

Jesus

Doing His Father's

Will



INTRODUCTION

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26). God's essence is love, truth, faithful, merciful, just, holy, righteous, peace and all other good attributes. He also thinks, reasons and decides.

His essence, nature, demands the exercise of righteous judgments which are revealed throughout the Bible; e.g., banishment of Adam and Eve from Paradise, Eden; destruction by the flood of the wicked of Noah's day, burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, plagues given to wicked Pharaoh and the Egyptians and the removal of Saul as King of Israel. God's righteous judgments can also be seen in the spirit world "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 1:6).

However, God wants all mankind to be reconciled to "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

This series of lessons examines the activities, works or functions of those who put their trust in Christ through obedience and call upon God to forgive them by being immersed into Christ's death in water, baptism, and put into Christ's Body, His Church, by God.

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The Bible Way Online - Randolph Dunn

thebiblewayonline.com

April 2019

The Father's Will

Lesson 1

Following the creation of the cosmos God desired a creation in His likeness. So, He created man and gave him the ability to make decisions. He created him from the dust of the earth but also in His image, likeness and nature. Man is not the exact representation of God but a likeness, as depicted below.

There are many references in the scriptures that describe God, the Father; God, the Son and God, the Spirit. Mortal man has many of these attributes but not to the same degree as God. The following is a comparison of some attributes of God and man.

GOD	MAN
God loves 1 John 4:8 but hates sin	Man can love and hate fellowman
God is life. John 1:4	Man lives but will die
God is truth. John 14:6	Man can know some truth
God is just (holy, righteous) 2 Thessalonians 1:6	Man tends to put self ahead of what is just and right
God is mercy. Luke 6:36	Man seeks revenge
God is peace. 2 John 3 and John 14:7	Man wars and strives against each other
God is faithful. 1 Corinthians 10:13	Man struggles to be faithful but breaks covenants
God is without sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21	Man yields to temptation and sins

Following the creation God placed man in a paradise with the instruction to:

- a. be fruitful and multiply,
- b. tend the Garden of Eden
- c. not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
- d.

For an unknown period of time God walked and talked with man as he was a perfect creation, righteous.

When Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan they chose to believe his lie over truth. They chose self over God. They became unfaithful severing their perfect relationship with their creator. Mankind continued his rebellious ways becoming so wicked that God was grieved and regretted He had ever made man. But since God is love, He desires for man to return to the relationship in which he was created.

Response of Prominent Old Testament Individuals

Adam

Now Adam and Eve had a choice. They could obey and do as God said and be pleasing to Him, or chose not to obey and satisfy their own desires by ignoring God's instructions. As we all know they **chose self** rather than God. They sinned. God was displeased. They suffered the consequences of their act of disobedience receiving the promise of God, which was death (Genesis 1-3). Paul tells us that all men have sinned and that the wages of sin is death (Romans 3:23).

Noah

Noah was blameless and walked with God while others had corrupted their ways and had become "exceedingly wicked." God was filled with pain and was grieved that he had ever created man (Genesis 6). Peter tells us that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, a herald, a proclaimer (2 Peter 2:5). Noah **obeyed God**, built the ark and by his actions of obedience and preaching was a light reflecting God's justice to the wicked of their land.

Following the flood God instructed Noah and his sons to "be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1). Some years later, 101 years according to Word Bible Timeline while Noah was still living, the people again disobeyed God stating "let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens (sky), so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered" (Genesis 11).

Later God began to make man aware of sin and its consequences. He selected Abraham to begin a pathway to redemption which culminated in the ultimate sacrifice for sin by Jesus doing His Father's will.

Abraham

God told Abraham to leave his father and his native country and that through him God would bless all the peoples of the Earth (Genesis 12). The Hebrew writer tells us that "by faith" [belief put in action (rd)] Abraham **obeyed and went**. At various times and places Abraham built altars and called upon the name of the Lord. However, he was not perfect as he lived deceitfully while in Egypt. God inflicted serious diseases upon Pharaoh and his household which Pharaoh properly attributed to Abraham's God. But Abraham was still accepted by God.

Moses

Hundreds of years pass. Moses, a descendent of Abraham, chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward (Hebrews 11:25-26). A few years later God called Moses to deliver His people out of bondage. Moses **obeyed** God and delivered the Children of Israel from Egyptian slavery even as they groaned and rebelled by wanting to return to Egypt.

