

*Victory of the Cross*  
Colossians 2:11-5, 3:1-17

Sermon

*Hobart, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012*

*Devonport, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

*Launceston, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

## Scripture Readings:

### **Psalm 48: 4-11**

- <sup>4</sup> The kings of the earth joined forces  
and advanced against the city.
- <sup>5</sup> But when they saw it, they were stunned;  
they were terrified and ran away.
- <sup>6</sup> They were gripped with terror  
and writhed in pain like a woman in labor.
- <sup>7</sup> You destroyed them like the mighty ships of Tarshish  
shattered by a powerful east wind.
- <sup>8</sup> We had heard of the city's glory,  
but now we have seen it ourselves—  
the city of the LORD of Heaven's Armies.  
It is the city of our God;  
he will make it safe forever.
- <sup>9</sup> O God, we meditate on your unfailing love  
as we worship in your Temple.
- <sup>10</sup> As your name deserves, O God,  
you will be praised to the ends of the earth.  
Your strong right hand is filled with victory.
- <sup>11</sup> Let the people on Mount Zion rejoice.  
Let all the towns of Judah be glad  
because of your justice.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Ps 48:4-11). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

### **Colossians 2:11-15, 3:1-4**

<sup>11</sup> When you came to Christ, you were “circumcised,” but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature.\*

<sup>12</sup> For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

<sup>13</sup> You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup> He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

<sup>15</sup> In this way, he disarmed\* the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.<sup>2</sup>

### **3:1-4**

3 Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand.

2 Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. 3 For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.

4 And when Christ, who is your\* life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.<sup>3</sup>

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\* Greek *the cutting away of the body of the flesh*.

\* Or *he stripped off*.

<sup>2</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Col 2:11-15). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

\* Some manuscripts read *our*.

<sup>3</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Col 3:1-4). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

## INTRODUCTION:

### I. WHY DID JESUS DIE?

#### A. ONE OF THE NEW ATHEISTS MAIN COMPLAINTS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

1. Is, “How could a loving God have his son killed”

#### B. COULDN'T GOD HAVE SAVED US WITHOUT HAVING TO SEND JESUS TO DIE FOR US?

1. Couldn't he just have forgiven us anyway?

## S.P.S:

#### A. IN HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY THE WESTERN CHURCH HAS EMPHASISED JESUS' DEATH FOR OUR SINS

1. The Eastern Church has emphasised how Jesus was raised for our justification
2. In Roman Catholic churches you see more crucifixes, images of Jesus nailed to the cross, symbolizing his death
3. In Protestant churches you see more empty crosses, symbolizing Jesus' resurrection

#### B. KARL BARTH

1. Encourages us to understand how Jesus' death and resurrection are both inextricably linked and that we should not emphasise one at the expense of the other

We must see two things together, we must always understand one by the other. In the history of the Christian faith it has, indeed, always been the case that the knowledge of Christians has gravitated more to the one side or to the other.

Of course there is no Easter without Good Friday, but equally certainly there is no Good Friday without Easter!<sup>4</sup>

**C. BARTH COMMENTS THAT THIS OUGHT TO IMPACT THE WAY IN WHICH WE COMMEMORATE GOOD FRIDAY;**

We shall in that case celebrate Good Friday quite differently, and perhaps it would be well not to sing on Good Friday the doleful, sad Passion hymns, but to begin to sing Easter hymns. It is not a sad and miserable business that took place on Good Friday; for He rose again.

