

His Work on the Cross and What Has Been Accomplished by It

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the profound and unfathomable significance of Christ's work on the cross, emphasizing the incomprehensible truth that the sinless Son of God was made sin for us, enduring immense suffering in fourfold ways - in Himself, from men, from the devil, and ultimately from God, bearing the full weight of divine judgment and wrath. Through His sacrificial death, He accomplished propitiation and substitution for believers, providing perfect justification, peace, acceptance, and access to God, delivering them from the power of darkness and securing an eternal inheritance. Gaebelein highlights the eternal efficacy of Christ's finished work on the cross, emphasizing the need for believers to live in light of this truth, glorifying God in body and spirit as those who have died to sin and are alive in Christ.

Description

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Transcript

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suffering of Christ" - "The role of incarnation in His sacrifice" - heading: "III" points: - "The completion of His work on the cross" - "The implications of 'It is finished'" - "The eternal efficacy of His sacrifice" - heading: "IV" points: - "The blessings of salvation through His work" - "Understanding propitiation and substitution" - "The assurance of peace and acceptance with God" - heading: "V" points: - "The call to live in light of His sacrifice" - "The responsibility of believers" - "Glorifying God through our lives" faq: - q: "What does it mean that Christ was made sin for us?" a: "It signifies that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of humanity, standing in the place of guilty sinners." - q: "Why is the suffering of Christ significant?" a: "His suffering illustrates the depth of His love and the seriousness of sin, as He endured both physical and spiritual anguish." - q: "What does 'It is finished' signify?" a: "This declaration confirms that Christ's work of atonement is complete and that salvation is fully accomplished through His sacrifice." - q: "How does the cross relate to our salvation?" a: "The cross is the source of our justification, peace, and acceptance with God, ensuring that all who believe are saved." - q: "What is the believer's responsibility after understanding the cross?" a: "Believers are called to live in a way that glorifies God, recognizing they are bought with a price." quotes: - "He who knew no sin was made sin for us!" - "It is finished!" - "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price." applicationPoints: - "Reflect on the depth of Christ's sacrifice and its personal significance in your life." - "Live in a manner that honors the price paid for your salvation, recognizing your identity in Christ." - "Share the message of the cross with others, emphasizing the availability of grace to all who believe." keywords: - "cross" - "atonement" - "suffering" - "salvation" - "propitiation" - "substitution" - "justification" - "peace with God" ---

And now let us consider His work on the cross and what has been accomplished by it. But who is able to speak worthily of this theme of all themes? Who can fathom the solemn yet blessed fact, the death of the Son of God on the cross? What tongue or pen can describe the sad, yet glorious truth, that the Just One died for the unjust, that Christ died for the ungodly! He who knew no sin was made sin for us! And what human mind can estimate the wonderful results of His work on the cross!

Some Christians speak as if the death on the cross, the work accomplished there, is so fully known to them, that they do not need any more instruction on it. They tell us that they search for deeper things. There can be nothing deeper than the death of God's Son on the cross. Depths are here which are unfathomable. We must ever turn back to the cross. Always we shall learn something new. With unspeakable Glory upon us and greater glory before us in eternal ages to come, the cross of Christ and the Lamb of God which has taken away the sin of the world can never be forgotten. But we shall never know what that death on the cross meant for Him and what it meant to God.

Made Sin for Us.

In Hebrews 10 we read of the sacrifices which were offered by the Jews year after year. These sacrifices could not take away sin. Then He, the Son of God, stepped forward and made His great declaration. Coming into the world He saith, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure" (verses 5-6). The body prepared puts before us again the fact of incarnation. That body was a prepared body, a holy body, an undefiled body, a body in which sin could not dwell and on which death had no claim. But when He took on that body, He likewise said: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In the tenth verse we read, "By the which will [the will of God, which dates back before the foundation of the world], we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. The holy Lamb of God, with no spot or blemish upon Him, shed His precious blood on the cross, to procure redemption. But what it all meant for Him who was as truly Man as He is God! Here was a Being

perfectly holy, One who had always pleased God and did His will, yea, His meat and drink was to do the will of Him that sent Him. Sin was the horrible defiling thing to Him. He, too, like the holy God, hated and hates sin. And yet such a One was made sin for us. He had to stand in the place of guilty sinners and all the waves and billows of divine judgment and wrath had to pass over Him. He drank the cup of wrath to the last drop.

