

WHAT DOES THE PASSION OF CHRIST MEAN?

“To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs. . .” (Acts 1:3, KJV)

It is undeniable that people from all ages since the cross have been attracted to Christ’s suffering, thus fulfilling the prophetic effect:

“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (Jn. 12:32).

“Why did he suffer, and what does it mean for us?” we ask. We shall answer this question briefly in four direct scriptural implications.

First, the passion of Christ means God loves us. Consider Romans 5:8,

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Other passages teach this fundamental fact, *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13; cf. Jn. 3:16)*. Likewise, Paul wrote the church, *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”* Clearly the cross demonstrates divine love to man.

Second, the passion of Christ means that God passionately hates sin. Sin is so horrific that it not only brought the wrath of God through a death sentence upon all men since Adam’s day, but it also drove the nails into God’s only Son (Rom. 5:12; Is. 53:4, 5)! The fact that a future and *second death* exists in a lake of fire for the ungodly is testimony that God hates sin (Rev. 19:20; 20:14, 15; 21:8). Again in Romans 5, Paul wrote:

*“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from **wrath** through Him” (Rom. 5:9).*

That the wrath of God is real is indisputable. That we desperately need to apply the blood of Christ to escape God’s wrath is equally unquestionable. That preachers neglect to speak on this aspect of God today is dangerously absurd! Men like to “tolerate” sin and “sweep it under the rug,” but God sees it and “hates” it. Our culture arrogantly dresses sin up with respectable attire, saying “homosexuality” is “alternative,” “abortion” is “choice,” and “foul speech” is “freedom.” Isaiah warned against men calling evil good and good evil (Is. 5:20)

Third, the passion of Christ means that God has provided a place for reconciliation to God:

“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. . .” (Rom. 5:10).

If Christ had not suffered, there would be no ground today for reconciliation. Paul was careful to identify that this place of reconciliation is found in His death and

that baptism places us there “*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*” (Rom. 6:30). Does your preacher tell you to get baptized? If so, does he give the same reason that Paul gave for it?

Finally, the passion of Christ means that we are no longer under the Old Testament law.

Romans 7:4, 6, 7, “. . .you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead. . .But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by. . .Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘You shall not covet.’”

Paul quotes the tenth commandment and says that we are dead to that “law.” What law? The *Ten Commandment Law*, of course. This law was “taken away” by the Christ in His passion (Col. 2:14). Romans 7 implicates that binding the Old Covenant upon men today is seeking to make people commit spiritual adultery with Christ—one cannot be married to Christ and the Ten Commandment Law. This does not mean that we are *without* law today or that covetousness is commended. The New Covenant condemns such (1 Cor. 6:10). Simply put, one cannot bind Old Testament Law and practices upon New Testament Christians because it has no jurisdiction over us anymore than Australian Law has jurisdiction over U.S. citizens. Does your preacher teach Christians are “dead” and “delivered” from the Old Testament Law or “bound” to it?

The passion of Christ teaches many things. We could add that it also shows the necessity of the church since Jesus purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Would you buy something with your blood that is unimportant? Why not investigate the church of Christ, the church Christ died for (Rom. 16:16; Eph. 5:23)?

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