**D. WE SAW LAST TIME HOW JESUS' RESURRECTION GIVES US LIFE**

1. Today we are going to look at how his death fits in to the complete salvation Christ has wrought for us all
2. Why God chose to save us in such an extreme way

**E. PRAYER**

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<sup>4</sup> Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, Harper Torchbooks, 1959, p.114

## BODY:

### II. CHRIST'S HUMILIATION & EXALTATION

#### A. THEOLOGIANS DESCRIBE JESUS' SAVING ACTS UNDER TWO ACTIVITIES

1. His *humiliation* and
2. His *exaltation*

#### B. HUMILIATION

1. What events and experiences would be included in Jesus' *humiliation*?
2. His betrayal, arrest, trial, torture and torment, his carrying his cross, his being nailed to and crucified on the cross, his being mocked and ultimately his death and his burial
3. This was all clearly and dramatically visible
4. It includes great suffering, humiliation and darkness
5. And what gives this all such great significance is that the one who suffered all this was God's son – no other person's death would do

#### C. EXALTATION

1. What events and experiences would be included in Jesus' *exaltation*?
2. Jesus' resurrection, his appearances in a glorified body to his followers, and his bodily ascension 40 days later.
3. Most of this was cloaked in mystery, not fully seen or comprehended, except in part by a few
4. It brought great glory to God
5. But as we saw last time, and as Karl Barth expresses it;

But the real mystery of Easter is not that God is glorified in it, but that man is exalted, raised to the right hand of God and permitted to triumph over sin, death and the devil.<sup>5</sup>

#### **D. ATONEMENT**

1. Barth then talks about the full combined effect of the humiliation and exaltation, the crucifixion and resurrection upon us as human beings

When we hold these two things together, then the picture before us is that of an inconceivable exchange, of a *katalage*, that is a substitution.

Man's reconciliation with God takes place through God's putting Himself in man's place and man's being put in God's place, as a sheer act of grace. It is this inconceivable miracle which is our reconciliation.<sup>6</sup>

2. Georg Pfleiderer explains more about the meaning of this reconciliation, picking up on the same Greek word *katallage*, which means *Atonement* or reconciliation

'Atonement' is, as its syllables indicate, the process of an unification of persons, (individuals or groups) who were separate from each other—separate mostly in an unfriendly sense. Therefore, 'atonement' (in Greek *katallage*) in this general and quite profane sense means turning enemies into friends.

3. Pfleiderer adds that "atonement" covers all of the similar words we use concerning the relationship of God and human beings, such as 'reconciliation', 'propitiation' and 'salvation', and that it can be "understood as the essence of Christianity."<sup>7</sup>

4. Jesus' incarnation: God becoming one of us, one with us, his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension— are all part of the saving acts of God

a) No one act alone saves us

b) Every one of these aspects of Jesus' incarnation is needed

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<sup>5</sup> Barth, p.115

<sup>6</sup> Barth, p. 115

<sup>7</sup> Georg Pfleiderer, 'The Atonement', chapter in *Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology*, ed. Paul Louis Metzger, t&t clark, 2005, p.127

- c) They express who God is and what he has done and is continually doing for us
  - (1) **Who he is for us, and who he is with us**
  - (2) **His life and nature, and the life and relationship he wants us to share with him for ever**

**E. LET'S THEN LOOK AT WHAT JESUS' DEATH, ALONG WITH THE WHOLE OF HIS INCARNATE LIFE BROUGHT ABOUT FOR US;**

1. One of the most highly respected Trinitarian theologians of recent time was an Englishman named Colin Gunton;
2. He used three terms that to describe what God's atoning work through Jesus Christ encompassed
  - a) They are
    - (1) **Victory**
    - (2) **Justice**
    - (3) **Sacrifice**
3. Each of these help us understand more fully why Jesus died

**F. LET'S FOCUS TODAY ON VICTORY**

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**III. VICTORY**

**A. THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT WE SEE GOD AT WORK RESCUING HIS PEOPLE FROM HARM AND FROM POWERFUL ENEMIES**

1. The Exodus is the classic example
  - a) God brought the Israelites out with a high hand, and a triumphant victory as the Sea closed over the armies of Pharaoh
2. Jesus brought victory to the weak, the suffering, the possessed, by healing and delivering them and forgiving their sins



- a) And he taught the way of freedom from sinful lives, and vigorously opposed and spoke out against legalistic, humanistic religious teachers and authorities and their misuse of power

