

Death of Jesus Christ I

Fred R. Coulter—March 16, 1985

This sermon is going to be about the death of Jesus Christ and why we are commanded to remember the death of Jesus Christ. Protestants and Catholics think that they are remembering the resurrection of Jesus Christ by keeping a so-called Easter Sunday. But nowhere does it say Easter Sunday; the Bible does command us to observe a day, a non-Holy Day, the day after the regular Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which then commemorates the resurrected Jesus Christ.

- Why are we told to remember the death of Jesus Christ?
- Why is the death of Jesus Christ so important?
- Why is His death any different than the death of another human being?
- What is it that has to do with Jesus Christ in relationship to God the Father and our lives and the forgiveness of sin and the shedding of His blood?

Obviously, that would take more than one sermon, so I want to direct your attention to *A Harmony of the Gospels* that I first published in 1974, and to read the section The Day God Died. Go over this and review some of it; please read it over and go through all the Scriptures that are there, and understand it as thoroughly as you can.

I'm going to review just a little bit, which covers some of the things that we've covered in other sermons. First of all, the most important thing to remember about Jesus Christ we find right here in John 1:1-3—very key, important thing. In reviewing this let's ask: Why was it important that John—who was the last apostle to write, and probably the one who collated the New Testament for us in much the same form that we have today—begin at this point, as he does in the Gospel of John?

I would have to say that the reason he did it was because the true knowledge of Who Jesus was before He became a human being was being lost by those people who had developed their own brand of Christianity. Their own brand of Christianity developed because of the conflict between the Jews and the Gentiles and people coming in, which over a period of time as they do now, with their different denominations and things, there are different split-offs that take place so you have different theological standards coming up.

John_[transcriber's correction] wrote here a tremendously important thing to remember, John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word

was with God, and **the Word was God**.... [Jesus, before He came in the human form, **was God!**] ...He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him" (vs 1-3).

Jesus Christ was the One Who created *everything!* That becomes *spiritually* a very important thing to understand and *legally* a very important thing to understand. Most people do not realize that God is the Author of law, and there are things that God does which are legal, upon which He binds Himself and upon which He binds people. That's the whole basis for everything God does in the Bible. In addition to His grace and His love there's also a *legal basis* on which God does things.

For example: What is called—even in the law of the land today—a covenant? *A covenant is generally an agreement to do certain things that two people or more have set their agreement to do!* There was the covenant to Abraham and there was the covenant to Israel. These things became *legal* covenants between God and the people.

When we come to the New Covenant, there is a very *legal* thing that God does. There's something very, very important from a *legal* sense. I want to cover those legal technicalities first before we get into why we remember the death of Jesus Christ, which then gets into the *spiritual* aspects of it.

First of all, when the Old Covenant was ratified, it was ratified with the blood of animals. A covenant is a will, and a will is not in effect until there is death. If someone includes you in their will, and it would read: Upon my death I bequeath to 'so-and-so' whatever—\$100-million. Until there was a death of the person who was bequeathing to 'so-and-so' they could not claim that \$100-million. They could not go in and say, 'you have me in the will for \$100-million, give me my \$100-million now.' They would have no legal basis to demand it. They would have no standing in a court of law. When he died then they would. Then you probably have to go to court to get it, because there would be other people trying to take it from you.

So, when the Old Covenant was instituted, it was ratified so it would be in effect by the death and sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the blood upon the book of the Law and the people. Moses said that this was the 'Covenant of the Lord, between you and Him.' And the people said, 'Yes,

all that the Lord has said, we will do.’ That ratified the Old Covenant.

The Old Covenant was a *marriage pact!* God has certain laws concerning marriage—doesn’t He? What are the laws concerning marriage? Upon a legal, binding marriage—which it was between God and ancient Israel. I’m not going to go into human marriages, binding or loosing and the legalities of that or the spiritual technicalities here, because in each case it would be an individual matter. I’m talking about that which has to do between God and Israel.

It became a legal, binding marriage between the Lord God of the Old Testament—which was the One Who became Jesus Christ—and Israel. God, in that covenant, promised that He would enter into no other covenant relationship with any other people except Israel. He said, ‘If you’re sinful, I’ll punish you. But because of My promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the covenant that we have made here, I will not enter into any marriage relationship with any other people but you. That was sealed then with the blood of bulls and goats and so forth.

When we come to the New Testament, God has a *legal* problem, and we’ll see what the legal problem is. In a marriage between two people, it is binding under normal circumstances *until death!* With the situation with ancient Israel, they were married and God said to Israel, ‘You became mine!’ Of course, we know what happened to Israel. They became very promiscuous, and they became what is called in the Bible adulterous:

- because of their sins
- because of going against God’s commandments
- because of breaking the covenant

What did He do? *He sent them off into captivity*, which God calls a ‘bill of divorcement.’ But a ‘bill of divorcement’ did not mean that the covenant was broken. The covenant of the Old Testament was a *physical covenant* with *physical promises*. It was much like a marriage between a husband and wife. It is binding until death.

