



WHAT JESUS ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS

That day of four years ago, in the remote village in Armenia, began as any other for Arman and his family. As he left home and made his way along the narrow winding streets toward his school little did he realize that he was about to experience the most frightening AND miraculous event of his life.

As the children sat in their classroom the floor, the entire building, began to vibrate. Then to move, to rise and fall, casting things in all directions. It was if the whole world had gone into convulsions as his tiny part of the world was stricken by an earthquake measuring 8.2 on the richter scale.

Suddenly, as if the very foundations of the earth had been wrested from beneath it, the entire school collapsed burying all 44 children beneath the broken, mangled debris. Immediately all of the parents began to make their way through the rubble and ruin toward the school and their children. Upon arriving their hearts sank and their souls felt the deep, dark, hollow anguish that only those who have lost a child could understand; for it was evident that all were lost.

Friends and neighbors began to comfort and lead the bereaved from the twisted wreckage of this massive grave, but one would not be comforted; nor would he be lead away. Arman's father began to dig. To move metal and mortar to seek for his son. Friends, family, and authorities try to tell him it was futile, that there was no hope; but they could not dissuade him. Thus they decided to let him dig until he exhausted himself.

He dug all that day and would not stop. As night approached again his friends tried to persuade him to cease and return home, but he replied "I know my son is alive and I must save him." He continued working into the night. Twelve hours passed and he kept digging. All night long he persisted and would not desist. As the sun rose the next morning he was still digging and people began to gather about thinking he had gone mad.

He had now be at it for over 24 hours and would not stop. Thirty hours had now lapsed and still he pressed on seeking his son, calling his name. The father continued digging through the destruction. Digging, calling, hurting, crying, bleeding; but no answer, no sign of Arman.

34 hours, 35, 36 hours. But wait, suddenly the father hears a familiar sound - "Father I'm over here. Yes I am alright. Yes, there are others with me. Oh, father, I knew you would come for me."

16 of the 44 children were found alive.

We were, as it were, entombed by Satan himself. Buried beneath the debris of sin. Engulfed in error and rebellion. Our Father has dug us out. Placed us in His hospital that He might clean us up and heal our wounds so that He can take us home.

Romans 5:6-10 Notice how Paul keeps using the phrase "much more".

Verse 11 declares we have already received the atonement.

Verses 12-21 tell us how, when, where and who received the atonement.

Verses 12-14 explain what our situation is "in Adam."

Three points to take notice of.

1. Sin entered the world through Adam.
2. Adam was condemned to death.
3. This condemnation spread to all mankind for all have sinned.

Does Paul mean that all die because "all have sinned" personally as Adam did? Or because "all have sinned" in Adam.

Paul is stating that all mankind was in Adam when he sinned and the condemnation of death was automatically passed upon all mankind as a result.

Four things help clarify this.

1. The Greek verb sinned (verse 12) is in the aorist tense. Thus it refers to an act that took place at a single point of time in the past, Adam's sin; not the continuing sins of his descendants.
2. Verses 13 and 14 explain what he meant in verse 12. "Not sinned after the similitude (likeness) of Adam's" sin. Thus it contradicts the notion that all die because they have sinned as he did.
3. Four times in verses 15-18 Paul declares that it was Adam's sin (not ours) that brought judgment, condemnation and death upon the whole human race.
4. Paul's argument continues by stating that all that has happened to us in Adam is undone for us in Christ.

Verses 15-18 make it clear that if one insists that all die because all have sinned as Adam sinned; then we must insist that all live and are justified because they have obeyed as Christ obeyed.

Note that verses 13-17 are in parenthesis and were given to explain and illustrate the point he is trying to make. Thus one can move from verse 12 to verse 18 and Paul's point remains absolutely clear.

There are several different ideas as to what Paul meant by verse 18.

1. "All" does not really mean all, but refers only to the "elect" or those whom God has "predestined" to be saved.
2. "All" will be saved, even if they do not want to be; they have no choice in the matter.
3. Only a provision was made, whereby it might be possible to be justified, if one will do something in order to activate it.