**B. HOW DID GOD WIN THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OVER EVIL, AND SIN?**

1. Did he suspend his holy righteous, moral nature, and use the methods and morals of the enemy in order to defeat that enemy?
  - a) That would contradict who God is, and go against his very being
2. God won over evil through the power and authority, the disarming force of love
  - a) As we will look at when we look at the *Justice* and *Sacrifice* aspects of Jesus' death

**C. JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS WAS THE ULTIMATE VICTORY**

1. It was a victory through love, and humble giving
2. Jesus' victory came not through violence and superior physical force,
  - a) but through superior spiritual power and overwhelming love and holiness resisting and overcoming sin and evil forces
  - b) Through Jesus refusing to take up arms, as his disciples wanted to, but instead willingly, voluntarily, suffering and surrendered to the power of the Jewish and Roman authorities, and all the powers of evil at all levels of existence

**D. THOMAS TORRANCE**

1. describes this victory of God and his love;

In the incarnate life of Jesus, and above all in his death, God does not execute his judgement on evil simply by smiting it violently away by a stroke of his hand, but by entering into it from within, into the very heart of the blackest evil, and making its sorrow and guilt and suffering his own. And it is because it is God himself who enters in, in order to let the whole of

human evil go over him, that his intervention in meekness has violent and explosive force. It is the very power of God.

And so the cross with all its incredible meekness and patience and compassion is no deed of passive and beautiful heroism simply, but the most potent and aggressive deed that heaven and earth have ever known; the attack of God's holy love upon the inhumanity of man and the tyranny of evil upon all the piled up contradiction of sin.<sup>8</sup>

### **E. JESUS DEATH DEALT WITH ALL THAT STOOD AGAINST US, FULLY AND FINALLY**

#### **Colossians 2:13-15, 20**

<sup>13</sup> You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup> He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> In this way, he disarmed\* the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.<sup>9</sup>

### **F. THOMAS TORRANCE EXPLAINS HOW THIS TOOK PLACE**

The Gospels think of the incarnation as the invasion of the mighty Son of God into our domain where evil has come to exercise its sway, in order to break its bonds and to deliver us from its captivity. That is the significance of the whole life of Jesus, particularly from his temptations immediately after his baptism to the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary.

He chose the way of redemption indicated by the suffering servant identified with the expiatory sacrifice, and then pressed toward the final act of the servant on the cross, there meeting in full the hour and power of darkness. ...he came through the temptation and passion of his self sacrifice on the cross clothed with the power of the resurrection, *Christus victor*, Christ Triumphant, endowed with all power in heaven and earth.

But how did he do it? How did he achieve redemption? The Gospels make it clear that he met and overcame the powers of darkness by his holiness, as the holy one of God. ...By his very holiness and perfect obedience sin

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*, Robert T. Walker, editor; Paternoster/IVP Academic, Milton-Keynes, UK, 2008, p. 150

\* Or *he stripped off*.

<sup>9</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Col 2:13-15). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

had no power over him, and it was therefore as the holy one in entire fulfilment of the holy will of God that he invaded the domain of evil and redeemed us out of the power of darkness by his holy life and his holy submission to the Father's will even unto the death of the cross.

His holiness in our life put us in the right with the holy will of God and so delivered us from the judgement of the law....

In the redemption of Christ by his holiness in which we are justified before God, we are no longer under the judgement or the power of the law. Therefore evil has all its usurped *exousia* [power and authority] stripped away from it, and humanity is free from its tyranny.<sup>10</sup>

### **Colossians 2:20-21**

You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as,<sup>21</sup> "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"?