When it came time for the New Covenant to start God had a problem, a *legal, technical problem*. Why would God have a problem? I’m not saying it was an insurmountable problem, but God binds Himself by His laws—doesn’t He? God will not lie—will He? *No, He won’t!* God will follow everything in principle in what He gave to us as the Ten Commandments. If He would have married another nation and made a covenant with another nation, He would have been living in adultery. If God sins, there is no God! That’s a technical thing because God does not sin. God had to work a way, which would accomplish two things:

1. To render complete and finished the Old Testament

Since marriage is binding until death—and this was a physical covenant—then God solved that problem by becoming human and taking upon Himself a human death, but He was God in the flesh! When Jesus Christ died that ended the Old Covenant. The marriage relationship was ended. {see sermon on Rom. 7 (*Romans Series*) and read verses 1-7; it explains it in the terminology and lays out the legal work that God did.}

The death of Jesus Christ also did another thing—it accomplished two purposes:

2. Ratified the New Covenant

The New Covenant would be in effect from the beginning, ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ. We are heirs and recipients now of God’s Holy Spirit. We are co-heirs with Jesus Christ so that at the resurrection we will share everything that He has. That takes care of the legality of the situation between God and us. We have a covenant that is called *The New Covenant*. It is also a *marriage covenant* that when Jesus returns we will—as a group, as a church, and all those that God has called—be in a marriage covenant relationship with Jesus Christ (Rev. 19) as the Bride of Christ and we will be in that relationship forever!

Let’s understand something that is very, very important, because God also had to do something else that was *legal*. God created everything and created human beings, and God also created Lucifer who became Satan. Satan, we know, rebelled! Satan tried to become like God. And we know that Satan is the one who is the ‘god of this world.’

God then has a responsibility—doesn’t He? God did not rebel; God did not sin. Certain things happen to human beings because of sin, and because of the sin of Adam. Therefore, God has to do something to redeem, to buy back humanity. It’s much like in real estate. If you do not make the payment on your house there is foreclosure. The foreclosure demands payment. Because human beings have sinned—even Satan sinned—therefore, there has to be payment. Human beings, in this particular sense in the state of sin, are before God in the same bases as in the state of foreclosure. In a state of foreclosure you can’t come and piecemeal your payments—can you? *You have to pay all!* What is the payment demanded for sin? The wages [payment] for sin it is *death!*

Let’s go to Romans 6:23—God says: “For **the wages of sin is death...**” That has to be paid; it is a debt. We owe God because of this debt, but God has to accept the form of payment. God has

determined what the payment is, and the payment for human beings in death. This presents a problem to us as human beings and a problem to God. How do you satisfy this without killing all human beings? *It would defeat God's purpose to kill all human beings—wouldn't it? Sure it would!* How does God solve the problem?

“...but the **gift** of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” (v 23). How is God going to make a way or solve the problem? Let's look at it another way. By the time God created human beings on the earth, beginning with Adam and Eve, Lucifer had already sinned—isn't that correct? Adam and Eve had nothing to do with the sin of Lucifer—true! Absolutely nothing to do with it!

When they were created, God gave them the opportunity to choose between God's way and Satan's way. They chose Satan's way! Something happened to human beings, and who put that upon human beings? *God did, because of their sin!* What happened was that when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they were subject to death. Death passed to all human beings and all human beings inherited what is called in the Bible *the law of sin and death*.

You take little children; nice, wonderful little children. Why is it that all nice, wonderful little infants who are bubbly and smile and coo and wonderful, nice and innocent grow don't grow up to be perfect human beings? Every human being was just a little, teeny-weeny baby once. I just wonder how sweet Adolph [Hitler] was when he was three months old? He must have been just as sweet as any other baby. But look what happened to him. Why did that happen to him? We could use an example of any other human being. Are there not other human beings that are given the best, that they have the finest parents, they have a good family background, grandmother and grandfather and they supposedly all fear God and everything is wonderful? But they go off and sin! Why? God hasn't done anything about it!

You can go into the 'finest' bloodlines; you've got sin upon sin upon sin. All you have to do is read about the kings of England if you want a chronology of how bad they were. What is God going to do about it? How is God going to take care of the problem? We were born into the world—right? Did we ask God for the *law of sin and death* to dwell in us? *No!* We had no say so. It is there! It is in every human being. This presents human beings with a problem, and it's exemplified in the world today. I was watching the late news the other night and I could not believe it—it was 20/20 and the late news—telling about all the things they had done in Sicily to get rid of the Mafia and it's an absolute

shoot-out war! Yet, it hasn't even stopped a trickle, not reduce by the slightest degree, the amount of heroin that is coming into the U.S. to be sold. It went through an explained about the whole thing. Then it showed the cocaine problem that they were having on the late news. I was thinking: *this is terrible; this is awful!* But what we are seeing is that human beings with this built in—the law of sin and death—once things accumulate to a certain degree become more and more evil!

