their deliverance? (With a mighty hand and outstretched arm.) This is an example of "freeing by avenging".

The common idea that grew among the Hebrew people was that redemption was a family responsibility. The word translated "redeemer" is also translated as "kinsman" or "next of kin." The laws given to the nation of Israel required the kinsman to buy back such things as property, animals or even persons.

*Leviticus 25:25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.*

This verse give an illustration of what was typical of the law of property.

The Book of Ruth has several interesting things about redemption as practiced by the Israelites. For example, the right of redemption could be passed on to another kinsman if the next of kin was not able to handle the responsibility as in the case of Boaz. (See Ruth 4:1-6) We find also in Ruth that the principle of redemption applied in marriage. The kinsman might be called on to marry the widow of a deceased relative. The idea of redemption was, therefore, quite familiar to the Israelites.

Other references include

Exodus 6:6 - the act of redemption is described with the result that the Israelites would be delivered from the burdens of the Egyptians and be rid of their bondage.

Isaiah 47:4 - God is referred to as "Our Redeemer - the Lord of Hosts is His name - is the Holy One of Israel."

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated "redeem" and "ransom" meant to buy, to loose, or the price thereof. Jesus described His mission in terms of ransoming.

*Mark 10:45 . . . The Son of Man came . . . to give His life a ransom for many.*

In the forum (market place), slaves were sold and the word "redeem" was used to describe buying a slave. The slave was usually still a slave; he just had a new owner. Paul used this concept in picturing salvation and our redemption to God.

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

We belong to God, we are not free in the sense of having no responsibility; however, we have been set free from certain things. This obligation is clearly directed to God and not to the mere keeping of man-made rules. Paul gives clarification of this in 1 Corinthians 7:23 where he said: *Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.*

The **price** of our Redemption is the life of Jesus and we find many passages that make this affirmation.

Ephesians 1:7 - "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,"

Revelation 5:9 - "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood"

1 Peter 1:19 - "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"

Hebrews 9:12 - "but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"

Hebrews 9:15 - " he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance"

Titus 2:14 - "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Did you notice that most of these passages said that the price was His "blood." This is consistent with what Jesus said "give His LIFE a ransom for many" since the life is in the blood.

The result of our redemption is our being set free (or loosed) from someone or something. There are at least three things from which we are freed.

### **1. Free from the Curse of the Law**

*Galatians 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:*

The Law pronounced what was right and proper, it also pronounced the penalty for disobedience, but the Law did not have the power to save or deliver us from bondage to disobedience. This passage also shows us that as a result of Christ's substitution/sacrifice we acquired redemption.

### **2. Free from Bondage of Sin and Death**

*Romans 8:1,2 - There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

What is the law of sin and death? It is simply this:

***All have sinned, the wages of sin is death, the soul that sin must die.***

The benefit of redemption is that we do not see sin as our only option. We have identified with Christ on the Cross and see our Old Nature was crucified with Him. This Old Nature, therefore, does not have control over us since it is dead. We are raised with Christ, having a New Nature (of the Spirit) and we live and act according to that New Nature.

*Romans 8:4 - That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Bondage implies slavery which would then imply that someone or something would have control or power over us which brings us to the third result of our redemption.

### 3. Free from the Power of the Evil One

Let's go back to Adam. Adam was given dominion over the earthly creation - the fish, the cattle, etc. (Gen 1:26) Man was in charge with authority and dominion over the earth via a *bona fide* gift from God. This tells us that grace was in operation from the beginning.

The entire universe is governed by law. One of the laws is found in

*Romans 6:16 - Know ye not that to whom you yield yourselves slaves to obey, his slaves are you?*

Applying this very sobering verse to man's situation in the Garden of Eden, we see that when Adam chose to obey (yielded himself to) Satan, he became Satan's slave! There were dire consequences: A slave has no legal rights - everything that the slave possesses becomes the property of the slave owner. Adam's sin (obedience to Satan) gave Satan legal authority to rule man and the earth. Because man came under the dominion of Satan all that was under the dominion of man was influenced also. See also Romans 6:6-7, 17-18

How could man be freed from this bondage? God had the power to void Satan's conquest of Adam, but this would have violated God's own moral principle of government. What mankind needed was a kinsman redeemer who could buy us back, free us by avenging or in some way disenfranchise Satan. All the sons of Adam were under Satan's legal authority and had no means to bring about redemption or to reclaim Adam's lost estate. This looks hopeless, but God had a way.

*Galatians 4:4-5 - But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

Since Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit He was NOT the fallen son of Adam. Therefore, Satan had no claim upon Him. JOHN 14:30 in

The Amplified Bible says it quite well.

*John 14:30 - I will not talk with you much more, for the prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me, he has nothing in common with Me, there is nothing in Me that belongs to Him, He has no power over Me.*

(No one else on earth could say that!)