He suffered in a fourfold way:

1. In Himself. Before He ever approached the garden of Gethsemane, He was troubled in His spirit. We hear Him say, "Now is my soul troubled ... Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour" (John 12:27). He looked on towards the cross. And why that agony in the garden? Why was His sweat as it were great drops of blood? Why the repeated prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me?" How many dishonoring explanations have been written of the Gethsemane suffering, as if He was afraid to die or that the devil tried to kill Him there to prevent His death on the cross, and that He feared the devil. But what was it? He suffered in Himself. His holy soul shrank back from that which a holy God must hate, that which He hated -- SIN. He was about to be made sin and He knew no sin. What suffering this produced in the Holy One of God to take all upon Himself and to stand in the sinner's place before a holy sin-hating God, our poor finite minds cannot realize.

2. He suffered from men. This he had foretold. When man, guilty man, cast himself upon the willing victim, all the wickedness and vileness and cruelty man is capable of committing was brought out and spent upon the blessed Son of God. The scourging, the buffeting, the mocking, the spitting and the shame connected with it, the shame of the cross, He despised. How that sensitive body must have quivered under it all!

3. He suffered from the devil. He had tempted Him. Nothing was left undone, what this being could do. All his cunning and powers were brought into use, with the one purpose to keep Him from going to the cross and dying in the sinner's place. And when at last he could not keep Him from going to the cross, then he cast himself upon the victim and heaped all his hatred and malice upon Him. He used man in all this awful work and no doubt the legions of demons. And in all this the Son of God was as a lamb, which is dumb before the shearers. He opened not His mouth.

4. But the greatest of all, He suffered from God. With hushed breath, we must speak of this. It is the Holy of Holies of the great work on the cross; the impenetrable mystery of the atoning work of the Son of God. From the darkness which enshrouded the cross and the blessed sufferer on the accursed tree, there came the mournful cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It made known the awful suffering, which the Lamb of God, the substitute of sinners, endured from the hand of a holy God. He was smitten and afflicted of God. Have you noticed that in the 22 Psalm this cry of the sufferer on the cross stands first? Man would have written the sufferings of Christ in a far different way. The descriptions of the sufferings not written by inspiration would have been in this wise: The physical sufferings, how they scourged Him, all the sickening details of that which even cruel Rome called the intermediate death, would have been pictured. Then would have followed a description of how the nails were driven into the blessed hands who had lovingly touched so many weary, sin-laden and disease-stricken bodies. All the agony of the cross and its shame would have been described first by man. Then how the multitude mocked and darkness came over the entire scene, then last of all, it would have been stated, He cried, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? But the Holy Spirit in this great Prophecy puts the cry of deepest agony first. Why? Because in that hour the great work of atonement, propitiation, sin-bearing, judgment and wrath enduring, was once and for all accomplished. In this same Psalm we read what men energized by

Satan's power, did unto Him. But man could not put Him to death. It is written, "Thou [that is God] hast brought me into the dust of death." God's own hand rested upon Him. "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). "It pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10). And elsewhere we read, what refers to the same atoning work of our Lord when He stood in the sinner's place.

"All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me" (Ps. 42:7).

"Thine arrows stick fast in me" (Ps. 38:2).

"Thy hand presseth me sore" (Ps. 38:2).

"Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit" (Ps. 88:6).

"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me" (Ps. 88:7).

"Thy fierce wrath goeth over me" (Ps. 88:16).

"I suffer Thy terrors" (Ps. 88:15).

But what it all meant for the Son of God! Who can tell out His sorrow and deep affliction? Never shall we fully discover the greatness of the price which was paid. The death of the cross, it has been truly said, stands perfectly alone. It can never be repeated and because of its eternal efficacy, will never need to be repeated.

