

# CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH – BAPTISM PART 2

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Peter Hay, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 20 March 2022  
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## Introduction

In our study today we will continue our focus on baptism in the second part of our series. Then, in the coming week, we will do a third part on this focus on baptism.

## A fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ

The final point that we made in our last study was that, by asking for baptism, a believer acknowledges the necessity for their fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. Establishing this point, we draw from the words of Paul in the book of Romans.

‘As many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death. Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.’ Rom 6 :3-4.

## Baptism - the entry to a pathway of life

This passage emphasises the point that baptism is not a sacrament. Nor is it simply a symbolic action of identification with a particular denomination or Christian group. Rather, baptism is the means by which a son of God is established on a pathway of life.

‘As many as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death; even so we should walk in newness of life.’

Baptism, therefore, is not merely a symbolic action. It is an entry to a pathway of life. This is the pathway of sonship that Christ authored for a son of God through His offering journey. And only on this pathway can a believer fulfil the works that belong to their sonship.

## Christ authored a pathway for us

This is what the Lord Jesus authored and wrote in the book of life for us, through His fulfilment of the Father’s will, as He made His journey from Gethsemane through to Calvary.

The point is that Christ, in obedience to the will of the Father, fulfilled this journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. In doing so, it revealed His death. And in His death, He fulfilled both the

*judgement* that belongs to our sin, and the *righteousness* that belongs to our sonship.

## Our connection with Christ’s offering

Baptism, therefore, is our connection to that offering through which sin is being dealt with in our lives. More importantly, through baptism, we are fulfilling the righteous works that belong to our sonship in Christ.

Baptism into Christ’s death is fundamental to our connection to this pathway, or to this walk. And the term ‘His death’, or ‘Christ’s death’, differentiates the death that *Jesus* died, from *our* death.

## The distinction between His death and our death

Paul stated that we have to be baptised into *His* death. This marks the distinction between His death and another death, which is our death.

To understand the daily implications of baptism, which Paul identified as ‘a walk’, or ‘a pathway’, we need to comprehend what *Jesus’* death is, as distinct from our death.

Now, let’s begin by considering what our death is. Some of this content will be familiar. However, it is very helpful for us to revisit this to become very clear about the death that we are being ‘*delivered from*’, and the death that we are being ‘*conformed to*’.

## We have died, and our sonship life (new creation) is hidden with Christ

One of the major points that we made last week was that we have died, and our sonship life, which is the new creation identity, is hidden with Christ in God.

Thus, we have to be delivered from our death, and conformed to His death through baptism. Our death is the implication of sin entering the world through Adam’s disobedience.

‘Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.’ Rom 5:12.

### **Falling from fellowship with Yahweh through an act of self-will**

Adam and Eve fell from fellowship with Yahweh in the garden of Eden when they disobeyed God's command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We have taught much on this, yet there is much more to say.

Fundamentally, Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because they desired to be the source, or origin, of their own life and expression; the determiner of what their life would be like and how they would express life.

Adam and Eve's desire to become the origin of, or their presuming or coveting, that capacity to be the source of something was inherently self-centred.

### **The Law of love defines the fellowship of Yahweh**

This self-centred desire *to have life according to their own knowledge of good and evil* was contrary to the Law of love, which defines the fellowship of Yahweh to which they had been established through their creation. This was where their predestination belonged.

The self-centred desire *to be the source and origin of their life and expression* was contrary to, or other than, the culture of Yahweh's fellowship, which is the culture of love

Paul described this self-centred drive, or motivation, established within the heart of every son and daughter of man as a result of the Fall, as *another law*, or *a law other than the Law of love*.

### **Another law, by which mankind came under the curse of the law**

This was established within Adam and Eve's hearts, and we could even say it became part of their identity. As they then began to bring forth children, this law was passed to everyone who came from them.

Having transgressed God's Law, the Law of love which defines the way that He lives, and the way that Adam and Eve were supposed to live in the image and likeness of God, mankind came under *the curse of that Law*.

Paul stressed this point in his letter to the Galatians as he drew from the writings of Moses.

'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the Law, to do them.' Gal 3:10.

It is important to note that there was nothing wrong with the Law when it was given to Moses for the people, as a covenant. The problem lay in the self-centredness of the Israelites in presuming that they could keep God's Law through their own fleshly capacity.

