

CHRIST MADE SIN

Peter Hay, prepared for communion word, 5 April 2020

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Introduction

Today in our Bible study, we are going to begin to consider the content from *The Steps of Salvation* Part 8. That book is now online on Lampstand, and the published printed version will be handed out across the course of the next couple of weeks.

The content that I am particularly going to be looking at is from Chapter 2, and this looks at the message of the cross and how Christ dealt with sin.

It is important that we understand how to engage with the content of 'the word of the cross'. There are some important foundations to our understanding that we need to be sure of.

We need to recognise the distinction between what we need to *know*, and how we are to *demonstrate* faith in the way that we participate in the fellowship of Christ's offerings and sufferings that He is inviting us to join.

The hope of sonship fulfilled

Paul wrote, 'For if we have been united in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.' Rom 6:5.

I am sure you will agree that is what we hope for. 'The likeness of His resurrection' is the fulfilment of the hope of sonship.

Of course, we are sons of God *now*, having been born of God; but our hope is to reign with Christ forever as sons of God in the new heavens and the new earth.

So, if we are united in the likeness of His death now, we are already living by resurrection life, in the likeness of His resurrection, now.

Knowing this

Then Paul noted that this is our reality if we 'know this.' He said, 'Certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, *knowing* this.' Rom 6:6.

In the Scriptures, 'knowing' is not merely an intellectual capacity.

To 'know' is to see, or to be illuminated by the Spirit, as we receive the word of the cross that 'is

a lamp to our feet and a light to our path'. Psa 119:105.

So, there is something here that Paul said we must know, or be illuminated about, so that the reality of our life is to be united together in the likeness of His death, and also in the likeness of His resurrection.

When we are understanding what it means to know or to see, we have to accept that there is a 'sight' that we must receive.

The word becoming our culture

To *receive* it, we must turn to the Lord and to His word.

Then the veil of our own understanding and perspectives on Christ, on the cross, and on what it means to be a Christian, are removed so that the word that is bringing sight can become our *culture*.

So, we have to know something by turning to the Lord, so that what we are illuminated to see becomes our culture.

And, when it does become our culture, this means that our life is one that is united together in the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection.

So, you can see that Paul was aiming for the culture to which we are to attain. He said that if that is to be our *culture*, this is what we must *know*.

Letting go of former understandings

So, what is it that we need to *know*?

'Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.' Rom 6:6-7.

Paul said that we must know this, and be illuminated to this understanding, so that the culture of our life is one that is *united with Christ's death and with His resurrection*.

So, what is this statement drawing our attention to?

The first thing that we need to know is what is our 'old man'.

We need to know what it means for our old man to be *crucified with Christ*.

We need to know what *the body of sin* is.

We need to know how *the body of sin is done away with*.

We need to know what it means to *be a slave of sin*.

And we need to know *how we die*, so that we are freed from slavery to the law of sin, which is the spirit of Satan.

So, you can see that, in that one statement, 'Our old man was crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be done away with', there is an enormous amount that we are to be *illuminated* concerning.

I encourage you that, to receive this illumination, we need to let go of our former understandings and perspectives regarding the cross, much of which is informed by tradition and by our own fleshly capacity to reason about the cross.

We need to receive illumination by the Spirit so that we are able to comprehend what is a mystery that has been kept secret from ages past.

And this is the great point of thanksgiving that we have in this season, as the Lord is restoring to us the message of the cross.

Believing follows knowing

We will take our time over the next few sessions to answer those questions, because Paul said that this is the critical thing that we are to know so that our *culture* is one that is *leading to life*.

'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.' Rom 6:8.

Now, this is different from 'knowing', isn't it?

There is a culture that we are to live which requires us to be illuminated concerning what it means for our old man to be crucified with Christ so that the body of sin is done away with.

And then, 'Now if we have died with Christ, we *believe*.'

The question now is, 'What are we to believe; and what does it look like to believe?'

This is because *believing* is the next step from *knowing*.

'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.'

Demonstrating faith

Importantly, believing demonstrates that we have received *the same spirit of faith* that Christ received when He was obedient to the command, or the word, of the Father.

This is the point that Paul made when he wrote, 'And since we have the same Spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED AND THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe and therefore speak'. 2Co 4:13.

So, to die with Christ and to live with Him each day is *the expression of faith that belongs to a son of God*.