It Is Finished.

And this great work He came to do, is finished. "It is finished!" thus He spoke on the cross and the words assure us that all is done. The rent veil and the open tomb tell us "It is finished." But what has been accomplished in this blessed work? We cannot fully grasp it now as long as we look into a glass darkly. When at last we are brought into His Presence, transformed into His own image, when we shall have share with Him in His glorious inheritance, when at last sin and death are no more and a new heaven and new earth are called into existence, then shall we more fully know what that work has accomplished. All, ALL we have and are, all we shall have and shall be as His own, has its blessed source in the cross of Christ. He died for all. He gave Himself a ransom for all. He tasted death for every man. He is the propitiation for the whole world (not for the sins of the whole world, else the whole world would be saved). It means His work is available to all sinners. Upon that fact that He died for all, the Gospel is preached to lost and guilty sinners. Christ died for the ungodly. "Whosoever will" -- "Whosoever believeth," these are the precious conditions of the Gospel of Grace which sound forth from the finished work of Christ on the cross. And all who believe on Him and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, for them He bore their sins on the cross. Each believing sinner can look back to the cross and can say, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me." He paid my debt. He bore my sins in His own body on the tree. He stood in my place. He was my substitute. He tasted death for me.

Much of the evil teachings of the present day, such as universal salvation, larger hope, millennial dawnism, etc., emanate from the fact that propitiation and substitution are not correctly understood. Propitiation is the Godward side of the sacrifice of Christ, with this God is satisfied. The propitiation is for the whole world. This does not mean that the whole world is therefore to be saved. He bore the sins of many -- not the sins of all. He was the substitute on the cross only for such who believe on Him.

And what do we possess who have believed on Him, own Him as our Saviour and our Substitute? Many Scriptures might be read in answer to this question. We cannot do so, but shall mention briefly a few things which all believing sinners share on account of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

We have a perfect justification. All our sins are forever put away, because they were borne and paid for by His death on the cross. The Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. All has been righteously and forever settled. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died" (Rom. 8:33-34). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

We have perfect Peace with God. Peace has been made in the blood of the cross. It can never be unmade. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Peace. So many Christians think their peace with God depends on their walk and service. If they sin, they think they have lost their peace and their standing before God and unless they are restored, they will be lost forever. Not our walk and service, not anything we have done, we do or shall do, is the ground of peace with God, but what God has done for us in Christ's atoning work on the cross.

Then we have a perfect acceptance and standing before God; perfect nearness and access to God. We are made nigh by the blood. With no more conscience of sins, we can stand in God's own presence, purged and cleansed, complete in Him, as near to God as He is.

His blessed work on the cross has made an end of the old man. We are dead to the world, to self, to sin, to the law. The old man was crucified with Christ. "sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14). This is the blessed message from the cross. We have deliverance from the power of darkness and a perfect title to an eternal inheritance. No uncertainty is attached to all this. We have salvation, are saved, forever secure, Sons of God, Heirs of God indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and much else, on account of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

And to all this we add that on the cross He loved the church and gave Himself for it. There He died for Israel and as a result the remnant of that people will some day be delivered from iniquity and perverseness, as Balaam beheld them, no iniquity in Jacob and no perverseness in Israel (Numbers 23:21). Groaning creation will ultimately be freed from the bondage of corruption and brought into the liberty of the sons of God, because He shed His blood on the cross. All things in heaven and on the earth (not things under the earth) will be reconciled in virtue of the death of Christ on the cross.

Ye Are Not Your Own.

Let us remember as such who have been reconciled and have redemption through His blood that we are bought with a price. Ye are not your own. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20). Through His death we are positionally dead; all who believe on Him have died. We are dead to the law, to the world, to sin. But are we truly living, walking and acting as such who have died, dead to sin and alive unto God? A child of God who walks after the flesh practically denies the power and value of the blessed finished work of Christ on the cross.

Let us exalt in our lives, by our words and deeds, the cross of Christ. "But 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" (Gal. 6:14).

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