In order for Jesus to be our Sacrifice without spot or blemish that He must have lived a sinless life and He must not have had an Old Sin Nature; therefore, He could not have been born of Adam's seed: Hence the **absolute necessity** of the Virgin Birth.

We see that for Jesus to be our Redeemer that He must, first of all, **not** be a descendent of Adam since He would be a slave of Satan by birth. Furthermore, He would need to be sinless by refusing to serve or obey Satan. If He committed sin, then by virtue of Romans 6:16 He would have become a slave of the one he served. This is why Satan tempted Jesus so strongly in the wilderness and during His passion. The agony in the Garden, the torture and ridicule, the pain and the suffering leading up to the crucifixion itself were attempts to get Jesus to turn away from serving His Heavenly Father and to serve Satan.

In his efforts to compel Jesus to rebel against God and transfer allegiance to himself, Satan pushed Jesus clear up to death. Once Jesus died without once failing in His submission to His Father, Satan was defeated. Why? Satan became a murderer in that he had no legal right to take the life of an innocent man. Satan had exercised the power of death over fallen mankind but, since they were his slaves he had the right to do so. However, when Satan became a

murderer, he came under sentence of death and thereby lost all of his legal claims upon earth and man. Therefore, we have been freed from the rule or power of the evil one.

The price was the life of Jesus Christ, but notice that the price was not paid to anyone. It was what it costs Him to disqualify or disenfranchise Satan from legal claim on Adam's descendants.

*Hebrews 2:14 - Since, therefore, [these His] children share in flesh and blood [in the physical nature of human beings], He [Himself] in a similar manner partook of the same [nature], that by [going through] death He might bring to nought and make of no effect him who had the power of death--that is, the devil-- (Amplified Bible)*

This is even clearer in the New Living Translation

*Hebrews 2:14 - Because God's children are human beings--made of flesh and blood--Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the Devil, who had the power of death.*

He became as we were - becoming our kinsman - that He might redeem us in some way: purchase (what was Satan's asking price?), avenge (on what basis?), or disenfranchise (disqualify Satan from ownership). By His submitting to death rather than serve Satan and His ensuing death, Jesus broke Satan's claim on man and the earth.

**WHY JESUS DIED**  
**Chapter 6**  
**THE RESULT OF JESUS' DEATH: SALVATION**

**B**RIEF REVIEW:

1. God created man at one with creation, with God, with others, and with self. Sin disrupted the harmony and man was alienated from creation, God, others, and self.
2. God's plan for our salvation is to restore man to His original intent of being in the image of God. Much of God's plan involved the communication of Himself to man through His prophets and ultimately in the incarnation.
3. Since sin was at the heart of the problem, God needed to deal with that in His incarnation and the means of accomplishing that was through the Cross and the shedding of His own blood. The blood deals with our sins and the cross deals with our sinfulness.
4. In shedding His blood for sins, He became a sacrifice to provide a covering (atonement) and in the giving of His life in place of ours, He became our substitute.
5. His life was the price that set us free from our slavery to sin and Satan. He redeemed us from the curse of the law, bondage to sin and death, and the power of the evil one.

So far we have dealt only with what God has done for us in Christ Jesus. Atonement for our sins has two parts -- the death of Jesus for our sins and sin AND the acceptance of that fact by faith on the part of you and me. Salvation is both objective (Christ died for me) and subjective (I accept Him as Lord and Savior). God has done His part, we must do ours.

**The Cross: Forgiveness of Sin**

The benefits of salvation -- the forgiveness of sin - which allow relationships to be restored (with creation, God, others, and self) are so evident we have to wonder WHY it is often so difficult for us to turn away from the old life (to repent), receive forgiveness, and achieve this "at-one-ment".

Unwillingness to Face Our Sin: Denial is simply refusing to accept responsibility for sin. The first sin was handled with denial. "It ain't my fault!" is still echoing down the corridors of history. It is the ghost that haunts us as human beings and is indicative of our need to grow up and face life as mature persons. 1 John 1:8 warns us that "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves."

Boasting in Sinfulness: All of us have seen people who flaunt their sin. Some boast of the number of sinful acts they have chalked up. Others will brag about their ability to put others "in their place." Others are proud of how little work they do and still get a full paycheck. These are people of whom Paul says, "Their glory is their shame."

Either method, denial or flaunting, are destructive ways of dealing with sin. We must honestly face our sin, admit that it is sin, in repentance receive the forgiveness already provided by God and then press on in cooperation with God to bring about the fulfillment of our being conformed to the image of Christ.