This is the faith that they have received by hearing the word of the cross that brings illumination.

The evidence that we believe is that we speak

So, we started with asking to what are we to be illuminated. This is the knowing.

And the evidence that we have received that illumination is that we have obtained faith by hearing His word.

Then, the evidence, or fruit, of hearing is the expression of faith.

And that faith is, first, the capacity to believe.

The evidence that we believe is that we speak.

Paul said, 'We believe and therefore speak.' So, 'speaking' refers to our conversation and our conduct as Christians.

It is important to note that the words for 'conversation' and for 'conduct', in both the Hebrew and the Greek, are exactly the same.

So, when the Scriptures talk about faith being revealed through speaking, it means that the demonstration of faith that we receive by hearing the word of the cross is going to be demonstrated in the way that we *communicate* with one another and in the mode of our *conduct*.

You can see, then, that the word, which is giving us illumination, or knowledge, is leading to a particular way of living that is the demonstration of faith that we have obtained by hearing that word.

So, 'speaking' refers to our conversation and conduct as Christians, which the Scriptures exhort us to order aright. Psalms 50:23.

Love is our conversation and conduct

What, then, is the conduct or conversation of a person who is born of God?

It is obvious, isn't it? The conversation and conduct is *love*, and this is demonstrated through the offering of Christ.

If we are born of God, and God is love, the capacity or the nature of someone who is born of God will be the same nature as that of God Himself - and that is love. 1Jo 4:7.

This is not merely a feeling of affection or our charitable deeds - in fact, it is not even that. The love of God is demonstrated by *offering*, in which a person lays down their life to reveal another. By this means, life is multiplied.

We can only love in this manner if we have been born of God, who is love, and are joined to the fellowship of Their offering in Christ.

The body of sin done away with

So, when Paul said, 'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with Him,' he was saying that this is what it will 'look like' to live with Him, if we are living by the faith that we have received by hearing the word of the cross. Paul was very systematic here in his message.

'Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.' Rom 6:9-10.

We can see that this is another aspect of 'knowing'. This is not a *different* knowledge that we are to receive; rather, it is as though Paul was elaborating the detail of what it means for all the 'old men' to be crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be done away with.

That is what he is saying here in relation to Christ having died a particular death, resulting in the end of sin and death's dominion over us.

This is what it means when Paul said earlier, 'The body of sin might be done away with.'

When Paul said, 'That the body of sin might be done away with,' he was specifically saying that it would be *completely gone* as though it evaporated or never existed.

'Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Rom 6:11.

Three effects of the gospel

This is the third element in Paul's progressive statement on the effect of the gospel in our life.

The first element is that we are to *know* something; that is, we are to be illuminated.

The second is that we are to demonstrate faith by receiving that word, hearing it, and then beginning to speak.

The third element is to reckon ourselves dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reckoning ourselves dead to sin and alive to God is how we are to 'set our minds', as spiritual sons of God, so that the way in which we live is a participation in the cross that has been proclaimed to us by the word.

So, to 'reckon' is the way in which we are to set our minds every day as spiritual sons of God, and this becomes the conduct of our life.

As you will see, this has a specific implication for how we judge ourselves when we eat and drink the communion.

So, we are going to begin by what we know and what we are supposed to know, by illumination.

And, over the course of this series, the obvious goal is to get to what it means to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God, so that this becomes the mode of our conduct and of our life as sons of God, both now and, of course, into the new heavens and earth as part of the new creation.

The old man lives by the other law

So, let's begin by refreshing ourselves in our understanding of 'the old man'.

In this particular content today, we are not going to go into all the detail of the Fall. We have spelt that out reasonably systematically in Chapter 2 of Part 8 of *The Steps of Salvation*.

However, there are some important things that we need to understand about the way in which the old man lives.

The old man is a son or daughter of man who lives by the other law in bondage to the law of sin.

It is important to note that the law of sin is not only the sins that I do because I transgress the Law of God.

The law of sin is the spirit of Satan himself.

So, if a person is living by the desires of the other law that was fathered in them by a lie from Satan, they are under the dominion of the spirit of Satan. Paul called that the law, or the principle, of sin.

If you are not born of God, you have no other principle of life by which to live.

