


School of Theology



The Cross of Christ

Part 3 – What did the Cross achieve? (part 2)

Sunday 17 March 2024

Introduction

Why's the Cross of Christ good news? How many different reasons can you think of?

Recap...

Week 1 we looked at “Why the Cross is necessary”

1. Why **we** need the Cross
2. Why **God** needs the Cross

Week 2 we considered “What did the Cross of Christ achieve” and we saw that the Lord Jesus:

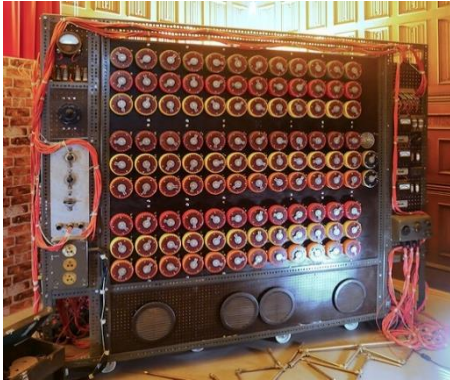
1. Was appointed to be **our substitute** – the true and better Adam
2. Came to **make atonement** – taking the punishment for our sin

1. Good news for us

To see why the Cross is such good news for us, we're going to chase some Bible code.

(a) Bible code-breaking...

A little analogy from WW2...



Old Testament



New Testament

(b) Blood: Bible code for the death of a substitute

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Leviticus 17:11 (NIV 2011)

Blood shed stands...not for the release of life from the burden of the flesh, but for the bringing to an end of life in the flesh. It is a witness to physical death, not an evidence of spiritual survival!

Alan Stibbs

(c) Blood of Christ: code for the death of Christ, our substitute

Whenever we find the theme of blood in the New Testament we ought to understand it as a substituting death: **Christ's death instead of mine.**

That leave us with the question, **what did the blood of Christ achieve for us?** We find there is plenty of good news. This good news is necessary because we saw that our sin has brought plenty of bad news our way...

Sin's effects We are guilty We are alienated We are enslaved We are defiled	What sin leads to DEATH	What we need to be forgiven to be reconciled to be liberated to be cleansed
	└─▶	to be given life

Table from Meynell, *Cross-examined*, p.61

The solution to all these problems is found in the **blood** of Christ.

(d) What the blood of Christ achieves...

1. _____ for the guilty

*God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his **blood**—to be received by faith.*

Romans 3:19-20 (NIV 2011)

*Since we have now been justified by his **blood**, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*

Romans 5:9 (NIV 2011)

2. _____ for the alienated

*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the **blood** of Christ.*

Ephesians 2:13 (NIV 2011)

*and through [Christ] to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his **blood**, shed on the cross.*

Colossians 1:20 (NIV 2011)

*Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the **blood** of Jesus*

Hebrews 10:19 (NIV 2011)

3. _____ for the slave

*In him we have redemption through his **blood**, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace⁸ that he lavished on us.*

Ephesians 1:7 (NIV 2011)

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors,¹⁹ but with the precious **blood** of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV 2011)

*... Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his **blood***

Revelation 1:5 (NIV 2011)

(See also Revelation 5:9)

4. _____ for the defiled

*How much more, then, will the **blood** of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

Hebrews 9:14 (NIV 2011)

*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood** of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

1 John 1:7 (NIV 2011)

(See also Revelation 7:14)

(e) How do we benefit what the blood of Christ achieves?

The answer is that we must **receive** what the blood of Christ achieves.

Passage	What is done with the blood?
Exodus 12:21-23	
John 6:53-58	
Revelation 7:14	

*“...we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value to us.” **John Calvin***

The Cross deals wonderfully with the consequences of our sin. But we still need more help, because Satan remains opposed to us and far stronger than us. But the good news is that at the Cross, Satan was defeated.

2. Bad news for Satan

In the Bible we find:

- Satan is real and dangerous
- The Lord Jesus contended with Satan
- The Bible equips us to resist Satan

“...if all of our analyses are restricted exclusively to such categories, the huge danger is that our solutions will be cast in such categories too. Our answers will be superficially sociological because we do not probe deeply enough to analyse the cosmic tension between God and the Devil. And then, quite frankly, we do not really need God.”