- What is God going to do about it?
- How is God going to solve the problem?

Let's go back and we will use the principle that was enunciated by Harry Truman where he says, 'The buck stops here, and if you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen.' We go back and say, 'This person sinned.' But why did they sin? *Because the law of sin and death was in them!* They're not wholly responsible for it! They didn't put the law of sin and death in them! Where did *the law of sin and death* come from? *It came because there is a Satan the devil!* Satan the devil made Adam and Eve sin, or they chose—they had their responsibility in it, and along the line each person has *their* responsibility. If you do evil and sin, you still have your responsibility because you chose to do so, even though you have *the law of sin and death* in you.

Go all the way back and there is Lucifer. God did not put away Lucifer after he sinned—did He? *No! God did not!* Who is responsible for the sin of Lucifer? *Lucifer is, because he chose to sin!* But, who is responsible for allowing or placing Lucifer here so that he is 'the god of this world' and rules over the world. Two factors:

1. God did not put away Lucifer
2. Adam and Eve chose to follow Lucifer

Who has to solve the problem of sin overall? *God has to solve the problem of sin overall!* This why the Lord God of the Old Testament—Who created *everything*, including creating Lucifer before he became Satan—was the One responsible ultimately! Isn't that correct? We could use the analogy that they use for liability insurance. We even see this today. We have the feudality concerning asbestos. There were workers who worked in asbestos plants. Who is responsible for it? Well, the workers that worked there; they didn't have to work there—did they? They chose to work there. They got asbestosis, which is in the lungs, and they died because their lungs became like rock. They go back and say, 'Company, you are responsible.' And the company says, 'We don't want to be responsible, but we have insurance companies who will pay for our liability.'

Now we're getting back to the exact, same thing that God is going to do with human beings. God is going to pay for that liability *IF* we accept it. Now the question becomes: How is God going to do this so that it can be applied to every human being? Is He just going to raise up one person out of the human family and make that person perfect? *No!* He couldn't just take an ordinary human being, because that ordinary human being—even though he were perfect—would only be worth an exchange for a sinner, one human being for one human being.

Couldn't use an angel, because an angel could not create human beings! Could not use an animal or any number of animals because they are inferior to human beings! That wouldn't satisfy the human problem. What is the solution? *God would become human so that His life could pay for all!* Basically, all of this we have understood in general, pretty much as I have laid out. Now, let's go and examine about the life of Jesus Christ in relationship to human beings, and then we are going to see why it was such a fantastic thing that God did. Absolutely incredible what God has done!

This is talking about the Passover, and this is talking about taking the bread and wine for the Passover, and Paul says, 1-Corinthians 11:26: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup... [which we know it once a year] ...you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes." We **remember** His death! Why should we want to remember His death? *Death is awful! Death is horrible!* Jesus died a terrible, excruciating, shameful death! Why should we want to *remember* His death?

You would think it would be very important to forget a death—isn't that what we like to do if someone dies; someone close to us? We don't like to remember their death; we like to remember their life—isn't that correct? Then we blot out everything that they did that was wrong so that we can remember the good things of their life. Why is it that with Jesus Christ we are to *remember* His death? And we do it every year at the Passover! Why is His death so important!

In the series on Grace we see things that we suffer on account of God is called *grace!* In the *King James* it says 'acceptable.' This is acceptable to God, but the Greek there is 'charis' which means *it is grace*. I think I'm beginning to understand more and more—I file a lot of these things in the back of my mind that I just don't have the ready answer—that the hardest thing to understand is why should you rejoice when you go through trials? I think that we need to understand *why* there are trials and we need to understand how God looks at it. If we suffer for Jesus Christ that is *acceptable* or *grace*, and we'll

see why when we understand about Jesus.

Hebrews 2:9: But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death..." That is for the purpose of the suffering of death. Why did God have to suffer death? Couldn't God have done it in some other way? Couldn't God have just done something else to solve the problem? It was for the purpose of suffering death. Then we're going to see what Jesus took upon Himself. We see him "...crowned with glory and honor..." because of the crucifixion and the resurrection and ascension to God the Father.

"...in order that **by the grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone**" (v 9)—'anthropinos' which means *every person, every human being*. That's really a statement! We read over that and say that's marvelous, but what does it mean? ***That Jesus Christ suffered death for every human being that HE has caused to be created!*** That's saying an awful lot, because as the Creator of human life, Who abstains and upholds human life, Who is responsible for all human beings in existence, ***died for every human being!*** Will they all accept His death? That is the question that we have to answer, and every human being has to answer, in relationship to God.

Verse 10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

- Why does God's plan have to be perfected through suffering?
- Why couldn't it be that it's perfected through just happiness?
- Why couldn't it be that it was perfected through goodness?