Even if you are born of God, you have to set your mind on the things of the Spirit, because it is possible to set your mind again on the flesh, isn't it? And to set your mind on the flesh means to live by the desires of your other law.

So, the old man is a son or daughter of man who lives by the other law in bondage to the law of sin, which is the spirit of Satan. This is *every* person who is part of fallen humanity.

An old man, who we have already defined as a fallen person, is deluded and self-centred because they live by the controlling principles of the other law, and the law of sin. 2Co 5:15.

Believing the lie of Satan`

Unless we are delivered, through the cross of Christ, from this way of living, our own understanding of ourselves and of our lives will be other than what is *true*.

What do we mean by that? We mean that when Adam and Eve believed Satan's lie, it affected the way that they saw what was true. They couldn't perceive what was true anymore because they had believed a lie, and the pursuit of that lie became a propensity within them called 'another law'.

So, if a person lives by another law, it means that they live completely by this deluded perspective. They believe that everything that they think to be true is the truth.

However, because that perspective was fathered in them by a lie, it is fundamentally *other* than the truth. It is a lie; it is a delusion.

And, unless we are delivered from this way of living - delivered from the other law and from the dominion of Satan - our entire perspective of ourselves, of others, of what our life should be like, of who God is, or what's happening in our life, will be in *darkness*.

Jesus said that is a very great darkness indeed, if we think that our darkness is the truth and the light.

So we need to humble ourselves, because God gives grace to the humble, and that is the very same grace by which Christ Himself died.

And that is what we are aiming for - to be united in the likeness of His death and the likeness of His resurrection.

The old man is in a body of death

The Scriptures define the mortal body of the old man who lives in this carnal, or fleshly, condition as 'the body of death'.

The old man who is living by the principle of the other law, under the dominion of Satan, is in a mortal body. As he lives by that principle, his body is dying; and he is already dead in trespasses and sins under the condemnation of death, being reserved for eternal damnation.

In Scripture, that is called 'the body of death', and everyone who is an old man is in a body of death.

What, then, in relation to our fallen condition, was the initiative of Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit to recover us to the predestination that They had for each person, even before They created the heavens and the earth?

This is the wonderful mystery of the cross. As you will see, this is how the cross is set as the foundation of the world.

Being reconciled to God

So, let us begin to understand how Christ came and established a pathway of deliverance from this bondage to sin.

Paul wrote, 'Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us [that is, God the Father was pleading through us]: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.' 2Co 5:20.

Of course, this is the great evangelistic message of 'being *reconciled* to God'.

But the question is, *how* are we reconciled to God?

What did Christ Himself proclaim through the cross and through the ministry of the word of the cross, which was being proclaimed as His blood was being shed, that we, as ambassadors of

Christ, proclaim so that a person is reconciled to God?

Becoming a son reveals God's righteousness

The key point to understand is, 'For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.' 2Co 5:21.

Now, when the Scriptures refer to our becoming the righteousness of God, they mean that we are becoming the sons of God whom the Father named us to be.

That is because God's righteousness is revealed when His will is fulfilled.

And what is His will? It is that all of us become His sons.

For us to become the righteousness of God is to become the son of God whom He predestined us to be in Christ.

And that is possible. The Father made Christ to be sin, so that this might be fulfilled.

Now, we know this, but the question is, 'How was Jesus, who had no other law, who never sinned, made *to be sin* by the Father?

And what does it mean for Him to have been made sin so that we could become the righteousness of God?

Was it merely that all of our sin was placed on Him and that, when it was taken away from us and put on Him, and He was getting a beating for it, we were immediately righteous?

Even as I say it, you recognise that that is not the truth. What we do need to understand is how Jesus' being made sin established, or pioneered, a pathway for our salvation.

Another way of saying it is for us to become the righteousness of God in Him.

The Father made everyone a member of Christ's body

Now, Jesus Christ became sin when the Father made every person who would ever be born to be a member of Christ's body. This is a massive point.

I don't know about you, but I had always considered that we were made a member of Christ's body by being baptised.

And, of course, we are going to talk about baptism, because it is a significant element for our recovery from slavery to sin and death.

But that is not the *starting point* of the body of Christ. The beginning point of the body of Christ was in Gethsemane when the Father made every individual human being, from Adam through to the very last person who would ever be born, to be a member of Christ's body.