Don Carson

(a) Satan is the enemy of God and his people

Titles for Satan	Passage
	Revelation 12:9-10
	Matthew 4:3
	John 8:44 (3 titles here)
	John 14:30
	Matthew 13:9
	Matthew 13:39
	Matthew 9:34
	1 Peter 5:8 (2 titles here)
	Revelation 9:11

Satan is a fierce and dangerous enemy of God's people. However, he is a creature and, therefore, his abilities are limited.

- Satan is powerful, but he's *not* omnipotent / all-powerful
- Satan is clever/cunning, but he's *not* omniscient / all-knowing

→ At points his conduct is **IRRATIONAL**

→ **Trying to keep the Lord Jesus from the Cross**

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! ... you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Matthew 16:22-23 (NIV 2011)

→ **Then sending the Lord Jesus to the Cross**

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

*⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. **Luke 22:3** (NIV 2011)*

- The realm of evil and the demonic must involve a kind of chaotic inconsistency at its very core

None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Corinthians 2:8 (NIV 2011)

Because fallen spiritual powers are evil, they are incapable of understanding love. Meaning they are unable to "fathom the possibility that the Son of God had become human out of love for this fallen race of rebels."

Gregroy Boyd

(b) The Lord Jesus came to defeat Satan

*The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. **1 John 3:8** (NIV 2011)*

How was this achieved at the Cross?

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. **Colossians 2:13-15** (NIV 2011)*

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*“Christ defeats Satan (Christus Victor) by removing the ground of Satan's accusation, which Jesus does by paying the penalty for sin (penal substitution).” **Jeremy Treat***

*“When the sinner ceaseth to be obnoxious unto death, the power of Satan ceaseth also... for "there is no condemnation unto them that are in Christ Jesus" [Rom 8:1]; and this because he died. He died for their sins, took that death upon himself which was due unto them; which being conquered thereby, and their obligation thereunto ceasing, the power of Satan is therewith dissolved.” **John Owen***

(c) The defeated Satan

An accuser without grounds for accusation

- Joshua in Zechariah 3:1-10
- But **NOW** there's no condemnation for God's people.



*“Therefore, there is now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus”*

Romans 8:1 (NIV 2011)

A tempter who's lost his knack

- Luke 22:31-32
Peter saved from Satan's temptation by Christ's prayers.
- Believers in the Lord Jesus can **NOW** resist Satan with God's help...

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James 4:7b (NIV 2011)

*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to
mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted
beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will
also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV 2011)

(d) But why Satan doesn't look defeated?

1. Christ brought about victory through self-sacrifice

The Cross is Christ's "triumphal chariot".

John Calvin

(See also Genesis 3:15)

2. Christ's defeat of Satan has many phases, not all of which are completed. See summary from John Stott:
 - a. The conquest **predicted** – the Prophets
 - b. The conquest **begun** – Christ's earthly life & ministry
 - c. The conquest **achieved** – the Cross
 - d. The conquest **confirmed** – the Resurrection
 - e. The conquest **extended** – through the ministry of God's people and the work of the Spirit
 - f. The conquest **consummated** – the return of Christ
3. Christ is delaying total defeat of Satan because of his mercy

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

1 Peter 3:9 (NIV 2011)

3. Good news for God

At the Cross of Christ God puts his glory on display as he...

- Provides forgiveness sinful rebels
- Upholds his justice
- Defeats the powers of evil

All of this is consistent with his character and magnifies his glory.

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.' **Exodus 12:6-7** (NIV 2011)

"In saying this, one must affirm that the atonement is ultimately about God's glory and not merely the good of humanity. It is theocentric at its blazing core. The Lord moves with overflowing and unforced love to create, redeem, and perfect creation, but this work ultimately redounds to the triumphant glorification of God as it catches creation up within the dance of victory."

Joshua McNall