The Psalms bring this out in the recognition that the Law is perfect.

'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple'. Psa 19:7.

### **The Law is the testimony of Yahweh**

The psalmist stated that it is 'the testimony of Yahweh'; there is no problem with the Law.

The problem for us is the lie that we think that we can keep it in our own strength.

With this in view, we will inevitably transgress the Law. The apostle James said that, by transgressing just one element of the Law, we become transgressors of the whole Law; and this brings us under its judgement.

Our failure to keep the Royal Law of love, because of the self-centred desire of the other law inherent in our identity, brings us under 'the curse of the Law'. This is a distinct implication for not keeping God's Law.

The curse of the Law was the expression of God's judgement on Adam and Eve's disobedience. There was a Law which defined the fellowship of Yahweh. Adam and Eve, however, transgressed that Law by presuming, through self-centredness, to become the origin and source of their own life.

### **The expression of God's judgement on disobedience**

This established *another law* within them. And, because they were now transgressing God's Royal Law, they were brought under the curse of the Law. The curse of the Law, therefore, was the expression of God's judgement on Adam and Eve's disobedience.

Because Adam heeded the voice of his wife, he, in turn, *rejected the headship of Christ*.

The Lord God said to him, 'Cursed is the ground for your sake.'

'The ground' refers to the context for Adam's life, and for all of the sons and daughters of men who would proceed from him.

'Cursed is the ground for your sake.'

### **The consequence of heeding an alternative word**

Remember, the Lord said that it was because Adam disobeyed by heeding another word, that the ground was cursed.

'Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.' Gen 3: 17-19.

We are taken from dust, and to dust we are returning. Inherent in the curse, and resulting from disobedience, is *death*. Death is the process of returning to the dust.

The curse of the Law is a consequence of disobedience, and includes the suffering caused by time and chance and by the inevitable deterioration of one's mortal body as they age.

### **Time and chance happen to them all**

The difficulties that we face as our bodies begin to deteriorate are all part of this curse because of sin. King Solomon explained this point as he said that 'time and chance happen to them all.' Ecc 9:11. He didn't make any distinction between the good and the evil; or the righteous and the unrighteous. He said that 'time and chance happen to them *all*.'

It is very important for us to understand time and chance in relation to our own experience, particularly considering that we are baptised into Christ. As Solomon pointed out, it doesn't mean that we will not have accidents or will experience various trials.

The question is, how do we understand and interface with this reality as a participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings?

King Solomon said that 'time and chance happen to them all'. By this statement, he described the life of the sons and daughters of men, under the condition of the curse, as being 'vanity under the sun'. This includes all the works that belong to

our life in this age under the sun. He said that they were vanity.

Before the Fall, as Adam and Eve maintained their fellowship with Yahweh at the tree of life, their mortal bodies were sustained in that very fellowship. As well, life proceeded from them through Adam's word to the whole of creation, because of that connection to the fellowship of Yahweh.

### **The reality of time and chance for Adam and Eve - life became a limited resource**

When Adam determined to become the source of his own life and expression apart fellowship, however, he was cut off from the life of Yahweh. He no longer had access to it. Because of his disobedience, under the resultant curse of the Law, his life was beginning to expire.

Stating it another way, because of his disconnection from the Father, who is the source of all life in the fellowship of Yahweh, life itself became a limited resource; not just for Adam, but for the entire creation.

Having been cut off from life in the fellowship of Yahweh, and now pursuing life through the desire of the flesh – that is, the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes and the pride of life – mankind was now in bondage to the law of sin and death.

He was under the curse of the Law because of disobedience, and he was dying. Living by the other law within him, under this condition of life being a limited resource, he was then living by another law, or a law called 'the law of sin and death'.

### **The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life**

'For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.' 1Jn 2:16-17.

Those three principles of worldly desire refer to the threefold delusion which prompted or motivated Eve to take hold of the fruit of the tree of good and evil: to satisfy her flesh; it was good to the eyes; and good to make one wise. John stressed that this, obviously, was 'not of the Father but of the world'.

That lust, desire, or motivation, which drives a person's life, describes the fundamental motivations of every person who has another law

operating within them. That, of course, applies to each of us, because we have all inherited that culture from Adam.