In the study of Redemption, we indicated that slaves sold in the forum were said to be redeemed even though they were still slaves. They became free from one master so that they could serve another. Likewise with us, we have been saved from sin and saved for righteousness. (The Children of Israel were saved from Egypt and saved for the Promised Land. Many of them did not make it. Objectively, the Promised Land belonged to them. Subjectively, they did not

experience it.) We are saved from the past and saved for the future. For us to realize the benefits of our salvation, we must integrate our Christian commitment into our total life-style. (Be ye, therefore, transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .)

### **The Cross: Symbol of Discipleship**

We said earlier that objectively “Christ died for me” and subjectively “I accept (receive/follow) Him as my Lord and Savior.” Both these are needed for our salvation to be what God intended. Objectively, you can do nothing to pay the sin debt, you cannot earn the right to participate in what God has done for us. This is GRACE. It is God's free (to you) gift. Subjectively, there is something I need to do to experience that which grace has provided. It bothers many of us when we talk about our needing to **do** something. What does it mean to accept Jesus as Lord? Our **doing** is what we call discipleship. By its very definition, discipleship involves discipline. The words of Jesus show a significant challenge for discipleship and is the context within which we need to be operating.

*MARK 8:34 If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.*

We have pictured the cross that we take up as *the problems we encounter every day* – a sore back, arthritis, hay fever, a wayward child or some other personal ailment – as being our cross. Whether such things are instrumental in being our cross depends on how these things affect us. The cross was an instrument of death. It had no other purpose. Our problems, trials, and tribulations can have various effects on us. They could heighten our awareness of self. “Everybody picks on me.” “Nobody likes me.” “They just don't realize how good I am.” “I'd really like to be able help out some way, but I've had so many problems with my daughter that I just can't think about anything else.”

On the other hand, problems can be used to bring about a death to self. In order for this to happen, we must refuse to defend self. Jesus could have called for 10,000 angels and been rescued from the ordeal of the cross. If someone verbally attacks you, do you call for 10,000 angels or do you take up your cross? You find yourself in a difficult position that is really going to embarrass you – do you run away or deny the truth and lie out of it or use the occasion to put self (pride) to death? To confess our sins and to say “I was wrong” is an act of taking up our cross. To let others go first and not insist on our “rights” is denying ourselves.

Some writers tell us that the crosses we bear are not difficulties that beset us as a normal part of living but are hardships endured as a direct result of a commitment to Jesus Christ. I just don't agree with that idea in that it is limiting. I can see everything (Romans 8:28) – whether it is viewed as hardship or benefit – a possible means of bringing death to self. If someone says to you, “You are the finest example of a dedicated Christian I have ever seen,” then how do you react to that? I'm not interested in what you say, but what you feel deep down inside. Do you feel pride or humility? Do you think that you are great or do you feel totally inadequate. If you feel pride, the that leads to a strengthening of self, if you feel humility, then that works to weaken self.

To the extent that our commitment to Jesus Christ is directed toward our becoming more like Him and to the extent that we recognize that God uses all things to bring about that transformation, then I can see that everything that we encounter is a means to put self to death.

Many ignore the need for the “daily cross.” We, however, should not expect to participate in the glory of the resurrection without participating in the cross. We would like to go directly to Easter and just skip Good Friday.

2 Corinthians 4:8-18 <sup>8</sup> We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. <sup>11</sup> For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So then death worketh in us, but life in you. <sup>13</sup> We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; <sup>14</sup> Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. <sup>15</sup> For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. <sup>16</sup> For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; <sup>18</sup> While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

It is clear what must be done. However, here is a problem! We can't do it. If we attempt to do it, we wind up in the middle of the predicament described in Roman Chapter 7. "The good that I would, I do not, but the evil I would not, that I do." What is the solution to the problem, then?

*Romans 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

According to Paul, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. This truth is reinforced two verse later in

*Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

In verse four Paul speak of our "walk" or our actions and in verse 6 he points us to the origin of our action – our thoughts. For most (all) of us, our thought patterns have been developed in the environment of the world and were impacted by the Old Nature. Now that we have put the Old Nature to death (the work of the Cross), the mind needs to "unlearn" the ways of the world and be impacted (re-programmed or transformed) by our new nature which is after the Second Adam. Paul stated what needs to be done quite well in

*Romans 12:2 But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

Objectively, we were "in Adam" and have been placed "in Christ." This speaks to our Position. Subjectively, we were "in the flesh" and we are moving to be "in the Spirit." This speaks to our walk or our practical experience.

Living in the Spirit means that I trust the Holy Spirit to do in me what I cannot do myself. This life (in the Spirit) is completely different from the life I would naturally live of myself. Another way to state this is that we move on from **regeneration** to **reproduction**.

Regeneration: the life of Christ is planted in us by the Holy Spirit at our new birth.

Reproduction: the new life grows in us until the very likeness of Christ begins to be reproduced in our lives.

THIS IS OUR SALVATION, EVEN THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS.

THIS IS THE MYSTERY OF THE AGES: CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY.