



Year of Growth Teaching Series  
Spring 2018 – **Sin and Salvation 3**  
the 10 & the 5: 11 February

**Reading:** Colossians 2:9-15

<sup>9</sup> *Jesus is the physical expression of the full nature, character, power and glory of God.* <sup>10</sup> *You've been made complete in him, the ultimate power and authority.* <sup>11</sup> *Jesus transforms you by cutting away your old life, something you couldn't do for yourself.*

<sup>12</sup> *Baptism is a wonderful symbol of what Jesus accomplished. You 'act out' his death and burial when you go under the water, joining him in the grave and dying to your old self. Then you burst up out of the water into your new life in Jesus, confident that the very power God exerted to raise him from the dead is now at work in you.*

<sup>13</sup> *This is the heart of what God has done for you. You were finished, lifeless, without a hope or a prayer, but God has raised you to new life with Jesus, forgiving our sins.* <sup>14</sup> *The Law, with its rules and regulations, accused us at every turn, daubing our sins like graffiti for all to see. But God has erased it all, called time on the Law and nailed every accusation to the cross through the body of his Son.* <sup>15</sup> *The cross took the powers of darkness by complete surprise, destroying their weapons. Like a conquering general, Jesus paraded them as prisoners of war for all to see. That's the power of the cross.*

*(‘Who?’ A fresh retelling of the New Testament © Bible Society / Paul Langham)*

<sup>9</sup> *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,* <sup>10</sup> *and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.* <sup>11</sup> *In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ,* <sup>12</sup> *having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.*

<sup>13</sup> *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,* <sup>14</sup> *having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.* <sup>15</sup> *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

*NIV (UK)*

### **RE-CAP on ‘The Year of Growth’ teaching series**

You can find resources at: [https://www.ccweb.org.uk/Groups/299249/Year\\_of\\_Growth.aspx](https://www.ccweb.org.uk/Groups/299249/Year_of_Growth.aspx)

You can listen to previous talks at the 10 & the 5 here: <https://www.ccweb.org.uk/Media/AllMedia.aspx>

In the previous talks in this mini-series, ‘Sin and Salvation’ (January 28 & February 4), we learnt that our ‘evident’ sins are but the outward and visible expression of something that can be traced back to our inner reality – the distance between ourselves and Jesus caused by the absence of faith. Sin, we saw, is ultimately a matter of disconnection – this is what Paul means when he writes to the Ephesians that they were

When Paul spells out to the the reality of their pre-conversion state

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins ... (Ephesians 2:1)*

He is talking about sin’s deepest reality – it deadens our spirit, that which is designed for and enables connection with God. It is our breaking of this connection that is sin, and makes evident sin possible.

In other words, sin is essentially about connection – or rather disconnection in our relationship with God.

## THE CENTRALITY OF THE CROSS

- Not plan B
- The essence of all preaching – ‘We preach Christ crucified’ (1 Corinthians 1:23)

## METAPHORS (WORD PICTURES) OF THE CROSS

- What did the Cross achieve?
- Why is it a triumph?
- Why is it just?

On one level, we can accept that the Cross is just because the Lord has declared it to be so ...

### 1 **Redemption** (Paying a price / ransom to secure **freedom** / deliverance)

*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a **ransom** for many.*  
Matthew 20:28

### 2 **Justification** (Declaring to be **righteous** / Acquittal in a court of law)

### 3 **Sacrifice** (The shedding of **blood** to affect **forgiveness**)

- Day Of Atonement
- Leviticus 16
- Hebrews 9 & 10
- Then annual, in Christ ‘once and for all’
- Passover: the Sovereign act of God to deliver his people – Exodus 12

### 4 **Substitution**

- Propitiation (‘hilaskomai’ = the turning away of wrath)
- The modern ‘problem’ with the wrath of God
- In the OT more than 20 Hebrew words for & more than 580 references to God’s wrath
- God cannot abide sin
- Christ as propitiation, offering himself to make atonement in our place
- The death of Jesus Christ was an act of substitutionary atonement (he died in my place)

Recent claims by some theologians and church leaders that this amounts to ‘cosmic child abuse’ simply reveals poor theology. Such a claim could only be sustained if Jesus (as son) were inferior to God (as father) – then, as in the comparative human relationship, the father would be in a position of power and the son coerced to submit to the father’s will. But the Christian church has always taught that Father & Son (& Holy Spirit) are equal within the Trinity. As no such power relationship exists, there is no case for a charge of ‘abuse’

The biblical truth of Jesus as willing victim is captured in R S Thomas’ poem, ‘The Coming’

And God held in his hand  
A small globe. Look he said.  
The son looked. Far off,  
As through water, he saw  
A scorched land of fierce

Colour. The light burned  
There; crusted buildings  
Cast their shadows: a bright  
Serpent, A river  
Uncoiled itself, radiant  
With slime.

On a bare  
Hill a bare tree saddened  
The sky. Many People  
Held out their thin arms  
To it, as though waiting  
For a vanished April  
To return to its crossed  
Boughs. The son watched  
Them. Let me go there, he said.

## 5 Reconciliation

Making enemies friends **once more**

### QUESTIONS

Which of the metaphors (word pictures) which the New Testament uses of the Cross appeals most to you and why?

Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross

- you are guaranteed salvation purely because of what Jesus has done?
- the demand for blood to secure forgiveness has been met?
- the price of setting you free has been paid on the nail?
- you have been changed from being an enemy of God into a friend of God?
- the wrath of God is turned away from you?
- you have been legally acquitted of all charges against you?

Is the Cross central to your life? If it is, what are the hallmarks by which this is evident? If not, what needs to change?

Spend some time thinking about the wonder of your salvation. What does it mean to be justified? What difference does it make to know you are 'saved from God's wrath?' How would you describe to a non-believing friend what it feels like to 'have peace with God.'

For your worship time, read through one of the gospel accounts of Jesus' death in its entirety as a group together, perhaps taking a section of the text each. You can find them in Matthew 26:36–27:61; Mark 14:32–15:47; Luke 22:39–23:56; or John 18:1–19:42. Pause awhile after each section and imagine what it must have been like for Jesus. Look out for the moments of psychological, physical and spiritual trauma

listed in the sermon notes. Spend some time thanking Jesus for being willing to go through all that suffering just for you.

What spiritual sacrifice can you offer to God this week in grateful response to the gift of Jesus Christ?

*Paul Langham, February 2018*