Christ's body became a corporate body of sin

Remember that through one man's disobedience, sin entered the world, and death entered through sin. Rom 5:19.

So, when Adam disobeyed God, the other law was established in Adam, and he came under the dominion of Satan because of that effect on his identity and on the identity of Eve. That delusion and that principle of another law was then passed onto every identity born from Adam and Eve.

So, we *all* came under the same condemnation from one man's disobedience.

We were all 'old men' who were living by the other law under the dominion of the principle of sin.

This is the amazing point of the Scripture. This is part of the great mystery that has been proclaimed in this time as the Lord is removing the veils of all other theologies to do with the cross.

When we, who were all old men, were all made part of the body of Christ, His body became a corporate body of sin.

This is how Jesus became sin for us; for the whole word in fact.

So, when Paul was saying, 'Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Christ', he wasn't talking about the 'old men' of those who are Christians.

Rather, he was saying that the old man of *every person of humanity* was joined to Christ's corporate body in Gethsemane, so that the entire body of sin of the whole of humanity might be done away with forever.

Now, when did this happen?

This happened when Jesus drank the cup of cursing that the Father gave to Him. Paul said that when He did that, He tasted the death of every person. The Father gave Him a cup, and when he drank this cup, He was tasting death for every man.

That is not only for every Christian; that is for every individual human being. He 'tasted', or experienced, or fulfilled, the sufferings of death of every person who is under condemnation because they are part of an old creation that is judged by God.

He drank the cup of wrath for every man

So, how do we know that this is the case?

The cup that the Father gave Jesus to drink was the cup of wrath that Yahweh *Elohim* had already made every person on earth to drink as a judgement because of their sin.

Through one man's disobedience, sin and death entered the earth and spread to *all* men. Now, the nature of that death as a judgement on humanity is called 'the cup of wrath'.

When a person drinks that cup of wrath, it activates a sword upon them to kill them; to cut them off from life.

A sword of judgement

This is the prophetic message that the prophet Jeremiah proclaimed according to the word of the Lord. When he proclaimed this message, he was declaring this judgement on the entirety of humanity who lived, and are living, as the 'old man' in a body of death.

Yahweh *Elohim*, the entire counsel of God, proclaimed this message and gave the word to Jeremiah to proclaim to the whole earth.

'Thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. And they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them".' Jer 25:15-16.

So, the first point to note is that Yahweh *Elohim* had an *initiative*, by His word, to send a prophet who would proclaim the Scriptures to every person to whom He sent to drink this cup.

And for everyone who drinks this cup, which is the wine cup of the Lord's fury, the result is that a 'sword' is applied upon them in judgement.

Then we can see all the people to whom He sent it. We can follow this through all of these nations. It began *in the house of God*. The judgement began in Jerusalem, right in the temple.

From there, it spread over the entire earth. This is important, because judgement does begin in the house of God. This is judgement that is proclaimed on the whole earth.

Motivated by our other law to save our life

'Therefore you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Drink, be drunk, and vomit! Fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.'" Jer 25:27.

It is important to note that He specifically addressed the fall of man there. He proclaimed, 'You are to drink this cup of cursing, and the effect is a falling. It is a falling away from Yahweh Himself, where you are disconnected from resurrection life, which you would have otherwise been able to rise by.'

Resurrection life is *exanastasis*, or the life that is unique to the offering of Yahweh. It is the life by which They come back, as they lay Their life down to reveal another.

He was saying, 'Drink this cup, and you are fully disconnected from that life. You have fallen from it, and you are unable to rise again. You are dying because I am bringing a sword upon you to cut you out.'

'And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "You shall surely drink!"' Jer 25:28.

This is a classic passage, because many of us would say, 'Well, I am not going to sin in the likeness of Adam. I am going to do exactly what God says. I am going to do everything in the Bible so that I am not sinning in the same way that Adam did.'

But He was saying that even if you refuse this - as if you can! - by thinking that you can walk in a different way, He will make you drink it, because you are still motivated by your own other law to save your own life.

We were all predestined to be part of His sheepfold

So, even our good intentions and our efforts to keep the Law come under the same condemnation.

He said, 'You will *surely* drink it' - everyone will.

'“For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth,” says the Lord of hosts.

“Therefore, prophesy against them all these words, and say to them, “The Lord will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold”.' Jer 25:29.

Now, this fold is the fold of His sheep who are all called by name.

