

Various Scripture
Sermon 2

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February 9, 2020



INTRO: Last week we started a two week series titled "Faith Foundations". We are looking at 6 essential doctrines of Christianity. Last Sunday I spoke to you about the first three, 1. *The Authority of Scripture, and the Gospel*, 2. *Monotheism, and the Unity of the Godhead (Trinity)*, 3. *The Deity of Christ, and His Manhood*. Today, I want to continue the thought.

It has never been more important than it is today that Christians know WHAT and WHY they believe. And few do. My hope with this series was to introduce some of you to the key doctrines of our faith, and to reinforce for others the foundational truths that God's Word has declared to us.

I said last week, not all doctrines taught in scripture are *essential* to salvation. **BUT SOME ARE.** And it's important that we know, and that we share these essential truths

Everything Jesus taught and every word of scripture is important and has great benefit to those who read and take it to heart. But It's not only important, it's also absolute truth, and LIFE, and the only moral compass the world has to go by.

My prayer is that you will listen intently, take notes, and take these truths to heart. Now notice with me Essential truth number...

IV) SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN:

Substitutionary Atonement, or Vicarious Atonement, as it is sometimes referred to, is the act of Jesus dying for the sins of all mankind. Every one of us are in need of a Savior. This is true of all who have ever lived. **Romans 3:9-12, 22-25** "What shall we conclude then? Do (the Jews) have any advantage (over the Gentiles)? Not at all! ...Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. 10 As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.' ...22 The righteousness (of God) is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith."

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death (Gr. Thanatos; spiritual death, eternal separation from God) , but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Jesus was, quite literally, the substitution, the stand-in, for my death sentence. I should have had to pay the penalty for my sin, and you too, should have, for your sin. But Jesus became the Substitutionary Atonement received by God, on behalf of every man, woman, boy and girl who has and will ever live. He died for the sins of the world!

The question then is, why was that necessary?

IV) SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN:

CONTINUED Let me explain... Because of Adam's sin in the garden, and consequently, the sin of all mankind, because we all descend from Adam and have his nature, **BECAUSE OF OUR SIN**, fellowship between man and God was no longer possible. God is Holy. He is altogether Holy and Righteous, Good and Pure! He cannot sin, nor can He mingle with sin. And we are ALL sinners.

Now, at this point, our options are few. We know that the payment of sin is death, so either, we pay for our sins with our own lives, or another means of reparation, what Christians call **ATONEMENT**, has to be made on our behalf.

Now, we can certainly choose to pay for our own sins with our lives. But to do that, means eternal separation from God. Or, we can choose to accept the means by which **God offers**. **Ephesians 1:3-7** "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, (the very death of Christ on the cross) the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."

2 Corinthians 5:21 "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

1 Peter 2:24 "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."

CAN THE CHURCH SAY AMEN! Notice essential truth number...

V) THE BODILY RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND RETURN OF JESUS:

Most certainly, no other event in history rivals that of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. It is celebrated world wide, yearly, even after nearly 2000 years have past. And this truth is essential to Salvation and Christianity!

1 Corinthians 15:14 "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain."

Did you get that? If the resurrection did not take place, then Christianity is a sham, and every Christian a fool! **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures..."

Now listen to what Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, has to say...

Acts 1:1-3 "The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

IV) SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN:

V) THE BODILY RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND RETURN OF JESUS: CONTINUED Let there be no mistake, Jesus lived, He died, was buried, and HE ROSE FROM THE GRAVE, just like the Bible says. Many people saw Jesus after His resurrection...

1 Corinthians 15:3-7 “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.”

Jesus died and ROSE again. He remained on Earth 40 days after His resurrection and was seen by hundreds of people. He then ASCENDED into the Heavens, where He remains today interceding on our behalf. (He prays for you, watches over you, and cares for you) And He will come again, just as He said He would. After those 40 days with Jesus the disciples are anxious for Him to take the throne and restore Israel to it's former glory. But notice what happens...

Acts 1:6-11 “Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Christ will return someday.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

Now, let's look at the last Essential Truth of Christianity...

VI) SALVATION BY GRACE, THROUGH FAITH, AND NOTHING

ELSE: Last week we looked at the Gospel. The Gospel being the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST. It is our belief in, and acceptance of, the Gospel, that brings us into a right relationship with God. It's the experience we call, SALVATION.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

IV) SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN: V) THE BODILY RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND RETURN OF JESUS:

VI) SALVATION BY GRACE, THROUGH FAITH, AND NOTHING

ELSE: CONTINUED That's pretty plain. It doesn't need a lot of commentary. But let me say this, FAITH is only as good as it's object. And a faith that is placed anywhere other than in Jesus Christ is insufficient for salvation.

Jesus said in **John 14:6** *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me."*

That is an essential truth for Salvation.

John 3:36 *"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."*

Speaking of Jesus, Peter said in Acts 4:12 *"Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

1 Timothy 2:5 *"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,"*

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

CONCLUSION: I hope you have listened with a heart to learn and know the truth as we have looked at the Essentials of Christianity. Keep your notes. Review them. Study more about these important truths. If you are uncertain about your relationship with God, please take the time to settle it this morning. Let me leave you with a beautiful passage...

Titus 2:11-14 *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all man kind. 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."*