

KNOW THE TRUTH

Lesson 8 - The Person and Work of Christ (2 of 2)

Outline is drawn from pages 205-224; 237-244 of *Know the Truth - A Handbook of Christian Belief* by Bruce Milne.

KEY CONCEPTS FROM CHAPTER 16 - THE WORK OF CHRIST: BIBLICAL TEACHING

"The phrase 'work of Christ' covers all that Christ did to bring salvation to the world." (p. 205)

I. Atonement in the Old Testament

- A. "We need to begin, therefore, with the unambiguous assertion that in the OT salvation is as assuredly by the free **grace** and mercy of God as in the NT." (p. 205)
 1. "The basis of Israel's relationship with God and of her hope of salvation lay in God's **electing** grace (Gen. 12:1-7; Exod. 3:6-10; Deut. 6:21-23; Isa. 41:8f.)..."
 2. realized through the **covenant** with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 15:18; Exod. 6:6-8; Ps. 105:8-15, 42-45; Isa. 51:2-6; Ezek. 37:35f.; Luke 1:32f., 54f.; Acts 13:17-23).
 3. This grace called for a response of **faith** or trust (Gen. 22:17f.; Ps. 33:16-20; Isa. 31:1).
 4. On this covenant basis, the **law** came into effect as God's demand that his people live in accordance with his holy character (Exod. 20:1-2)." (p. 205)
- B. "There were a number of strains within the religion of Judaism around the NT period, some of which were **accurately** reflected in the polemic against legalism and self-righteousness which Jesus delivered (Matt. 6:5f.; Luke 18:9-14; Matt. 23:1-15), and which Paul reiterated in his day (Rom. 3:19-22; Gal. 2:15f.; 3:10-14)." (p. 205-206)
- C. "Similar accord with NT atonement teaching is expressed in the Jewish **sacrificial** system." (p. 206)
- D. "The ultimate reference point of divine grace is also identical in the two Testaments, the person and work of Christ. While for us today the virtue of Calvary is projected **forwards**, in the case of the OT saints it is projected **backwards** (Matt. 8:16f.; Luke 2:38; John 3:14f.; 8:56; Rom. 4:1-25; 10:11-13; 1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 9:15; 10:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:18f.). For them as for us, atonement, ultimately considered, is by the blood of Christ." (p. 206)
- E. "This point needs to be fully and clearly grasped: salvation is only and always through the **work** of Christ, only and always because 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16). From Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden to those in the last human generation on earth at the time of Christ's glorious return, there is no basis for salvation other than Christ's death and rising." (p. 206)

II. Jesus the Messiah

"Messiah", we saw, means 'God's **anointed**'. In Israel three offices were established to which people were appointed by anointing with oil: kings (1 Sam. 16), priests (Lev. 8) and prophets (in this case spiritually, perhaps, rather than literally, Isa. 61:1)." (p. 207)

A. Prophetic Office

1. "The prophet is one who **speaks** for another (Exod. 7:1f.; Deut. 18:18f.). His office presupposes people's ignorance and blindness with respect to God's

will and purpose, which the prophet as spokesman of the Almighty seeks to dispel." (p. 207)

B. The Priestly Office

1. "The presupposition of priesthood is our sinful **estrangement** from God. The priest is God's appointed mediator through whom the estrangement is - overcome (Heb. 5:1). " (p. 208)
 - a) The **penal** metaphor: justification
 - (1) "Hebrew thought concerning righteousness has an invariable legal (forensic) atmosphere. The righteous person is the one 'whose sin the LORD does not count against him' (Ps. 32:2)." (p. 209)
 - b) The **cultic** metaphor: reconciliation/propitiation
 - (1) "Reconciliation means the abolition of enmity between two parties who have quarrelled. It is used of Christian salvation in several important NT passages (Rom. 5:10f.; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20). An allied notion is 'making peace' (Rom. 5:1; Col. 1:20). For humankind is indeed the enemy of God (so Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21; Jas 4:4), and not simply just short of being God's friend. Reconciliation is effected by removing the cause of the quarrel (in this case our sin) which God has done in Christ, in particular by his death. " (pg. 215)
 - (2) "The means of this reconciliation is spelled out more precisely by a closely related term, propitiation (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:5; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). It refers to the removal of wrath by the offering of a gift." (p. 216)
 - c) The **dramatic** metaphor: redemption
 - (1) "Redemption is a term with two levels of meaning. It is used as a general synonym for the work of salvation, often coupled with creation (Ps. 19:1, 14; Isa. 43:14f.; Heb. 9:12). It also has a more precise meaning, relating to our enslavement to sin (John 8:34; Rom. 7:14; 2 Pet. 2:19) and the devil (Eph. 2:2; 1 John 5:19). In his grace God brings redemption to us in our helpless condition." (p. 217-218)

C. The Kingly Office

"This office is rooted in the OT prophecies of the **perpetual** throne and kingdom of David (2 Sam. 7:12f.; Ps. 89:3f.). Thus Messiah is anticipated in regal terms (Isa. 9:6f.; Jer. 30:8f.; Ezek. 37:21f.; Zech. 9:9). The presupposition of kingship is our weak and rebellious submission to sin and darkness, which leaves us helpless under the reign of sin and its allies, demonic powers, death and judgment (Luke 4:6; Rom. 5:17f.; 7:14-24; Eph. 2:1ff.; 1 John 5:19). At his birth Jesus is welcomed as the one who fulfills this OT hope (Matt. 1:1; 2:2; Luke 1:31). He is the King come to restore the fortunes of God's people and to exercise God's rule on earth." (p. 218)

1. The resurrection
 - a) It fulfills his **priestly** work
 - b) It manifests his **kingly** work
 - c) It embodies the **promise** of his future reign
2. The ascension
 - a) It proclaims Christ's **triumph**
 - b) It establishes the **conditions** under which the church is called to serve
 - c) It guarantees our future final rule in **glory**
3. The return of Christ

- a) "Christ's future reign in glory is the perspective from which everything else must be viewed, when he shall gather up all things under himself, and reign openly over a fully **redeemed** cosmos (Rom. 8:21–23)."

III. Conclusion

KEY CONCEPTS FROM CHAPTER 17 - THE WORK OF CHRIST: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

- I. The section concerning the historical perspectives on the work of Christ is good, but not included in the recommended reading or class lecture for the sake of time.
- II. Application Pertaining to The Person of Christ (see page 237)
 - A. Affirmation
 - B. Condescension
 - C. Concentration
- III. Application Pertaining to The Death of Christ
 - A. Wonder
 - B. Challenge
 - C. Thanksgiving
 - D. Confidence
 - E. Identification
 - F. Mission
 - G. Dignity and Respect
 - H. Community
 - I. Consecration
- IV. Application Pertaining to The Resurrection of Christ
 - A. Joy
 - B. Peace
 - C. Worship
 - D. Hope
 - E. Victory
- V. Application Pertaining to The Ascension of Christ
 - A. Security in an insecure world
 - B. Comfort in our suffering
 - C. Mission in Christ's name
 - D. Resources for our Christian living and serving
 - E. Promise of Christ's coming reigned