Elijah

Elijah, God's prophet to Israel, was one of two people not to die. He along with Moses talked with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration a short time prior to Jesus' crucifixion (Mark 9:1-4). Obviously, Elijah **did God's will**.

Ezekiel

Many times, God said to Ezekiel "Son of Man" speak to my people, go tell them, prophecy to them, and prophecy against them. "Then the vision I had seen went up from me, and **I told** [prophesied (rd)] **the exiles everything the Lord** had shown me" (Ezekiel 11:24b-25).

In every generation man needs to hear, understand and **do** the Will of God in order for him to be redeemed and reconciled to God.

Questions

1. God created man in His likeness but without decision ability.
True ___ False ___

2. Adam and Eve were not given any instructions and limitations.
True ___ False ___

3. Satan causes Adam and Eve to sin.
True ___ False ___

4. Who was to bless all people on the earth?
 - a. ___ Noah
 - b. ___ Abraham
 - c. ___ Moses
 - d. ___ Elijah
 - e. ___ A descendant of Abraham

5. None of the prominent Old Testament men sinned.
True ___ False ___

Choices

Lesson 2

Choices of the Father and the Son

Before the beginning of time on earth God made choices by the creating various levels of angels including Michael, Gabriel and Satan. Some angles chose not to keep their proper domain, but rebelled. God chose to reserve these angles in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment (Jude 1:6).

God [Father, Son and Holy Spirit] also chose to create man with the ability to decide. We know this because he said "And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'" (Genesis 2:16-17) Thus they were given the ability to choose to eat or not to eat.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (John 3:16).

God, the Son, chose to become flesh in the form of Jesus of Nazareth to live among men and face temptations, trials and rejection by the very beings he had created (Philippians 2:6).

Statements about the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth

Old Testament

Here are just few of over 60 prophecies and their fulfillment.

Jeremiah 23:5 - "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."

Matthew 1:1 - "This is a record of the life of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

Luke 3:23-38 – Luke traced the genealogy of Jesus back through David all the way to Adam.

Zechariah 9:9 – "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Matthew 21:6-7 – "And the disciples went, and did even as Jesus appointed them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their garments; and he sat thereon."

Isaiah 53:5 – "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Matthew 27:26 – "Then released he unto them Barabbas; but Jesus he scourged and delivered to be crucified."

Isaiah 53:7 – "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth."

Matthew 27:12-14 – "While Jesus was being accused by the high priests and elders, he made no reply. Then Pilate asked him, 'Don't you hear how many charges they're bringing against you?' But Jesus did not reply at all, so that the governor was very surprised."

Isaiah 53:9 – "And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth."

Matthew 27:57-59 – "Later that evening, a rich man arrived from Arimathea. His name was Joseph, and he had become a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and Pilate ordered it to be done. So, Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. Then he placed it in his own new tomb, which he had cut out of the rock. After rolling a large stone across the door of the tomb, he left."

Isaiah 61:1-2 - "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed and to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,"

Luke 4:16-19; 21 – “And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written:

‘The spirit of the lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the lord.’

“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

New Testament

John the Apostle stated “In the beginning, the Word existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. Through him all things were made, and apart from him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life brought light to humanity. And the light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

“He [John] came as a witness to testify about the light, so that all might believe because of him. John [the Baptist] was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. This was the true light that enlightens every person by his coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him. Yet the world did not recognize him. He came to his own creation, yet his own people did not receive him. However, to all who received him, those believing in his name, he gave authority to become God's children, who were born, not merely in a genetic sense, nor from lust, nor from man's desire, but from the will of God. The Word became flesh and lived among us. We gazed on his glory, the kind of glory that belongs to the Father's unique Son, who is full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-14).

Matthew recorded the following event “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to stop him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and are you coming to me?’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be this way for now, because this is the proper way for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ At this, he permitted him to be baptized. When Jesus had been baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Suddenly the heavens opened up for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. Then a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love. I am pleased with him” (Matthew 3:13-17)!

John the Baptist testified “John told the truth about him when he cried out, “This is the person about whom I said, ‘The one who comes after me ranks higher than me, because he existed before me.’” “We have all received one gracious gift after another from his abundance, because while the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus the Messiah” (John 1:15-17).

Peter replied, when Jesus asked who do you say that I am, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!” (Matthew 16:16)

Secular writers

Thallus

Thallus, a Samaritan-born historian who lived and worked in Rome about A.D. 52, was quoted by Julius Africanus, a Christian chronographer of the late second century.¹ “Thallus, in the third book of his histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun.” Africanus stated his objection to the report arguing that an eclipse of the sun cannot occur during the full moon, as was the case when Jesus died at Passover time. The force of the reference to Thallus is that the circumstances of Jesus' death were known and discussed in the Imperial City as early as the middle of the first century. The fact of Jesus' crucifixion must have been fairly well known by that time, to the extent that unbelievers like Thallus thought it necessary to explain the matter of the darkness as a natural phenomenon. ... Ironically, Thallus' efforts have been turned into the mainstream of historical proof for Jesus and for the reliability of Mark's account of the darkness at his death.”²

Mara Bar-Serapion

"A manuscript in the British Museum preserves the text of a letter sent to his son by a Syrian named Mara Bar-Serapion. The father illustrated the folly of persecuting wise men like Socrates, Pythagoras, and the wise king of the Jews, which the context obviously shows to be Jesus. "What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as a judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their king? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men: the Athenians died of hunger; the Samians were overwhelmed by the seas; the Jews, ruined and driven from their land, live in complete dispersion. ... Nor did the wise King die for good; he lived on in the teaching which He had given".³

Cornelius Tacitus

A Roman historian living from about AD 50 to AD 100 wrote regarding Nero's fire. "Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus".⁴

Plinius Secundus

A Roman governor in AD 112 wrote Emperor Trajan "They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as God, and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wicked deed ... after which it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to partake of food, but food of an ordinary kind".⁵

Seutonius

An annalist and court official of the Imperial House during the reign of Hadrian wrote about AD 120 in the Life of Claudius. "As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome."⁶ Edward C. Wharton then states "The reason for the fame of this quotation is due to the fact that Luke, some sixty years earlier, had recorded this same incident as the reason for the apostle Paul yoking up with a Christian Jewish couple named Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-2). Again, the mention of Christ in the historical context is observed in extra-biblical literature."⁷

Flavius Josephus

Josephus, a first-century Romano-Jewish scholar, historian, has an interesting observation. "There arose about this time Jesus, a wise man, if indeed we should call him a man; for he was a doer of marvelous deeds, a teacher of men who receive the truth with pleasure. He won over many Jews and also many Greeks. This man was the Messiah. And when Pilate had condemned him to the cross at the instigation of our own leaders, those who had loved him from the first did not cease. For he appeared to them on the third day alive again, as the prophets had predicted and said many other wonderful things about him. And even now the race of Christians, so named after him, has not yet died out."⁸

The following quote from F. F. Bruce summarizes the secular writings about Jesus very clearly. "Whatever else may be thought of the evidence from early Jewish and Gentile writers...it does at least establish, for those who refuse the witness of Christian writings, the historical character of Jesus himself. Some writers may toy with the fancy of a 'Christ-myth,' but they do not do so on the ground of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic [self-evident (rd)] for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not historians who propagate the 'Christ-myth' theories."⁹

Jesus before Pilate

Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I was born for this, and I came into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is committed to the truth listens to my voice."

With these prophecies and testimony, it should be clear that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God who came to earth in human form to do the will of the Father. God's will is for man to be reconciled unto Him "The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some people understand slowness, but is being patient with you. He does not want anyone to perish, but wants everyone to repent" (2 Peter 3:9).

Forgiveness of sins required a sin-offering that only Christ being sinless could fulfill. Thus, Christ offered Himself up by allowing the rebellious Jews acting through the Roman Government to accomplish God's purpose by crucifying Christ.

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay (Act 2:22-23).

Footnotes

1. F. F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents, Eerdmens, p. 113.
2. Edward C. Wharton, Christianity: A Clear Case of History, Howard p. 7.
3. British Museum Syriac Mss., F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament, p. 31.
4. The Annals and the Histories, 15:44. From Britannica Great Books, Vol. 15, p. 168.
5. Epistles, 10:96.
6. Life of Claudius, 25:4
7. Edward C. Wharton, Christianity: A Clear Case of History, Howard p. 11.
8. Antiquities, 18,3. 3.
9. F. F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents. p119. All the above were cited by Edward C. Wharton in his book Christianity: A Clear Case of History

Questions

1. Some angles rebelled against God.
True ____ False ____
2. There were many of prophecies in the Old Testament about Jesus most of which were not reliable.
True ____ False ____
3. There is no evidence external of the Bible that Jesus of Nazareth ever lived.
True ____ False ____
4. The witnesses to Jesus as the Son of God were
 - a. ____ Holy Spirit
 - b. ____ High Priest
 - c. ____ Apostles
 - d. ____ John the Baptist
 - e. ____ All the above
 - f. ____ a, b, c,
 - g. ____ a, c, d
5. Jesus quoting the prophet Isaiah about Himself stating that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled. ____
True ____ False ____

Jesus, God in the Flesh

Lesson 3

But at just the right time or perfect situation, God came to earth in the fleshly body of Jesus of Nazareth to become the only sacrifice to atone for man's sins. In doing so He provided the only way for man's deliverance from the bondage of sin, e.g., salvation and reconciliation with God.

Throughout the Gospels we constantly read statements from Jesus about why He left His abode in Heaven with God. His actions and statements show His purpose was to glorify God by completing the work He was sent to do as He stated:

I had to be in My Father's House

I must do the work that the Father gave me to finish,

I have brought you glory on earth by completing Your work.

This was emphasized by Matthew when Jesus stated "**come unto me**, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and **learn of me**" (Matthew 11:28-29). For them to come and "learn of Me" Jesus had to **do His Father's will** (John 6:38) which was doing **the work that God sent Him to do** (John 9:4).

Work Jesus Came To Do

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." ... "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6, 8) because he wanted **to seek and save the lost** (Luke 19:10).

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance [a change from a life of sin and self to one of righteousness reflecting God]" (2 Peter 3:9).

Therefore, **God's will was to provide a way for His creation to be reconciled unto Him.** "God ... wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man of flesh - Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men (1 Timothy 2:4-6 also Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:25 and Hebrews 9:15). John put it this way "For God so loved the world that **he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes** [*pisteuo* – commits to] **in him shall not perish but have eternal life**" (John 3:16).

"For the grace of God [Jesus, the Christ (rd)] that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). But "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only **he who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). So "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord' and do not do what I say" (Luke 6:46)?

One who hears His Words, the way unto salvation, and fails to accept and obey them is "like a man who built a house on the ground [earth. sand or dirt as opposed to stone (rd)] without a foundation, consequently, like the house, his destruction will be complete" (Luke 6:49).

"My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working" (John 5:17). Jesus did His Father's work as he lived a sinless life pleasing God in order to offer His life and body as the only and perfect sacrifice to God to atone [take the place (rd)] for man's sins. He taught that all who believe on [trust in and commit to by obedience (rd)] Him would have eternal life with the Father (John 3:15, 16). He also said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you really knew [have an intimate relationship with (rd)] me, you would know my Father as well" (John 14:6-7). "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it" (John 5:21). "For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man" (John 5:26-27).

Jesus stated in John 17:1-4 "I When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do."

Questions

1. When did Jesus leave Heaven and come to earth
 - a. ___ When the Jews were expecting Him
 - b. ___ At just the right time
 - c. ___ When the Gentiles were rejecting their mythological gods and paganism

2. There is only one way for man to be forgiven of their sins and reconciled back to their creator.
True ___ False ___

3. While on earth Jesus:
 - a. ___ Died for the ungodly
 - b. ___ Finished the work that the Father gave Him to do
 - c. ___ Brought glory to the Father by completing the work
The Father gave Him to do.
 - d. ___ All the above

4. God desires for all mankind to be reconciled to Him and that none perish
True ___ False ___

5. Only those who do the Fathers will are promised forgiveness and the Kingdom of Heaven.
True ___ False ___

Crucifixion

Lesson 4

Just what did the body of Jesus of Nazareth actually endure during those hours of torture?

The physical passion of the Christ began in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, the one of greatest physiological interest is the bloody sweat. It is interesting that St. Luke, the physician, is the only one to mention this. He says, "And being in Agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground." (Luke 22:44)

After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was next brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiphus, the High Priest. It is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiphus. The palace guards then blind-folded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat upon Him, and struck Him in the face.

In the early morning, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, Jesus is taken across the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the

Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. It was in response to the cries of the mob that Pilate ordered Bar-Abbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion.

There is much disagreement among authorities about the unusual scourging as a prelude to crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who allegedly claimed to be the King of the Jews.

Preparations for the scourging were carried out when the Prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful the Romans would have made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter, but the Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes.

The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first the thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles.

The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally, the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. Flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used in bundles for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.

After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. Already having adhered to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, its removal causes excruciating pain just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, and almost as though He were again being whipped, the wounds once more begin to bleed.

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves, and the execution detail of Roman soldiers headed by a centurion begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance.

The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock, until the 650-yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed.

Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus is quickly thrown backward with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moves to the other side and repeats the action being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stipes and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed in place.

The left foot is now pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The Victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists excruciating pain shoots along the fingers and

up the arms to explode in the brain -- the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

At this point, as the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by his arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, he is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences recorded:

The first, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The second, to the penitent thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief-stricken adolescent John -- the beloved Apostle -- he said, "Behold thy mother." Then, looking to His mother Mary, "Woman behold thy son."

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain where tissue is torn from His lacerated back. He moves up and down against the rough timber enduring hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asp. Then another agony begins: a terrible crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

One remembers again the 22nd Psalm, the 14th verse: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

It is now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level; the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissue; the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain.

Jesus gasps His fifth cry, "I thirst."

One remembers another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

A sponge soaked in posca, the cheap, sour wine which is the staple drink of the Roman legionaries, is lifted to His lips. He apparently doesn't take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremes, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth words "It is finished."

His mission of atonement is now complete. Finally He chooses to die. With one last surge of strength, he once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs, takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father! Into thy hands I commit my spirit."

The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crurifracture, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; thus, the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when the soldiers came to Jesus they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John reports: "And immediately there came out blood and water." That is, there was an escape of water fluid from the sac surrounding the heart, giving postmortem evidence that Our Lord died not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure (a broken heart) due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

Thus we have had our glimpse -- including the medical evidence -- of that epitome of evil which man has exhibited toward Man and **toward God. It has been a terrible sight, and more than enough to leave** us despondent and depressed. How grateful we can be that we have the great sequel in the infinite mercy of God toward man.

Adapted from – “A Physician Testifies About the Crucifixion, Dr. C. Truman Davis, connections.com/Kcundick/crucifix.html”

David foretold it this way “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? ... But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him. ... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. ... All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him — those who cannot keep themselves alive. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn — for he has done it” (Psalm 22:1-8; 14-18; 27-31).

Questions

1. Jesus was arrested by the leaders of the Jews in the darkness of night.
True ____ False ____
2. In order to please the mob of Jews Pilate ordered Jesus to be crucified even though he found him innocent of the charges brought by the Jews.
True ____ False ____
3. According to Jewish law Jesus was treated fairly and with respect in His trial before the Sanhedrin, their court.
True ____ False ____
4. There were many prophecies in the Psalms about Jesus' and His death
True ____ False ____
5. By His death Jesus had completed The Father's will stating while on the cross “It is Finished” shortly before His death.
True ____ False ____

Resurrection

Lesson 5

Jesus of Nazareth, The Messiah, did His Father's will (John 6:38) by offering His body as the only sacrifice that could atone for man's sins, forgiveness. His sin offering was accepted by God as evidenced of His resurrection from death. Without His resurrection Jesus' death would have been meaningless, no different than all mankind.

As a result, His sacrificial sin offering and resurrection Jesus established a new covenant with man (Hebrews 9:15). Following man's death to sin and burial into Christ blood by immersion in water, God resurrected him, created a new spiritual being and put him into Christ's body with those previously put into His Kingdom prior to Pentecost (Luke 22:29).

This body of believers, His *ekklesia*, those called out the darkness of sin (Matthew 16:18) into His Light, righteousness, (1 Peter 2:9) are the forgiven and redeemed people - not a building or some religious organization.

Therefore, the will of the Father was for Jesus, God in the flesh, to provide the perfect sacrifice for man's sins and communicate His message of salvation by words, signs and wonders so that everyone would have the **opportunity to accept salvation by trusting** in Jesus' words and life, by **believing** [faith in action based upon knowledge (rd)] and by **committing to** Him through obedience. Those who responded to His call became the called out, His disciples, His Body. They are said to be in Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14). They are His Church, His Assembly.

Belief - not a onetime event:

- "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship" (Acts 2:42). They taught "Christ and Him crucified."
- "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:1-2).
- All who accept God's word delivered by the apostles, prophets and disciples, remain faithful in Christ and continue to be united as one set an example so the world may believe that God sent Jesus to do His will (John 17:10).

Paul told the Romans "Everyone who calls [*epikaleo* – to invoke (plead)] on the name of the Lord, [through the actions of trust, obedience and commitment (rd)] will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe [commit to (rd)] in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching (*kerusso* – herald, proclaim) to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news [gospel (rd)]' " (Romans 10:13-15)! Earlier in Romans 1:16 Paul stated "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes."

Jesus' Instructions To His Disciples

"My food," said Jesus "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor" (John 4:34-38).

What is this sowing and reaping that those in Christ are to do?

Make Disciples

"Jesus told His disciples shortly before He returned to the Father that 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name [authority Strong's] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'" (Matthew 28:18-19).

"Go into all the world and preach [proclaim] the good news (salvation is through Christ's life, atoning sacrifice (death) burial and resurrection) to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16).

Those who accept the message are to be taught to "observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). In Acts 2:42 we find "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread [probably eating their common meal together or the Lord's Supper but probably both (rd)] and the prayers."

The apostle Paul stated "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, [those who act upon their faith (rd)]" (Romans 1:16).

Were the apostles and disciples the only ones who had the task of preaching/teaching the Gospel? NO.

"On that day [stoning of Stephen (rd)] a great persecution broke out against those belonging to the way [those in Christ (rd)] at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. ... Those who had been scattered preached [*euaggelizo*] evangelized another Greek word *keérux* is generally translated as preach] the word wherever they went" (Acts 8:1-5).

Build Up One Another

Encourage and Exhort - "Beware, brethren, [Christians (rd)] lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief [no longer committed to (rd)] in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily [not just when assembled together; i.e., Sunday and Wednesday (rd)], while it is called "Today," lest any of you [a Christian brother (rd)] be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12-13). "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Comfort and Edify - To the Christians in Thessalonica Paul "sent Timothy, our brother and minister, servant, of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, that no one should be shaken by these afflictions" ... "For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thessalonians 3:2-3; 5:9-11).

Perform Works of Service

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).

Jesus had someone come to Him asking - "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life" (Matthew 19:16 and Luke 18:18)? He perhaps was of the opinion that he could earn eternal life by doing a certain amount of good works. The purpose of doing good works is not to obtain some reward, such as eternal life. Good works must come from an attitude of love because - he is my Christian brother, my family, my neighbor or my fellowman in need. Jesus' reply to the questioner lets us know that works done because of command or duty are not acceptable as they are not from a heart of love.

This is expounded on by Paul in Galatians 6:7-10. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh [self or self-satisfaction (rd)] will from the flesh reap corruption [destruction (Thayer's) eternal death (rd)], but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." Therefore, if we do not sow with an attitude of love, we will not reap the benefits of love.

Paul instructed Timothy similarly in regard to taking care of one's family "Take care of any widow who has no one else to care for her. But if she has children or grandchildren, their first responsibility is to show godliness at home and repay their parents by taking care of them. This is something that pleases God. ... But

those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers" (1 Timothy 5:3-8).

Infants are helpless. They must grow and mature to become productive adults. Likewise, the diligent studying and abounding in works the Father prepared for us to do is the food and exercise needed for Christians to mature and become faithful servants (1 Peter 2:2).

An examination of the New Testament provides great insight into the doing of good works within the Body for it to be effective.

1 Corinthians 15:58 – “So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.”

Colossians 1:10 – “Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.”

1 Timothy 6:17-19 – “Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.”

Titus 2:7 – “You yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind.”

Conclusion

Jesus of Nazareth took on a body of flesh in the likeness of man, His creation, for the purpose of offering His sinless life as the only sacrifice acceptable to God for the forgiveness of man's sins.

God accepted His sin offering by raising Him from the dead.

While dying on the cross as that atoning sacrifice Jesus stated “It is finished” as He had completely done all The Father's will. Now man has the opportunity to be forgiven and reconciled back to the righteous relationship with His Creator by also doing The Father's will.

Questions

1. God's resurrection of Jesus shows that He accepted Jesus' sin offering
True ____ False ____
2. Without His resurrection Jesus atoning sacrifice is meaningless
True ____ False ____
3. Those in Christ do God's will when they
 - a. ____Attend a church worship service
 - b. ____Teach the Gospel of Christ
 - c. ____Encourage Christians to remain faithful
 - d. ____All the above

e. ____ a and c

f. ____ b and c

4. By doing a certain amount of good works one can earn salvation.

True ____ False ____

5. Whatever a man sows he will reap applies both to the physical and the spiritual

True ____ False ____