‘And the world is passing away, and the lust of it.’

### **That which is passing away; and that which abides forever**

Thus, we will understand today how the world and its lust, which is ‘the other law’, is passing away. It is passing away in Christ’s offering and death.

‘The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.’

Thus, we see that there is a split happening here. There is something which is *passing away*.

As well, there’s something, or someone, which is *abiding, or living, forever*, referring to those who are ‘fulfilling the will of God’.

And what is the will of God? It is our sanctification as sons of God.

### **The three desires summed up as ‘the other law’, leading to captivity under ‘the law of sin’**

In terms of this bondage to the law of sin and death, Paul connected these desires, or lusts – the lust of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride of life – into one fallen characteristic which he defined as ‘the other law’. He then said, ‘Because a person has another law or lives by these desires, they are brought into bondage, or captivity, to the law of sin and death.’ Rom 7:23.

The law of sin describes the way of living, or the principle that belongs to fallen mankind, who compete with one another for the limited resource of ‘life’. We, therefore, are under the curse of the Law because of disobedience. This describes our ongoing motivation to be the source of our own life and expression.

This way of living brings us under the curse of the Law, because it inherently transgresses the Law of love, which is the motivation to lay down our lives to reveal another person. Because we are under the curse of the Law and are dying, life becomes a limited resource for us.

### **The drive for competition with others**

Everyone now is competing with one another for that limited resource – that opportunity for expression and for influence; or for whatever

sense of identity or validity we can find in the relational contexts in which we live.

The drive to have life in competition with others, because life itself is a limited resource, is a principle, or a law. Everyone who lives by the other law lives under the law of sin.

So, *the law of sin* describes the way of living, or principle of life, that belongs to fallen mankind who compete with each other for the limited resource of life.

### **Covetous behaviour**

The most distinguishing characteristic of someone who is living by the law of sin is *covetousness*.

To covet life is the most fundamental expression of the law of sin. It gives rise to all manner of sinful expression and destructive actions. We are *all* living under the law of sin.

Those who are finding deliverance from their bondage to sin, however, are doing so in the offering and sufferings of Christ.

Fallen mankind, who live in competition for the limited resource of life, are living by the law of sin. People who live that way compare themselves and compete with others. In doing so, they covet what others have or what they believe will give them life.

### **Destructive behaviours resulting from uncontrolled desires**

James referred to this when he made the point that covetousness, which is inherent to life under the law of sin, is the reason for all manner of destructive behaviours that happen globally, even down to the destructive behaviours in our families; for example, sibling rivalry. This extends from petty fights, right through to world wars.

‘Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires?’ Jas 4:1.

‘Desires’ is another word for ‘lusts’, which are the expression of our other law – the three dimensions of desire, or lust, which John described in his epistle. 1Jn 2:16-17.

James stated that these desires, or lusts, are the reason for all the conflict between the sons and daughters of men.

‘Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure

that war in your members [referring to 'in our bodies']? You lust [or desire] and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.'

### **Taking life from others for our own benefit**

From this passage, we see that covetousness motivates us to *take life from others*.

It doesn't necessarily mean murdering, although murdering is the ultimate action.

We can do this by using others to validate our own sense of self, and that involves stealing from them. We covet the life or the life that we *think* they have.

As well, we connect, or engage, with them, seeking empowerment for ourselves through that connection.

In this situation, it is not us laying down our lives to reveal someone else. Rather, it is taking from them to give ourselves some sort of identity verification.

These actions are under, or in bondage to, the law of sin; and ultimately lead to death. This refers to our death, not Christ's death.

The fruit of bondage to the law of sin is death, and Paul had a very insightful way of explaining that. He said, 'The wages of sin [or what we get from the sin transaction] is death.' Rom 6:23.

### **The curse of the Law results in death**

Death is, ultimately, 'going to the dust', as the Lord said to Adam.

And all the sufferings that belong to life under the curse of the Law, leading to death, are called 'the sufferings of death'.

They are also the implication of sin. Therefore, the suffering of death under the law of sin is the consequence of people's endeavours to have life at the expense of others. In other words, it is the pain that is caused by the sin of others against us, or us against them.

As people covet our life and spitefully use us, causing us injury, this is part of the sufferings of death. It is also the pain and suffering that we cause others as we seek to have life on the basis of the attainment of what we desire.