Each of us has a name that was predestined for us even before the world began. We were *all predestined* to be part of the sheepfold of Yahweh.

And He is saying that, because we have all fallen away, this proclamation is on everyone, even though we had a predestination to be included.

A sword falls on all inhabitants

So, He is roaring mightily against His fold. 'He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise will come to the ends of the earth.' Jer 25:30-31.

Now, this is an amazing statement. We note that He was speaking about all of the inhabitants of the earth. He was not referring only to those who were living at that time in those kingdoms because, when you look at the list of kingdoms, they start from before the flood right through to the end - all the seven kingdoms of the earth.

But when He said 'to all the ends of the earth', He was not saying, 'On the earth, to the remotest part of Papua New Guinea, or to the remotest part of Brisbane in a geographical sense. He was saying 'to the ends of the earth' - to the end of the time of the old creation.

He was referring to every inhabitant who has ever lived, and will ever live, as part of this old creation.

'“For the Lord has a controversy with the nations [And what is the controversy? It is that He had a

word for us, and we all went another way]; He will plead His case with all flesh [All flesh is all those who live by the flesh; that is, by the principle of the other law]. He will give those who are wicked to the sword,” says the Lord.' Jer 25:31.

So, you are getting the point that we have all drunk this cup and we are all under this condemnation that is the action of a sword to cut us off from the life of Yahweh forever.

He drank our cup of cursing

And yet, Jesus received this cup and drank this cup that we had already *all* drunk.

The cup that the Father gave to Jesus to drink was a communion in the curse that had been brought upon mankind because of Adam's disobedience.

That is a beautiful point, isn't it? It is a cup of cursing, and we are all cursed under it; and when He drinks it, He makes it a communion and *joins* everyone who has already drunk it to Himself.

When Christ drank the cup, as an offering for sin according to the will of the Father, every person who had already drunk this cup was joined to Him. They were made members of His corporate body, of which He was the Head and they were all now dying with Him. 2Co 5:14.

Isn't this the judgement that the love of God compels *us* to make? If One died for all, then all died with Him in the likeness of His death.

When we, whose bodies were dead because of sin and the other law, were placed in Christ by the Father, Christ's own body became the body of sin. Rom 6:6. Rom 7:24.

Every person who would ever be born was made a member of Christ's body as He embodied the principle of sin that had dominion over us all.

By this means, He took all of us who were in captivity to sin, captive to Himself in His body. This is the statement of, 'He took captivity captive'. Eph 4:8.

Every man was crucified with Christ

Christ had no other law, and He required no circumcision. There was nothing that needed to be cut from Him.

But, as soon as all the 'old men' of the entirety of humanity died with Christ and were joined to His

body, and His body became a body of sin, He required a *circumcision* to cut from Him the body of sin.

This was Paul's point when he said, 'Our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with.' Rom 6:6.

Can you see that Paul was not speaking only about the necessity for *Christians* to be crucified with Christ?

He was saying that *every person who was born of Adam* as part of the old creation was crucified with Christ so that the body of sin would be completely ended. The other law and the principle of sin would be finished; never to be revived.

So, Christ died as sin through His twenty-one hour offering journey. His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary involved seven wounding events. We could say that it was seven 'cutting events'.

He died our death by the grace of God

He died *our* death, making it *His* death.

It was not just the collective death of mankind.

'He tasted death for every man' means that He experienced and finished the suffering of death of every individual person over their whole life.

Can you see this is an amazing point? In twenty-one hours, He suffered your death and my death that we experience over the course of our whole life under the judgement of God.

And He did it *by the grace of God*, which means that He did it by *exanastasis*.

By this means, He changed the way that we were to die our death because of sin. He *changed* our death, which was a death of judgement leading to eternal separation where we fall and rise no more.

And He did it by *exanastasis* so that, as He was being struck by the sword, He was coming back from the death of sin as a new creation, and the body of sin was being cut away from Him and was left and finished.

Our death was a judgement because of sin. Christ died our death by the grace of God, making it His death. By this means, He changed our judgement to a chastening, so that we might be brought to God.

In the next session, we will look at how Christ did this - the nature of His offering journey - because this is the *faith* that we are to have as those who are participating in the fellowship of this death.

Then we will look at what it means to 'reckon ourselves dead with Christ'.