#### 1. Torrance continues;

...It is through destroying the usurped power of the law and darkness over man that the redeemer 'leads captivity captive' and opens up an entirely new situation in which the old order is annulled and a new order of freedom in the Spirit is ushered in.<sup>11</sup>

#### **G. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN VICTORY OVER ALL EVIL**

1. Over all false and misused power and authority
2. All that which lies within us in our human nature, our selfishness and rebellion against God
3. And all that which stands against us and our reunion with God, including the law

#### **H. JESUS HAS WON VICTORY FOR ALL OF MANKIND, ALL OF CREATION**

1. Victory over all the forces of the world that resist God and fight against him and his kingdom of peace and love
2. All that does harm in his creation

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas F. Torrance, *Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ*, Robert T. Walker, editor; Paternoster/IVP Academic, Milton-Keynes, UK, 2009, p. 31

<sup>11</sup> Torrance, *Atonement*, p. 31-32

**I. JESUS' VICTORY ON THE CROSS IS THE VICTORY THAT IS SPOKEN OF IN THE PROPHETS AND IN REVELATION**

1. When he returns, the victory of the cross will be fully realized everywhere, not just in the lives of his people, the members of his body

**J. VICTORY OVER DEATH**

1. As we saw the other week, Jesus' death and resurrection bring us victory over the consequences of sin, which is death
2. And through his atoning sacrifice, we have the promise of the resurrection to glorified, immortal life at Christ's return

**K. WE ARE ABLE TO LIVE THE VICTORIOUS LIFE NOW**

1. In fact we are redeemed, reconciled and atoned in order to be the people God created us to be
2. To put ourselves under his loving authority and gracious power
3. To be led by the Spirit to live the new life more and more today, with the promise that will all live it fully in the world to come

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**IV. LIVE THE VICTORY**

**A. PAUL ADMONISHED THE COLOSSIANS TO LIVE THE VICTORY JESUS WON FOR THEM AT THE CROSS**

1. To not get caught up in humanistic values, religious rules and teachings
2. Because in the end, these things have us looking to ourselves and the world around us for salvation, and turning further and further away from God

**Colossians 2:20-3:17**

<sup>20</sup> You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, <sup>21</sup> “Don’t handle! Don’t taste! Don’t touch!”? <sup>22</sup> Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. <sup>23</sup> These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person’s evil desires.

## **B. IT IS SUCH AN INATELY STRONG TEMPTATION FOR MOST OF US**

1. To believe that sin is about rules, and discipline and self-deprivation
    - a) Avoiding material possessions and pleasures, as if they are what make us unrighteous
    - b) Karl Barth,

Sin means to reject the grace of God as such, which approaches us and is present to us. Israel thinks it is able to help itself. Seen from this point, we must say that all we think we know as sin is petty and incidental and a mere application of this original sin.

...What is done by men in individual actions, from the action of Pilate down to that of Judas, is the rejection of the grace of God. But what is there done by men acquires its whole importance from its being done to God.<sup>12</sup>

...Where we are guilty towards man, we are automatically reminded of *this* man. For every man whom we have offended and tormented is one of those whom Jesus Christ has called His brethren. Now what we have done to Him, we have done to God.<sup>13</sup>
  2. Next time we will talk about how God’s justice deals with the unrighteousness, oppression and destruction caused by this sin.
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<sup>12</sup> Barth, p.105

<sup>13</sup> Barth, p. 106

## V. PAUL CONTINUES ON IN COLOSSIANS 3

### A. TO TALK ABOUT THE VICTORY JESUS SACRIFICE AND RESURRECTION HAS BROUGHT US,

1. and how we are to live the new, freed, victorious life today

*Living the New Life*

**3** Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. <sup>2</sup> Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

2. In Jesus we are brought into communion with God.

3. We are freed from hell on earth, from the sin of living apart from God, and the suffering and evil that result

4. We are freed to be led by the Spirit to live in partnership and communion with God

<sup>3</sup> For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> And when Christ, who is your <sup>\*</sup> life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

5. When Christ returns, all that is relatively invisible regarding our relationship with God through Christ, will be revealed to all.

a) So in the light of the full revealing and manifestation of our new, real life in the future,

b) we need to be living the real life now, and crucifying the things that are its antithesis,

c) Having nothing to do with those things that separate us from God, those practices that are ungodly and sinful.