Sin is not happiness! Death is not happiness! But because God is responsible that every human being had *the law of sin and death* in him, that in order for the sacrifice of Christ to apply to every human being, He had to suffer death!

That is really, what you might call in modern terminology today, a heavy concept! I don't think we understand *how heavy* that concept is in relationship to Jesus Christ and *what He really did!* I mean, we just got an inkling of it here where it said that 'He tasted death for every human being' for every man. God was made perfect in it. God was made complete in it.

Why would God be made perfect or complete in that suffering, for the suffering of death? *Only God can undo death!* Since God has to take

care of death—which comes to every human being—then *the death of God, Who created everything, is greater than the sum total of the death of every human being!* We will see why it is greater.

That suffering will not have its perfection until the finality of God’s plan, as we see through all the Holy Days and on down through the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. That will be the ultimate perfection of God’s plan for human beings up to that point.

Verse 11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the Church I will sing praise to You.’ And again, ‘I will be trusting in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.’ Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood...” (vs 11-14).

That’s a very important statement to say; it is very important from God’s point of view *legally!* The Catholics do not believe that Jesus was flesh and blood like we are. The Catholics have the false doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary, hence the immaculate conception of Jesus, so that Jesus would not have the ‘stain of original sin’ on Him, which the Bible calls *the law of sin and death*. But, if Jesus did not have *the law of sin and death* within Him He could not have died—isn’t that true? How could He have died if He did not have within Him *the law* that He would die? That He could not die? *That is a totally false doctrine!* We will see *that that doctrine denies the forgiveness of our sins!* He took on flesh and blood!

“...in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death... [We’ll see why the death of Christ has to be remembered.] ...He might annul [destroy] Him...” (v 14)—to loose, to render useless, or to destroy. I don’t want to get into the subject of will God destroy Satan? Is God capable of destroying Satan? Is God able to eliminate a spirit being so that it no longer exists? *God only knows!* If that means he’s going to destroy Satan, all I can say is *hallelujah!* That will be great! How He’s going to do it? *We’ll find out when we see it take place.*

“...He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to **bondage** all through their lives by *their* fear of death” (vs 14-15). *Sin!* People are subject to sin. Look at this terrible, terrible world!

People say, ‘I wish it was like in the *good old days.*’ You tell me one good ole day somewhere in the history of human beings where there was not

sin, where there was not death, where there was not murder, maybe in a lesser degree here and there. People are finding out: let’s go find some quite little place where we can get away from it all and we’ll have our own little place. The Hell’s Angels can drive up and blow your house away and kill you—BAM! You have no place to go! Or you go out and you say, ‘Ah, here’s some crystal clear wonderful, wonderful water.’ You drink the water and it’s polluted and you die! There is no such thing as a *good old day*. They’ve all been *bad old days* as far as sin goes. We can enjoy each other and love each other and have a good time together, and things like that.

But as far as wanting to keep and to retain—that’s the whole lesson of Lot’s wife. She thought San Francisco was a great place. “...subject to bondage...” and that is the bondage of sin!

Verse 16: “For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels.... [A lot of people think that Jesus was not really human. He *was really* human!] (but He took on the): ...seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was **obligatory**... [ordained, necessary, mandatory] but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren **in everything** [concerning human nature]...” (vs 16-17). Just like we have today, it is mandatory that you file your income tax by April 15th. If you don’t file by April 15th there is a penalty, and there is interest. Same way here: In order for God to cover the sins of every human being, it was *obligatory* upon Him in accepting this *to be made exactly like every other human being*. We’re going to see what that accomplished.

“...that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation [reconciliation] for the sins of the people.” (vs 17). That is to reconcile this horrible mess that people find themselves in, in relationship to *sin and death*—which we covered in the series in Romans.

Verse 18: “For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*... [I don’t think we have understood in the past the degree of that temptation, or the significance of the magnitude of that temptation. It is really just phenomenal when we get the right perspective on it.] ...He is able to help... [*comfort*; and you are comforted when you are redeemed, when you are reconciled] ...those who are being tempted.” That’s says an awful lot—doesn’t it? That says a tremendous amount!

Let’s look at what Jesus said about human beings and let’s look at what the Bible says about human beings and human nature. *IF* Jesus was made

in every way like a human being, and *IF* He had in Him *the law of sin and death*—which we will see He did—we know He never sinned! So therefore, having *the law of sin and death* in Him and never sinning becomes very significant—doesn't it? *Sure it does!* We've often thought that Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and He was really not like a human being and His nature was not the same. That has been a false understanding, a misconception entirely, completely.

Let's follow along here and let's see what human nature is really like. We can come to a couple Scriptures, which we know. The book of Jeremiah is very revealing about human nature. The Bible is very revealing about human nature. *IF* Jesus Christ did not have to overcome *the law of sin and death* in the human nature that He received from His mother—and that's not saying that Mary was evil, but it passes on to all human beings—what would His sacrifice be worth in relationship to sin? *It could not cover it!*

Jeremiah 17:1: “The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron... [That is really very descriptive language—isn't it?] ...with the point of a diamond... [That's much like what is happening here with all this drug trade—isn't it?] ...*it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars.” We will see what this results in and what is the basic essence of human nature:

Verse 9: “**The heart is deceitful above all things...**” That's quite a statement—isn't it?