All of these sufferings of death, whether they are toward us or because of us, are part, or the fruit,

or the wages, of life under the law of sin; we are under the curse of the Law as a consequence of *disobedience*.

This is the condition of mankind; it is the death that we are dying as an outcome of the sin of one man, which has spread to us all. Yet, Christ has come to redeem us from the curse of the Law.

### **Christ came to redeem us from the curse of the Law**

Redeeming us from the curse of the Law is taking us out of, or bringing us back from, the ultimate impact or consequence of the curse of the Law, which is death.

He has come to *recover us to life*; and this is the life that was predestined for us by God the Father, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

### **The death that Jesus died**

We will now turn our attention to *the death that Jesus died*.

The seven wounding events which Christ endured in the course of His offering journey from Gethsemane through to Calvary, along with all the accompanying pain and suffering, defined the totality, or fullness, of our sin.

This is the sin that was laid on Him or was exercised against Him. It completely defined all of our sin, and all of the suffering that resulted from our sin. All of our sin been laid on Him and He has suffered the consequences of that. These are sufferings that belong to our condition under the curse of the Law.

He is becoming a curse to redeem us from that, and to bring us to *life*.

An amazing thing is that Jesus called this journey His 'baptism'. This means that if we want to be baptised into His death, we have to understand the nature of His death and His journey.

The Son of Man joined us in our death.

He died *His* death but, first, *He joined us in our death*; in our condition. The Son of Man joined us in our death when the Father made Him who knew no sin, to *be sin for us*. How did that happen?

### **Every human being is a member of the body of Christ**

Jesus Christ became *the full embodiment of sin*.

This means that He joined us, in a body, with Him. He became the full embodiment of sin when the Father made *every* son and daughter of man to *be a member of Christ's body*.

This is one of the great illumination points that the Lord has restored to us in recent years. Jesus was made the Head of the body of sin, in Gethsemane, when the Father made each son and daughter of man, from Adam, through to the very last one who would ever be born, to be a member of the body of Christ.

### **Christ became the body of sin as an expression of obedience**

Now, we *all* have sin; we are in bondage to sin because of another law.

And when we were all joined to Christ's body, He who was without sin *became* the body of sin. He was *numbered with us*.

But He did not sin, because He died *in obedience*, whereas we are in our dead condition *because of our disobedience*.

### **Dying and living with Christ – joined to Him**

This passage lit up to me as I was preparing for this study. 'For as in Adam, all die.' 1Co 15:22.

It is straightforward to realise that, because of one man's sin, we *all* sin.

But then Paul went on and said, 'Even so, in Christ, all shall be *made alive*.'

'All', there, is the same 'all' expressed in 'all died in Adam'. The only way that that is possible is if all of us, from Adam, are *joined to Christ*.

What He achieved as He journeyed on His offering journey was achieved for *every* person.

He then gave each individual the accountability and dignity to choose what He has finished and completed for each of us.

That is an amazing point! He has made every person *alive*. He has *finished their sonship*. He has *completed the works* that belong to every person!

### **Choosing His life or our own**

And now, as we come to the cross, and hear the word of the cross, we have the accountability and dignity to *choose* whether we will lay hold of what He has finished for us; or whether we will maintain what we presume to be our right to be the source of our own life and destiny.

In which case, He has finished our *judgement*, as well. That has all been taken out and finished; or, as we read before, that is the world that 'is passing away, and the lust of it'.

### **The curse of the Law was applied to Christ**

Jesus became the Head of the corporate body of sin when He drank the cup that the Father gave to Him in the garden of Gethsemane. In previous sessions, we have gone into detail about the significance of His drinking the cup; and how that joined everyone who has already drunk that cup, to His body.

It is important to note that, when He tasted that cup, He wasn't drinking 'a cup of sin'. Rather, He drank *the wrath of God upon the sin of the whole world*.

And the drinking of the cup initiated a sword being applied upon Him and upon His whole body. That was *the curse of the Law*, because He has been joined to us and to our condition. The curse of the Law was applied to Him. It was the curse that is upon us all because of our sin.

This happened when Jesus drank the cup that the Father gave to Him in the garden of Gethsemane. Christ's death became the death experienced by *every* person. We are already under the curse of the Law because of sin and the desire of the other law within us.

