

## BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED – THE CROSS

Two thousand years ago, Jesus the Son of God came into this world and die on the Cross for sinners. How should we view His death on the Cross?

[1] WE MUST VIEW IT AS OBEDIENCE. In **John 10:17-18**, Jesus said, *“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”*



Jesus spoke of His death as obeying a command He has received from God! Following the same line, the apostle Paul talked of Christ's death as *“. . . by one Man's obedience . . .”* (**Romans 5:19**) and *“. . . became obedient to the point of death . . .”* (**Philippians 2:7-8**). When Jesus died on the Cross, it was an act of obedience. This was part of His obedience to God. While He lived, He obeyed God's Law for us (active obedience) and in obedience to God He died for us (passive obedience). We need both, in order to be saved!

In using the word 'obedience', we are reminded that Jesus did not die on the cross by accident. He wasn't an unwilling Saviour, a poor victim. No, He laid down His life willingly for sinners, in obedience to God!

[2] WE MUST VIEW IT AS SACRIFICE. In **Ephesians 5:2**, Paul talks about Christ giving Himself for us as *“a sacrifice to God.”*



This word links us back to the Old Testament sacrifices. In the Old Testament, the sacrifice is always related to *sin* and *guilt*.

In the sacrifice, sin is covered and divine wrath is removed. The offerer laid his hands on the animal, symbolizing the transfer of his sin to it. Then the animal was be killed. It pictured how Christ the Sacrifice will die for the sins of those whom He represented. Sin is transferred to Him. That is why He must die.

Though the sacrifice in the Old Testament is a picture of Christ's sacrifice, two things must be noted:

- (a) Christ's sacrifice is far superior – it is real, final and complete.
- (b) Christ is both the Sacrifice and the Priest who offered it. This is something the Old Testament picture could not convey.



[3] **WE MUST VIEW IT AS PROPITIATION.** **1 John 4:10** says: *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

The Hebrew word 'propitiation' means *to cover* while the Greek word means *to pacify, to appease*. When used in the Bible, it conveys (a) sin being covered, (b) the effect is cleansing and forgiveness and (c) both the covering and the effects take place before God. God sees the sin. God is angry. Propitiation presupposes the anger of God. Hence its purpose is to remove the anger by covering sin. How? By the death of Jesus on the cross!

We should note that propitiation does not turn a God of wrath into a God of love. No, **1 John 4:10** teaches us that the God who is angry with sinners sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins. The angry God loves! At the Cross, we see both the anger and love of God, both the holiness and the mercy of God!!



[4] **WE MUST VIEW IT AS RECONCILIATION.** *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life,* says **Romans 5:10**.

Reconciliation suggests that there is disharmony, enmity, wrong relationships. To reconcile means to remove the cause of the disharmony and the reason for the enmity so that the result is right relationships. Our sin has separated us from God and also separated God from us. When Jesus died on the Cross, He removed the cause and reason for God's enmity towards us. The Gospel message therefore is: *God is reconciled to us. Now, be reconciled to God!*



[5] **WE MUST VIEW IT AS REDEMPTION.** Jesus is our Redeemer. He gave His life as a ransom for us. He redeemed us from the curse and the works of the Law, from the guilt and the power of sin. He did not just make us 'redeem-able'. He redeemed us!

*I will glory in my Redeemer, whose priceless blood has ransomed me; Mine was the sin that drove the bitter nails and hung Him on that judgment tree. I will glory in my Redeemer who crushed the power of sin and death; My only Savior before the Holy Judge, the Lamb Who is my righteousness, the Lamb Who is my righteousness!*