- How do you know your heart is deceitful above all things? *When you do something that is not right, that you know that you shouldn't do!*
- What's the first thing you do? *You trick yourself into believing that it's not as bad as what it may sound or that it somehow doesn't apply to you in the same way!*

That's what Proverbs says: *every way of man is just in his own eyes!* That's self-deception! We say *that doesn't apply to us!* I've done it! You've done it! Every human being does it! It is deceitful.

(go to the next track)

Notice what that deceitfulness leads to: Verse 9: “**The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;** who can know it?” Who knows the human heart? This is why people cannot come to a proper perspective of who they are and what they are by self-introspection. You can never be completely honest with yourself and human beings will justify any wickedness—“...**who can know it?**” Even the best case; I want to bring up the example of Job. You talk about someone who was ‘perfect’—God even said he was ‘perfect’ in the flesh. But he didn't even see his own sins and the

things that were wrong with him. He didn't even know his own heart until God revealed it. What does God know about human hearts? We know what it says here. Let's look at some other Scriptures concerning the human heart and imagination and thoughts.

Jeremiah 11:8: “Yet they did not obey... [That is the Israelites who came out of Egypt as they were brought out in the exodus.] ...nor bow down their ear, but **walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart...**” We can go through the whole Bible and we can see various areas where it talks about the ‘evil heart’, and it is true. It says that the ‘thoughts, the imagination of the heart of man is evil continually (Gen. 6:5; 8:21).

Let's look at a couple of Scriptures concerning the kings of Israel and see what happened when they, as the Bible says, ‘sold themselves to evil.’ We as a nation are about ready to, in the majority of the population—unless there is something done concerning the sex problems and the drug problems and the murder problems and the corruption problems—are in the eyes of God **going to sell ourselves to evil!** When that happens the pendulum is going to swing, and you can know that this nation is going down. God sits there and controls everything that is being done.

Let's see an example of that, 1-Kings 21:20—this is the account of Ahab. You know the progression that happened with Ahab. He married Jezebel who was the daughter of the high priest of the pagan religion of Baal from Tyre. She persuaded him to kill Naboth and take his property and caused all Israel to sin because of the sins of Jezebel. Notice what the message was from Elijah.

1-Kings 21:20: “And Ahab said to Elijah, ‘Have you found me, O my enemy?’.... [Isn't that exactly what would happen? If someone really started saying—and it's going to have to be said one of these days—what's going to happen to this nation because of sin, he would be labeled as *an enemy!* That's what Ahab thought of Elijah.] ...And he answered, ‘I have found *you* because you have sold yourself to work evil in the sight of the LORD....’ (vs 20-21). That's how bad it can get—*sell themselves to do evil!*

Do we have people today who have sold themselves to do evil? Who have admitted that they have sold their souls to Satan the devil for a profit? For accomplishing what he wants? *Yes!* Most of the leading rock stars admit that they have sold their soul to the devil so that they will be successful. There are others who have sold themselves to do evil.

You know the story of Ahab. He did repent;

he was able to repent. That shows that a person can make a choice when confronted with the facts.

Let's go to another situation, 2-Kings 17:14—this is an historical account because this is why God sent the ten northern tribes into captivity: “Nevertheless, **they would not hear**, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers who did not believe in the LORD their God. And *they* rejected His statutes and His covenant, which He made with their fathers, and His warnings that He testified against them. And they went after vanity and became vain...” (vs 14-15).

I want you notice how much this parallels what we are doing as a nation and civilization today. We are following vanity, we are following vain people! Today there is a vain person down in Los Angeles speaking to a meeting of people. Her name is Geraldine Ferraro. She is there to address a convention of perverts—homosexuals and lesbians—to court their political support. That, I submit, is becoming vain, following vanity, because there's nothing but destruction left.

“...and went after the nations around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them not to do like them. And **they left all the commandments** of the LORD their God... [Go back and read all through 1st & 2nd Kings, 1st & 2nd Chronicles.] ...and made molten images, two calves for themselves. And they made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire. And they used divination and sorceries, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger” (vs 15-17).

They're doing the same thing today in a sense. Women are leaving the responsibility of their children and family and we are raising—*not rearing*—a generation that is going to mentally, spiritually and emotionally bankrupt! We're going to reap the results of that. Those kids coming through all the nurseries, coming through all the daycare centers—not having the concern of mother and father; mostly not having the concern of mother in her selfish pursuits to go work so that she can have a career; they don't want to be stuck with their children and at three-weeks put them into a nursery—are developing mental, emotional and spiritual problems that's going to reap the whirlwind. That is putting them through the modern fire of Baal.