When we were all *joined to His body*, and He became the corporate body of sin, that judgement of the curse of the Law was applied to Him, *and to His body*.

So, everything that He suffered was all of the sufferings that belong to us under the curse of the Law. They were all applied to Him.

### **Christ tasted every individual death**

This is an amazing point. And this is what Paul said about it.

'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death [He was a man in a mortal body], crowned with glory and honour [the kingship-priesthood activity that is inherent in His offering; the Melchizedek priesthood], that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every person.' Heb 2:9.

The literal translation is 'might taste death for everyone'. 'Tasting of the death' does not refer to only our ultimate death, as in the cessation of our breathing.

It is all *the sufferings that belong to death* under the curse of the Law.

And He 'tasted' it; but it was not just for the generic 'everyone'. He tasted the sufferings of death that belong to every *individual*.

### **Christ was not a slave to sin, because He had no other law**

Although Christ became *the embodiment of sin* because we were all joined to His body, He was never a 'slave' of sin.

And why is that? It is because He did not have another law. It is the other law which brings us into bondage to sin.

Christ was never a slave of sin. We know this because His offering was the outcome of *obedience*; whereas our death was the outcome of *disobedience*.

The point is that He did not die as a consequence of living by the law of sin.

That is because the law of sin is the way of life that belongs to *the sons of disobedience*; and the death that Jesus died was because of His *obedience*.

Immediately, we see the first point of distinction regarding our death, which is because of our *disobedience* under the law of sin; or in bondage, or captivity, to sin.

Jesus *joined us* under the curse of the Law, and He died the sufferings of death that belong to *our* condition.

However, He did not suffer that because of His disobedience. He suffered it because He was obedient to the Father.

### **Obedience to Christ is the beginning point of salvation**

Now can you see that it was a significant death that He died?

This is the first point of distinction between *our death*, and *Christ's death* - or the death that He died.

This is important, because He became the Author of salvation to *all who obey Him*.

So the first distinguishing point is that if we are to be delivered from our death, and conformed to His death, the beginning point for us, as it was for Jesus, is that we have to *be obedient*.

And, if we cannot be obedient to the word of Christ which He ministers through His

messengers, we will be 'stuck' in the death that *belongs to the world*.

The first distinction, then, between our death and Christ's death is that *He died in obedience*.

And we have already learned that He authored *a pathway of salvation* that belongs to all who obey Him.

So the mark of our transition from *our* death to *His* death, through baptism, is obedience.

### **Christ destroyed the law of sin by His obedience in His mortal body**

The point that Christ's offering and death was the outcome of His obedience is highlighted in a passage that we know well.

Jesus said, 'No-one takes My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself [the Law of love being exhibited]. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.' Joh 10:18.

Jesus was obedient, and He laid down His life, suffering under the curse of the Law, and pioneering, or authoring, *a pathway of obedience* that we are to follow as well.

Through His offering, Jesus gathered up all of our sin; all of the dysfunction and the death that results from sin. And He destroyed the law of sin which holds mankind in captivity because they fear death.

Remember, mankind is under the curse of the Law *because of disobedience*. And, as a result, they are dying.

And because they are afraid of dying, they are motivated to *covet life*, and will murder and steal to have life. The more that they are losing life, the more they are afraid of losing it; and the more driven they are to have it. That is bondage to death.

Through His offering, Jesus gathered up all of our sin, dysfunction and death that results from sin, and destroyed the law of sin which holds mankind in captivity because they fear death.

And this happened *in His mortal body*.

In His mortal body, He experienced the sufferings of death resulting from every person's bondage to the law of sin, under the curse of the Law. I know

there are a lot of 'laws' in there. But it is actually quite straightforward.

As He journeyed from Gethsemane to Calvary, He experienced the sufferings of death in His mortal body. Those sufferings of death are the sufferings of death that belong to *each of us* because we are under the curse of the Law. We are under the curse of the Law because we are *in bondage to the law of sin*.

So, as Jesus journeyed from Gethsemane to Calvary, He was being progressively cursed and cut off from God the Father.

And, in this process, everything to do with the curse of the Law - including time and chance; even including all the ailments that belong to aging - was gathered up into His death.