<sup>5</sup> So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

6. Idolatry is anything we choose before God.

<sup>\*</sup> Some manuscripts read *our*.

<sup>6</sup> Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming.\* <sup>7</sup> You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. <sup>8</sup> But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. <sup>9</sup> Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.

a) We are to have stripped away our selfish, independent ways of thinking and living that make us separate from God and unlike him

## 7. Michael Jenkins

...the triune God in Jesus Christ became what we are so that we might share in his quality of life.

Jesus Christ is the at-onement of our humanity with God. In his supreme act of self-giving love, God has taken upon himself our sin and death, and the fear of sin and death, so that we might know eternal life, God's quality of life.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

a) This is our reason for being, and what truly fulfills our lives; becoming more and more like him

<sup>11</sup> In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile,\* circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized,\* slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.

## 8. It is not about religious categories, outward rules and physical purity.

a) It is all about Jesus Christ, and him living in us

<sup>12</sup> Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace that comes

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\* Some manuscripts read *is coming on all who disobey him*.

<sup>14</sup> Jenkins, p. 149

\* Greek *a Greek*.

\* Greek *Barbarian, Scythian*.

from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

<sup>16</sup> Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

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## CONCLUSION:

### **A. SO WE SEE THAT ALL OF JESUS' HUMAN LIFE;**

1. His birth, his life, his teaching, his healing, his death and resurrection, and his ascension, and his future return
2. All work together to bring about the ultimate atonement and reconciliation, the full and total victory over all that separates itself and stands against our living in relationship with God
3. All that damages and destroys the incredible, free, creative, joyful and meaningful life God created us to participate in with him and all of creation

### **B. AND, PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, WE CELEBRATE THE FACT THAT JESUS' VICTORY AT THE CROSS STANDS AT THE CENTRE OF IT ALL**

### **C. PRAYER**

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## PART 2:

### VI. JUSTICE

#### **Colossians 1:18-22**

<sup>18</sup> Christ is also the head of the church,  
which is his body.

He is the beginning,  
supreme over all who rise from the dead.\*

So he is first in everything.

<sup>19</sup> For God in all his fullness  
was pleased to live in Christ,

<sup>20</sup> and through him God reconciled  
everything to himself.

He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth  
by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

<sup>21</sup> This includes you who were once far away from God. You  
were his enemies, separated from him by your evil  
thoughts and actions.

<sup>22</sup> Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death  
of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you  
into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you  
stand before him without a single fault. So our sin has caused  
great damage

1. And at its heart is our living independently from God,  
and in a way that hurts us, our relationships and our  
world.

a) All of which opposes God's desire and plan for us and  
creation

b) We have all cursed our lives and ended up in "hell" that is  
in separation from God

2. Barth writes about hell;

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\* Or the firstborn from the dead.

Hades in the Old Testament sense, is certainly the place of torment, the place of complete separateness, where man continues to exist only as a non-being, as a shadow..... It is a state of exclusion from God, and that makes death so fearful, makes hell what it is. That man is separated from God means being in the place of torment. “Wailing and gnashing of teeth”—our imagination is not adequate to this reality, this existence without God. ...What else but this is left as the result of sin?<sup>15</sup>

3. We have all descended into hell, and the whole world has suffered from living apart from God

### **B. BARTH 119. RIGHTEOUSNESS...**

The holy One, steps in for us the unholy, that He will to save and does save us. Righteousness in the Old Testament sense is not the righteousness of the judge who makes the debtor pay, but the action of a judge who in the accused recognises the wretch whom he wishes to help by putting him to rights. That is what righteousness means. Righteousness means setting right. And that is what God does. Of course not without the punishment being borne and the whole distress breaking out, but through His putting Himself in the place of the guilty one. He who may and can do this is justified in the fact that He takes over the role of His creature. God’s mercy and God’s righteousness are not at variance with each other.

