

Jesus Taught That He Must Die

This is a simple sentence yet something that must be taught and defended. Jesus died for our sins we have no part in our salvation. Jesus died to pay for our sins not to be an example of holy living. Jesus died for sinners not for those who are worthy.

Mark 9:30-35 NKJ ³⁰ Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know *it*. ³¹ For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." ³² But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him. ³³ Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who *would be the* greatest. ³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

Jesus taught the disciples that the Son of Man must die. This is such a simple sentence. Why are the disciples confused? Why did Jesus have to teach this truth?

In January of the year 1530 a group of German princes along with representative from some of the free cities presented to the Emperor a document which we call "The Augsburg Confession." This document told the Emperor what the Bible correctly taught on certain issues. There were other that spoke against these teachings so that the princes wrote another document called the "Apology to the Augsburg Confession." In this case the word apology means defense. This second document was an attempt to defend what was said in the first.

In the confession they spoke about the same things which Jesus speaks about in our text. Like Jesus they speak plainly and simply. This is what is said in article 4 of the Augsburg confession.

Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.

That is it two sentences, four lines. Short and simple and sweet. And yet so viciously was this one sentence attacked by the enemies of the church that the princes were forced to write 61 pages in the Apology to defend it.

Why did Jesus have to TEACH this truth. Why were the disciples confused? Why did the confessor have to spend 61 pages on such a simply truth?

Because this is the heart of core of the Christian faith. Although it is simple and easy enough for a child to understand, nevertheless Satan so viciously attacks this one truth that we are often and easily lead astray.

If we were not such great fools and such great sinners, we could simply read this sentence and rejoice and that would be the end of the sermon. But then again if we all were not such great fools and sinners Jesus would have no need to have died. Because we are such great fools and such great sinners Jesus did die and rise again. Because we are such great fools it is easy for Satan to divert us and cause confusion and put a fog between our eyes and this simple sentence.

When we are children we hear, and we believe that Jesus died for our sins and we need nothing else other than to know that Jesus died for our sins. Yet as we grow older Satan confuses us and draws us slowly away so that more and more we forget what this means. Therefore, the older we are the longer we need this sermon to be. The longer we need to hear and think and ponder on this fact that Jesus died for our sins and rose again the third day.

Every little child among us knows what it means that Jesus died, yet the disciples are confused and can not grasp this meaning. They need to be taught and so do we.

Satan attempts to convince us that Jesus death is not enough.

Above all us Satan would have us forget that it was Jesus who died for our sins and make us think that we must do it ourselves. He would so dearly love for us to think that we must do something, even something small, ourselves so that we can say, "I did this."

My mother would always get annoyed with husbands who said, "we're pregnant."

"What do you have to do with it." She would say.

So much worse is it when people try to add a we or an I to what Jesus did. I accepted Jesus. I repented. I went to church. I was loving. I gave money to the poor. I have great faith. Any and every time Satan can convince us to add a little something to what Jesus did he rejoices. Jesus died for my sins but I . . . We forget that Jesus is the one who died.

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 ⁷ But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, ⁸ which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Christ claims for himself the glory of the cross. It is a glory that makes no sense to the disciples in our text. It is a glory which Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2 is hidden from the world. The world does not see any glory in the cross but only a dead man on a tree. But we who are saved know the glory of God revealed in the love of his Son.

This is a glory which Christ claims for himself. I died for your sins and rose again. I paid the price for your salvation.

Any attempt to add any I, to claim any credit for, or any part of our salvation is pointless and it is theft.

It is pointless because nothing we can do will make any difference with regard to our salvation. A little child might like to pretend that he is holding up the car but in reality, it is all the strength of the car jack. The child is adding nothing.

It is theft because Christ claims this as his glory. "The son of man must suffer and die." "only by the blood of the lamb."

There is no "I" or "WE" in our salvation there is only Christ.

Satan likes to convince us that Jesus died as an example for us.

The Holy Almighty God did not become man, suffer and die for the purpose of giving us an *example* of what we ought to do.

This is a particularly cunning like of Satan because the scriptures do often speak of Christ's example.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Jesus himself tells us this in our text.

Mark 9:35 "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

It is true that we should follow his example. But it is not true that this was His purpose in dying.

I love my daughter and do many things for her. It would be good if she one day did the same for her children. But that is not my purpose in the things I do for her. I do them simply because I love her and want to take care of her.

Jesus so loved us that he desired to accept the punishment of our sins in our place. He so loved us that he gladly died so that we might be saved. It is good if we follow his example and love one another, even giving our lives for each other, but it is not why he did it.

Regardless of how good we are at following his example he still loves us and died for our sins, therefore we are saved. Even if we fail to follow. In our text the disciples did not follow his example, but rather immediately began arguing over who was the greatest. Nevertheless, Jesus still died for them and loved them and saved them, as he does us.

Satan deceive us into thinking Jesus died only for the worthy.

Satan would have us believe that we are not worthy of Jesus. Jesus died for sinners he tells us but not you. Or he gets us to think that we are worthy and that is why Jesus saved us. Both ideas are wrong. It is true that we are not worthy. But Jesus died for us anyway.

If Jesus died only for the worthy than he died for no one at all.

The disciples are not worthy. They immediately begin to argue over who is the greatest.

David who committed adultery and murder was not worthy. Yet Nathan the prophet assure David that Jesus died for him when he tells him. "God has put away your sin."

Abraham was not worthy who frequently doubted God's promise and even came up with his own plan because he did not God was going to do what he said.

God has called himself our father and has taught us to repeat this over and over each and every day. A father does not love his children because they are worthy but merely because they are his children. We are his children because of his love not because of our obedience

These are only the crudest forms of such arguments, but Satan is more cunning than this. He is very good at making us think these things and many others without even realizing it. Therefore, it is necessary for Jesus to teach us his disciples over and over again, this simply sentence that he did die for our sins and rise again. For if we are not taught this constantly, we will quickly like the disciples become confused and not understand this simple and greatest of all truths.

"Chief of sinners though I be Jesus shed his blood for me."