### **The culmination of Christ's journey was His being lifted up on the cross**

The culmination of this journey of progressive cursing was that Jesus was lifted up on the cross. 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law [how?], having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree").' Gal 3:13-14.

Paul was saying that when Christ came to the point where He was crucified on 'a tree', everything that He suffered, or 'tasted', that belongs to the sufferings of death - because we are in bondage to the law of sin, under the curse of the Law - He gathered up to the highpoint of Calvary, and 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'.

So the summation, or culmination, of that journey was revealed when He was lifted up on the cross - for what purpose? It was so 'that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith'. Gal 3:14;

So, through His sufferings as the body of death, sin and death were being destroyed in His flesh, and in *our* flesh - because we have all been *joined to His body*.

### **Sin and death were ended**

And, in His flesh, as He became the embodiment of sin, as His body suffered under the judgement that belongs to the curse of the Law, *sin and death died in His body*.

And it is dying in our bodies, as well, because we are *joined* to His body of sin.

Through His sufferings, as 'the body of death' - He is the embodiment of it - sin and death were being destroyed in His flesh, and in our flesh. In other words, sin and death were being *ended* as He was dying under the judgement that belonged to us.

So, *judgement* was killing sin and death as He tasted the sufferings of death that belong to each one of us.

### **Christ's journey of progressive cursing was His descending**

The apostle Paul described this journey of progressive cursing, from Gethsemane, all the way to the cross. He described this as Christ's 'descending', or the descending element of Christ's offering journey.

Paul said that, when He was descending, He was descending to 'the lowest parts of the earth'. Eph 4:9.

The Scriptures describe this descending journey, right down to the lowest points, even below the lake of fire, in various ways. But we can see the link, or association, between them.

One of them, for example, is one that we refer to regularly. That is 'the sea of God's forgetfulness' or, as Micah described it, 'the depths of the sea'. Mic 7:19.

Then, in Psalm 69, a number of verses refer to 'the flood', 'a flood of waters', which the psalmist likened to 'reproach being laid on Him'.

As He suffered reproach as an outcome of sin, it was like waters overflowing Him up to His neck. And then He was submerged under it like a flood.

Another term that is connected with this notion of 'the depths of the sea' or 'the sea of God's forgetfulness' is the term 'the pit'. We read this, for example, in Psalm 69 verse 15. It refers to 'the pit' being 'the depths of wells of water'.

As Jesus descended in the course of His offering journey, *sin was brought to nothing and was forgotten*.

Significantly, the whole of the old creation, including all of the sons and daughters of Adam, went out with Him into the sea of God's forgetfulness. This is amazing!



As He journeyed, all of our sin was being laid on Him through the actions of those who were sinning against Him. Those actions were carried out by *all of us*, laying reproach on Him.

And everyone who has done that to Him - which is all of us - was progressively descending, or being taken out, with Him, in His body.

It was all *joined to Him*; and it was being *progressively* laid on Him.

However, as He was being wounded through this experience, it was actually *dying in Him*. *Sin was dying!*

And He took it out; He took it away forever. He went under 'the sea', if you like, where it was left.

So, as Jesus descended in the course of His offering journey, sin was brought to nothing and was forgotten.

### **Christ's ascending was His fulfilling of our righteousness on His offering journey**

Now, at the same time, Christ was *pioneering the pathway of every person's salvation*, and *fulfilling the works of their sonship*.

The cross is the most amazing thing that has ever happened in the universe! In fact, the universe had its genesis from there.

But, as He was fulfilling this suffering, tasting death for every person, at the same time, He was *fulfilling the works of righteousness* that belong to every son and daughter of God.

Paul described this as Christ's 'ascending' journey.

Christ was doing both things at the same time, as He went from Gethsemane to Calvary.

He descended to the lowest pits, the sea of God's forgetfulness, to take away the body of sin.

But, at the same time, He was fulfilling the works of righteousness and life that belong to each person.

By this means, every person was given the opportunity to obtain the blessing of Abraham, which is what it means to be 'born of the Spirit'.

This refers back to Paul's statement in Galatians. 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us [Paul could have said, 'having redeemed us from the curse of the Law by His descending journey'] (for it is

written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus.'

That is another way of saying, 'So in Christ all shall be made alive', so 'that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' That was His ascending journey that happened at the same time.