‘His Son is not too dear to Him,  
He gives Him up; for He  
From fire eternal by His blood  
Would rescue me.’

That is the mystery of Good Friday. But actually we are looking away beyond Good Friday, when we say that God comes in our place and takes our punishment upon Himself.<sup>16</sup>

a) Karl Barth,

Sin means to reject the grace of God as such, which approaches us and is present to us. Israel thinks it is able to help itself. Seen from this point, we must say that all we think we know as sin is petty and incidental and a mere application of this original sin.

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<sup>15</sup> Barth, p. 118

<sup>16</sup> Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, p.119

Just as in the Old Testament all commandments have but one intention, of binding the people of Israel into God's covenant of Grace, so the transgression of all commandments is wicked and bad, because it manifests man's protest against God's grace.

...What is done by men in individual actions, from the action of Pilate down to that of Judas, is the rejection of the grace of God. But what is there done by men acquires its whole importance from its being done to God.<sup>17</sup>

### **C. C.S. LEWIS**

#### 1. Jinkins, p.139

The central Christian belief is that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God and given us a fresh start.

### **D. T.F. TORRANCE**

#### 1. Jinkins P. 136

2. The Incarnation was the coming of God to save us in the heart of our fallen and depraved humanity, where humanity is at its wickedest in its enmity and violence against the reconciling love of God.....

### **E. BARTH**

#### 1. Jinkins P. 137

The subject matter, origin and content of the message received and proclaimed by the Christian community is at its heart the free act of the faithfulness of God in which he takes the lost cause of man, who has denied Him as Creator and in so doing ruined himself as creature, and makes it His own in Jesus Christ carrying it through to its goal and in that way maintaining and manifesting His own glory in the world.<sup>18</sup>

### **F. BARTH, CHRISTUS VICTOR**

CHRISTUS VICTOR. These were the last words known to be spoken by the great pastor/theologian Karl Barth as he responded to his good friend Eduard Thurneysen offer a litany of what was wrong in the world of late 1968, Karl Barth responded "Don't forget, Christus Victor". Yet we notlonly need to be reminded that Christ is victorious but that the

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<sup>17</sup> Barth, p.105

<sup>18</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* 4/1, p.3

same Jesus Christ was crucified. We cannot fully celebrate Easter without celebrating Good Friday.

**Karl Barth** put it right when he wrote:

On Good Friday Jesus Christ entered the godforsaken state that was our due in order to take it upon himself, to bear it and to take it away with the divine power given to him. He cried out "My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" in order that we might no longer have to ask that question...certainly there are times when we don't believe we can avoid the idea that we could be abandoned by God, but perhaps it is us who have abandoned God. Yet we are mistaken to feel and think that way for in light of Good Friday the state of being godforsaken can only be a shadow, a pale memory, only a bad dream. It could well be true but it is not true---not for you and not for me or for anyone---that God has forsaken us...Because what a triumph is Easter, out of the godforsaken realm of death and the grave comes the risen Jesus Christ. What happened that day became, was and remains the center around which everything else moves. For everything lasts its time, but the love of God which was at work and was revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ endures forever. Because this even took place, there is no reason to despair, and even when we read the newspaper with all its frightening news, there is now and forever every reason to hope."<sup>19</sup>

### 1. "When it was evening...Jesus came and stood among them." (John 20:19)

And what a coming it was! Out of the realm of death's dominion, which overpowers all human beings- out of the grave! This is how the one who came that day and stood in the middle of his disciples climbed onto the throne befitting him in the middle of all of world history. At that time Jesus wished, brought, and created peace and a good day for all people of all nations and times, for the whole visible and invisible world. Into the middle of the whole of humankind- now shouting to high heaven, now gloomy unto death- the crucified and resurrected Jesus came that day with power and might as the Lord of all. Into the middle of all the illnesses and natural catastrophes; all the wars and revolutions; the peace treaties and the violations of peace; into all the progress; stagnation, and regress, into all