Paul meant exactly what he said: All have been legally justified by the sacrifice of Jesus for "the sin of the world."

(John 1:29) SIN OF WORLD

(Hebrews 2:9) TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY MAN

(1 John 2:2) PROPITIATION FOR WHOLE WORLD

(2 Corinthians 5:19) RECONCILED THE WORLD

(2 Corinthians 5:14-15) DIED FOR ALL. ALL WERE DEAD.

(Isaiah 53:6) LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL

The sentence pronounced on Adam was the second death and this was passed to all mankind in Adam. The entire race legally belongs on death row. In Adam we were all lost, but in Christ we have all been justified. He undid what Adam did.

He not only redeemed us from the results of Adam's sin, but "much more" He has also canceled our personal sins ("many offenses" verse 16) and brought the free gift "upon all men unto justification of life" (verses 16, 18).

He has already placed the gift of life in our hands, but what shall we do with it?

The punishment for sin was not merely deferred - it was totally inflicted upon Christ. Therefore, there is no reason any will experience the second death, except their own willful, persistent, unbelief. Their refusal to appreciate what Christ has actually accomplished for them on the cross, and He did it before they, or we, did anything good to deserve it.

This justification, however, should not be confused with the doctrine of justification by faith. This is a legal justification, without which none, saint or sinner, would be able to live even now. Every person on the earth owes his or her physical life, his very existence, to the sacrifice of the Son of God.

"To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring." *Desire of Ages*, p. 660

God has taken the Initiative, and He did it while we were under Satan's control - while the prince of darkness ruled our spirits.

(Romans 5:6-8) UNGODLY, SINNERS

(Hebrews 2:3) How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.

Most of us accepted Jesus for rather selfish reasons. Fear of hell or desire for heaven. Is that the reason you remain a Christian? It is impossible to remain a true Christian for selfish reasons. Remember, true Christianity is based on a love relationship. Our loving response to the greatest exhibition of love the world has ever seen.

"His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour." *Ibid.* 176

"It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice and they follow Him." *Ibid.* 480

Jesus fully experienced the separation sin makes between God and man, and it crushed His life out. When an individual sees the unconditional love of God as revealed in this Bible truth and believes, his heart is changed, he abhors his sins which placed the Son of God on the cross, he repents and accepts the Supreme Sacrifice in his behalf. This, then, is justification by faith! Not just a legal declaration, but a life changing experience which enables him "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13).

Remember, "no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul." *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 366

True justification by faith in Christ will be made manifest in transformation of character. One will no longer wonder "How much can I get away with and still get into heaven. Squeak by the pearly gates.

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 114

Truly the "cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are save it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18). That is why we, as Paul, can declare: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14).

STUDY HELPS

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| WHAT STAGES ARE THERE TO SALVATION? | 2 Corinthians 1:9, 10 |
| WHAT IS JESUS CALLED? | Hebrews 12:2 |
| WHO FINISHES THE WORK OF SALVATION JESUS BEGAN | Philippians 1:6 |
| NOTE: What Jesus did in the past, the Bible calls justification, what He is doing in the present is called sanctification, and what He will yet do in the future is called glorification. | |
| HOW MANY HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED BY JESUS' DEATH? | Romans 5:18 |
| WHOSE SIN DID JESUS TAKE AWAY? | John 1:29 |
| WHO DID JESUS DIE FOR? | Hebrews 2:9 |
| HOW MUCH OF THE WORLD WAS JUSTIFIED BY JESUS? | 1 John 2:2 |
| WHOM DID GOD RECONCILE TO HIMSELF? | 2 Corinthians 5:19 |
| HOW MANY DID JESUS DIE FOR? | 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 |
| WHEN DID JESUS DIE FOR US? | Romans 5:6-8 |
| HOW CAN WE LOSE WHAT JESUS HAS ALREADY GIVEN US? | Hebrews 2:3 |