“...And they used divination and sorceries, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger” (v 17). You can read the rest to see what happened. Human nature

is able to do that.

Just take a survey of every chapter in 1st & 2nd Kings and 1st & 2nd Chronicles and read about the first three or four verses in each chapter. It will talk about the 'king who did right in the sight of the Lord' and it talks about those who 'did evil in the sight of the Lord.' The two people noted in the Bible who sold themselves to do evil: Jeroboam, the son of Nebat and Manasseh. Both of them sold themselves to do evil. We say, 'Okay, they were adults.' What about children? It never really dawned on me. You know how you do and you read along and you've gone over it before and then all of a sudden, as you're reading a Scripture, what you've gone over before just leaps off the page right at you. Here is an account where something just leaps right off the page at you. I've read this several times and I didn't get the import of it.

2 Chronicles 36:9: “Jehoiachin *was* eight years old when he began to reign... [An 8-year-old! Not very big! You would certainly have to say that children are not accountable—are they? *Yes, they are held accountable!* You better believe they're held accountable. He didn't rule and reign 50 or 60 years like Manasseh did. Manasseh reigned 55 years.] ...and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.... [That's a total of about 100 days!] ...And **he did what was evil** in the sight of the LORD.” God holds accountable even children, even 8-year-old kids can do things that are evil. Why do little kids do evil? *Because they see sin earlier!*

You can, by properly rearing children and teaching children, reduce the degree of the sin in their life. But you cannot get sin out of their lives, because *the law of sin and death* is in them. You can teach them how gross evil is, but they still will try and lie and cheat and do their own little things that they want to do, regardless of how 'good' they are. Or in the case of their own deception: 'Why do you do this for this child and not for me?'—this kind of thing of human nature.

But here God says that this 8-year-old was made king and only reigned 100 days and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. What did he do that was evil? *It doesn't say!* But it says he did evil! We can just use our imagination and we can think about why societies are destroyed and we can pretty well surmise what maybe he was doing even at 8-years-old. Remember, one of the biggest problems that they had was homosexuality in the land. That may give you a good idea of what he was doing.

It shows, and the point I want to make here is that God knows the heart of human beings. This is why when we come back to the life of Jesus Christ and His death, that we have to understand how

fantastic this thing is that God did for humanity. Let's go back and see what Jesus knew about human beings.

Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'.... [I've talked about this before, but I think we're going to understand it more profoundly today than at any other time.] ...And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good?....'" (vs 16-17).

That's quite a statement coming from Jesus—isn't it? Had Jesus ever sinned? *No!* Was Jesus perfect His whole life? *Yes!* Could not He have been called 'good'? *Absolutely He could have been called 'good' from a human standard just looking from one human being to another!* He could be called 'good.' We could have 'good' neighbors, and most 'good' neighbors will be neighborly to you and will not perpetrate criminal acts against you. But are they 'good' in the sight of God, as God views 'good'? *No, they're not!* No human being is!

What did Jesus say about Himself? *Why do you call Me 'good'? There is none good by one, that is God!* Only God is good! He's talking about the goodness of God. We have seen what human nature has done and can do. Let's turn to John, the second chapter, and let's notice something else that Jesus had to do in His life, and there's a reason that He had to do it.

John 2:23: "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast, many believed on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing." You know what happened when people see miracles. They flock to them! They talk about them! We see many accounts where they brought the sick, the lame, the blind, the dumb, the demon possessed, the lepers—every single thing that you could say would be the worst physical tragedy that a human being could have in their lives. It would be much like today: if you went into some of these areas where the crippled, the deformed, the sick—everything! He performed the miracles and they were coming around.

What happens when there are miracles? *Everybody, 'Oh this is great! This is lovely! This is nice! We've never seen anything like this! Praise God!* What do they always do? *They begin to trust in a man!* You can see that's exactly what happens to people when they follow these evangelists that heal. Here again is a very interesting verse, that if you read over it you really won't get the impact out of it, because the impact is not contained in this verse, but in understanding other verses in relationship to this verse.

Verse 24: "But **Jesus did not entrust**

Himself to them, because He knew all men." In other words, He *knew* what was in man! It would seem like a good thing to praise someone for the good things that they have done—wouldn't it? Not to human beings, because what happens when human beings start doing that to other human beings? Have we not seen what happens to human beings? *They get all raised up in their vanity!* They believe their own press, if we could use modern terminology. This tells me that since Jesus did not commit Himself to them, but knew all men, *He also knew Himself.* He also knew about the human nature that He had, which He had to carry. Jesus had to carry that human nature, otherwise He could not be our Savior. He didn't commit Himself to them.

Verse 25: "And He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for **He Himself knew what was in man.**" Does that make those Scriptures we just covered really come to life! He *knew* what was in man!