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<sup>19</sup> <http://christisvictorious.typepad.com/christusvictor/2011/04/christus-victor-againa-message-for-holy-week.html>

the deserved and undeserved human misery, it happened in his time that he revealed himself as who he was, is, and will be: “Peace be with you” (John 20:21). What happened on that day became , was, and remained the center around which everything else moves. For everything lasts its time, but the love of God- which was at work and was expressed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead- lasts forever. Because this event took place, there is no reason to despair, and even when we read the newspaper with all its confusing and frightening news, there is ever reason to hope.” (*Insights: Karl Barth’s Reflections on the Life of Faith*, 30)

2.

### **G. TORRANCE**

1. O God, our Father, we thank you that you have not left this world to tumble down into dust, but in Jesus Christ your Son you have raised it up...taken our cause...through Jesus Christ’s birth, life, death, resurrection and endless life.<sup>20</sup>

### **H. JINKINS**

Christ did not come to change the mind of an angry God but to reveal the loving heart of God toward all God’s rebellious children.<sup>21</sup>

### **I. IRENÆUS**

1. JInkin p.139

Christ became what we are so that Christ might bring us to be even what he is.

### **J. JINKINS,**

1. P.139

Human history is, in Christ, not simply reversed and restored to God’s original intention, it is re-created. All that is is given new birth, a radical new creation, by God’s sovereign act in Christ.<sup>22</sup>

What Jesus Christ did for us he did in the depths of his unique divine humanity, in uniting our humanity with the life of God in himself.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Thomas F. Torrance, *Atonement*, p. 451

<sup>21</sup> Michael Jinkins, *Invitation to Theology*, InterVarsity Press, 2001, p. 149

<sup>22</sup> Michael Jinkins, *Invitation to Theology*, InterVarsity Press, 2001, p. 139

The filial relationship to God for which we were originally created, the reality of our being children of God that we have forgotten in our life-destroying and dissolute existence in the far country, has been restored fully to us in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man. ...the triune God in Jesus Christ became what we are so that we might share in his quality of life.<sup>24</sup>

#### **K. N.T. WRIGHT**

1. describes how Jesus at the cross took on all of Israel's suffering in exile, all of our distress and oppression and leads us all out of it victorious and free

And how has this all come about? It has happened because the Messiah himself has gone to the place of pain, the place where Israel and indeed the whole world was in deep distress. He has been cast down, oppressed by the enemy.

...He became the suffering Israel on behalf of the suffering Israel; he went into exile—Israel's exile the human exile from the garden, the exile of the whole cosmos—to redeem those who were in exile.

...to lead God's people to his holy hill and to his dwelling, back from the place of tears to the place of hope and joy.<sup>25</sup>

#### **L. JINKINS P.151**

*In Christ* we have repented and returned to God. *In Christ* we have died and our sins are nailed to his cross. *In Christ*..

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## **VII. SACRIFICE**

### **A. WHAT IS A SACRIFICE**

1. In religious terms it is something given on behalf of one person for another

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<sup>23</sup> Jinkins, p.149

<sup>24</sup> Jinkins, p. 149

<sup>25</sup> N.T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*, IVP Academic, 1999, p.165-166

**B. PFLEIDERER SAYS;**

The essence of a sacrifice is that it stands for something other than itself.

1. It is a symbolic act, the giving of a costly gift for someone else
2. It is symbolic act, but very real for our lives in that God accepts that sacrifice, that substitution in our place

**C. JESUS' GAVE HIMSELF AS THE SACRIFICE, THE GIFT TO GOD, ON OUR BEHALF**

1. He gave himself, in our place, instead of us
2. He was the perfect offering to God, unblemished and pure
  - a) He was completely faithful to God, without sin, without rebellion
3. He showed God's sacrificial, unconditional love towards us, by willingly, and at great cost, giving his whole being for each and everyone of us

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**NOTES**

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