### **Christ was made alive as New Creation by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant**

Christ's physical blood was shed through the wounds that He suffered. Obviously, as He was **being injured, He was bleeding.**

And Christ's blood contained within it the resurrection life of the Father. By the resurrection life of the Father that was in His blood, He was being *progressively made alive from the death of sin*, as the Head of the corporate *new creation*.

The point is that He was suffering under the curse of the Law, and He was being injured. So, as He was suffering, or tasting, that suffering of death, He was *bleeding*; but the *life* in His blood was bringing Him back from the death.

That is absolutely wonderful, isn't it? Paul taught us this when he wrote that the Father brought back 'the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant'. Heb 13:20.

So the resurrection life of the Father was in the blood which Jesus shed. And it brought Him back from the death of sin.

Furthermore, His life did not only bring Him back from the dead. This is a 'seed' principle because, unless the seed falls in the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it 'dies', it brings forth *fruit*.

He is the Seed in whom the life resides, and that life was in His blood. So, as He was dying - this is the death that *Christ* died - the life that is in Him was being multiplied by the shedding of His blood.

This was not only to bring Him back from the dead, but also to *bring back each one of us from the death of sin, with Him*. That is how much the life in His blood is being *multiplied* through His offering.

### **Christ - the full revelation of God's curse on sin and death; the full revelation of the corporate new creation**

His life was being multiplied and given to be the life of those who would *receive His word* and *accept their participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings*.

At the conclusion of His offering journey, Jesus was the full revelation of God's curse on sin and death. This is 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'.

But He was, equally, the full revelation of the corporate new creation, to which every person has been predestined by God according to the Everlasting Covenant.

### **Our choice to be of the new creation in Christ**

So, there is a *choice* as to whether you will be one who goes out with the cursing; or one whose name is remembered in Him and obtains the eternal life that belongs to Paradise.

This choice is evident in the responses of the two thieves who bore witness to, or heard, the message of the cross being proclaimed through Christ's actions; or, through His blood speaking to them.

I love this passage, which highlights this reality. This is a prophetic statement from Jesus Himself, from the cross.

'For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.' Isa 65:17-8.

The whole of the old creation will *remain forgotten*; left in the *descending*, at the lowest parts of the earth, in the sea of God's forgetfulness. That is why it is not remembered.

### **Rejoicing in our participation in the bride city**

'For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem [the new Jerusalem, coming out of heaven adorned as a bride.] behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy.'

Now, if you are joined to the death of Christ, you are joined to the fellowship of His sufferings.

But the evidence of one who is being delivered from their bondage to sin and to the other law within them, through their fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, is that they are *rejoicing* in their citizenship as part of the bride city.

You are joined to the descending and ascending of Christ, as well.

But you are not being forgotten.

You *do* go down underneath the waters with Christ, but you are *coming up* in 'the likeness of His resurrection'.

Having been *born of God*, you are *conformed to His death*.

You went under the water with Him, because He went under the water as new creation; and you are 'buried with Him'.

But what is buried with Him is that which was left in there as you came out in 'the likeness of His resurrection'.

And when you do, the evidence of that is *joy*. Now, the first element of joy is *birth*. But your joy will be full as you *continue* in the journey of that.

That means you will come to your full sonship in the fellowship of Christ's baptism.

### **Joined to His deliverance from sin; joined to His baptism**

Now, contrast the joy that belongs to one who is a citizen of Jerusalem, with the life of those who remain forgotten in the sea of God's forgetfulness because they will not relinquish the right to be the source of their own life and expression.

What did Jesus say belongs to their expression? It is 'weeping, and gnashing of teeth', in darkness.

Jesus described His whole journey as being a 'baptism'. Mar 10:37-40.

James and John came to Him and said, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory".

'But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?"

'They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptised with you will be baptised; but to sit on My right hand and on

My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared”.’

To be ‘baptised into Christ’s death’ is to be *joined to His baptism*.

This is the only means by which we may obtain deliverance from sin, and can *fulfil the righteousness of God, which is the expression of our sonship, in Christ*.

### **Conclusion**

In our third session on baptism we will consider the relationship between *our fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ*, and *our citizenship of the heavenly Jerusalem as members of the temple of Christ’s body*.