Let's see what the Bible says about man, Psalm 39:4: "O LORD, make me to know my end... [This is King David in praying to God] ...and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived [frail] I am.... [Notice his attitude, that's a good attitude. None of us are strong. We're all frail! Teenagers miss that. When you get about our age then you begin to realize that we do have the frailties. Compared to God, what are we?] ...Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth..." (vs 4-5). That's not very long—is it? And the older you get the shorter that handbreadth becomes and how quick the time flies. When you're a little kid, time goes on forever. Seems like when you're in the second grade you'll never ever get out of the second grade, but lo and behold here we are!

"...and the span of my days [age] is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state... [the very best he can be] ...is altogether vanity. Selah. Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain..." (vs 5-6). Jesus *knew* that was in every human being.

Now, let's carry this just a little bit further. Remember, Jesus was made like us; very important that we understand that. Let's see why the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can apply to all human beings. When Jesus Christ, having this human nature in Him, also accomplished something that was absolutely fantastic. There is a reason why Jesus didn't commit Himself to human beings. There is a reason why it was so difficult for Jesus. It's buried back in 1-Peter, the second chapter.

1-Peter 2:21: "For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps,

Who committed no sin... [We know that for sure; *He did not sin!*] ...neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, He threatened not, but committed *Himself* to Him Who judges righteously; **Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree...** (vs 21-24). What is that telling us? What does that really tell us that Jesus did? I think this is going to help open our own understanding of the profound significance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the profound experience that He went through as a human being.

Verse 24 (*Interlinear*): “Who our sins Himself bore **in** His body...” **IN** His body. The Greek there is ‘en’ and means *within*. What did Jesus carry to the cross? *The sins of ALL humanity!* Have you ever understood that before? *Maybe not from that point of view!* He carried within Himself the sins of ALL humanity! If you wanted to take it and analyze it this way: What was the degree of the law of sin and death that Jesus had to carry within Himself, and yet, never sin? *He had to carry the equivalent of the sum total of all sin!* That’s why His sacrifice is so great. That’s why it can be applied to everyone.

I will show you a Scripture to prove that. Let’s turn to 1-John 2—maybe this has been a Scripture that has been hard to understand, though it is very simple. 1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—and **He is the propitiation for our sins...**” (vs 1-2).

- We are concerned that we have our sins forgiven—aren’t we? *True!*
- But is that all that God is concerned about? *Our* sins?
- What about the rest of humanity?
- Was Jesus’ life just only for *me* or for *you*?
- Who was it really for?

“...He is the propitiation for our sin... [that is the mercy seat of atonement and forgiveness] ...**and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world**” (v 2).

He bore in Himself all the sins of humankind, so when He went to that cross to be crucified, His life—because He was God in the flesh—was worth inherently more than ours. **But it had to cover all the sins of all humankind.** He had to carry the sins of humanity to be paid for. That’s something *heavy!* That is really something to *think upon!* Too many times in our own lives—in our own things that we are confronted with on a day-to-day basis—we view things from that perspective. Whereas God is viewing how is He going to solve

the whole problem of sin, and that was in the person of Jesus Christ.

Let’s see some more concerning this. He *knew* what was in man! He was *made like us!* Now maybe you can begin to understand a couple of these statements here. 2-Corinthians 5:14: “For the love of Christ compels us, *because* we have thus concluded that **if one died for all...** [Who was the one? *Christ!* He died for ALL!] ...**then all died.**” Are not all human beings with the sentence of death before God as good as dead? *Yes!* ‘The wages of sin is death.’ All human beings have *the law of sin and death* in them; so spiritually, before God, they are *dead!* That’s why He had to carry all the sins of the world—*the sum total of the sins of humanity!*

Verse 15: “And He died for all so that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to Him Who died for them and was raised again. So then, from this time *forward* we know no man according to *the* flesh... [Why get involved and all enraptured after human beings when Christ already died for that human being? *Remember what God has done!*] ...but even if we have known Christ in the flesh, yet now we no longer know *Him* accordingly.... [There were people who had seen Jesus when He was living in the flesh.] ...Therefore, if anyone *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creation...” (vs 15-17). That’s the whole purpose of the Feast of Unleavened Bread: *putting on that new creation of God through the removal of sin by the sacrifice of Christ* and the walking in God’s way with His Holy Spirit, through the resurrected Christ.

“...the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us **the ministry of reconciliation**... [That’s what we need to have to bring everyone to Christ. Too many times it is to bring the people to a person and, instead of having ‘the ministry of reconciliation’ it becomes a ministry of something other than that.] ...which *is*, that God was in Christ...” (vs 17-19).

Let’s take what we have said one step further. Christ was here in the flesh. **Christ bore all the sins of the world in His body!** In other words, ‘the law of sin and death’ in Him was equivalent to the **sum total** of all ‘the law of sin and death’ in all human beings everywhere! Who was *in* Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit? Not literally in person, but by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Verse 19: “Which *is*, that God [the Father] was **in** Christ... [God the Father was vicariously, through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, also]: ...reconciling *the* world to Himself... [It hasn’t all been reconciled yet, but it will be.] ...not

imputing their trespasses to them; and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; and God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us. We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’ For He [God the Father] **made Him** [Jesus Christ] **Who knew no sin to be sin for us...**” (vs 19-21).

As we saw in 1-John 2:2, for the sins of the whole world. “...Who knew no sin...” Why did Jesus Christ have to have ‘the law of sin and death’ in Him, equal to the sum total of ‘the law of sin and death’ in all human beings and never sin? *So that His sacrifice could pay for the demand that God made, ‘the wages of sin is death’!*

“...so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (v 21). This helps us understand why ‘by grace we are saved.’ Then God takes that perfect life of Christ and He declares us—by God’s grace—***to be the righteousness of God!*** That, again, is a *heavy* thought, but it is true. And if God has done this for us, that’s why we should have the happiness and the joy and the understanding of why we have this relationship with God, and we are to *remember the sacrifice of Christ* because of the great enormity that this represents for **all** humankind.

Now, let’s end by going to Philippians, the second chapter, then we’ll cover this again in part two. Maybe this will help us to love and appreciate each other more; love and appreciate Jesus Christ even more; and God the Father even more. Too many times—and I think it’s things that we bring from us from our past experience—we have the concept that God is there like a huge giant with a big flyswatter for a fly and the minute that it lands—**WHACK!**

We go around with this fear! God doesn’t want us to have this fear, because God is not there ready to **WHACK** us. Why do that? What satisfaction is that going to have? Christ already died for us. What we need to do is say, *God:*

- *thank You*, for Your Son Jesus Christ
- *thank You* for the sacrifice that He has given to us and for the whole world
- *thank You* for calling us now that we may know that tremendous and wonderful Truth of God
- *thank You* that Christ is coming to share this with the whole world.

Then it’s much easier to have the right concept of God and then you’re going to be *instant in repentance!* You’re going to find when you do that and understand what we’re talking about and you really let it sink in and absorb it, you’re going to find that you sin less ***because you love God more!***

This becomes really tremendous, Philippians 2:1: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ... [being brought back in a consoling manner] ...if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions.... [If you see someone hurt or feeling bad your stomach just goes squish.] ...fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing.... [We need to be of *one mind*.] ...*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory*... [That’s just all human stuff. Psa. 39:5—man at his very best is altogether vanity. Don’t let it be done in strife and vainglory.] ...but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things... [Then it gets into an attitude of comparing and judging.] ...but let each one also *consider* the things of others” (vs 1-4)—from the point of view of how you can help.

Verse 5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” What kind of mind was it that Jesus had? *To become a human being! To take on Himself the full responsibility of ALL sin!* We will see in part two not only the sins of human beings, but more than that.

Verse 6: “Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [We can use the analogy of a stranger walking in cannot claim be of my family. That would be a statement of ‘robbery’; trying to take something from me that did not belong to him. So, Jesus Christ being equal to God or in the form of God, Who was God—that was not a statement of robbery—notice what He did]: ...but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant... [the Greek there is ‘dulos’ which means *slave*] ...and being found in *the* manner of man... [He was made in the likeness of men just as every other human being, but then He had to carry ALL the sins of the world in Him.] ...He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (vs 6-8).

And, of course, the death of crucifixion is a horrible and terrible way to die. Yet, God took that upon Himself. If you could think of the worst thing that you would ever want to happen to you or someone else, crucifixion is the worst! And Jesus willingly did that.

Verse 9. Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name, which *is* above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven... [because none of the angels did that] ...and on earth and under the earth... [because Jesus was Creator of *everything!*] ...and every tongue should confess that

Jesus Christ *is* Lord to *the* glory of God *the* Father”
(vs 9-11).

That is really tremendous! That opens up your whole understanding of this, how fantastic it was that God did this for us, that Jesus Christ came to this earth, that He was willing, that He humbled Himself, that He did not sin. We’re going to see in part two how difficult that was for Christ *not to sin*, and the temptations that He went through.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 1:1-3
- 2) Romans 6:23
- 3) 1 Corinthians 11:26
- 4) Hebrews 2:9-18
- 5) Jeremiah 17:1, 9
- 6) Jeremiah 11:8
- 7) 1 Kings 21:20-21
- 8) 2 Kings 17:14-17
- 9) 2 Chronicles 36:9
- 10) Matthew 19:16-17
- 11) John 2:23-24
- 12) Psalm 39:4-6
- 13) 1 Peter 2:21-24
- 14) 1 John 2:1-2
- 15) 2 Corinthians 5:14-21
- 16) Philippians 2:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 7:1-7
- Revelation 19
- Genesis 6:5; 8:21
- Psalm 39:5

Also referenced:

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Interlinear Greek New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

Sermons Series:

- *Romans*
- *Grace*

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