

JESUS CHRIST: THE POINT OF IT ALL III

God's Answer

The Bible calls the Lord Jesus the Wisdom of God. We have just arrived at the reason. Satan's rebellion capitalized on the apparent contradiction between God's Love and His Justice. It is good to call to mind again what Satan's position in that first Creation was. He was the Guardian of God's Holiness, the Preserver of the Memory of the Lord God's fundamental "Otherness" from the Work of His Hands. If Satan had kept in mind that God is not like His Creation although it is modeled in every detail after His Own Nature, then he would not have thought that God would necessarily have a problem reconciling both attributes of His just because Satan had a problem reconciling both.

It is the Wisdom that God showed in reconciling His Mercy and His Justice that explains how the Lord Jesus is the point of all Creation. The Lord Jesus Christ is why God can forgive sinners and still remain just in doing so. That is, because of the Lord Jesus, God can expiate rebellion against Himself, thereby demonstrating His boundless love but without in any way violating His Justice which **MUST** be satisfied as well. How is the Lord Jesus the reason that this is possible?

The Work of The Lord Jesus Christ

The answer to the question above is in what the Lord Jesus did. But His Work is intrinsically connected to Who He is as well. Both are a whole. What He did was possible because of Who He is uniquely. So, while we have discussed to some extent Who He is, we will still revisit those discussions in order to properly understand the Work that He did.

To begin, the Lord Jesus is God just like the Father is God and the Holy Spirit is God. Again, there is only One God. But that God is in three Persons as the Bible reveals. These Three are One God, not three Gods. And they are not three aspects or three manifestations or three ways of understanding God. Rather, they are Three Persons, Three distinct Individuals Who Are Each fully God in Their Own Right but Who Share One Being, One Essence, One Perfect Will, One Perfect Existence. There is only so far that human language and logic can go in comprehending such a thing but it is completely true even when it defies total human understanding.

The Lord Jesus is thus God. He existed as God before anything was made. He has always been. He was never created. The Bible identifies His Pre-existing Deity as The Word (John 1:1). But He assumed Humanity at a certain point in Creature History. That is, as Hebrews 10:5 puts it, He had a

"body" prepared for Him. In fact, what that meant is that He had a fully perfect and true Humanity prepared for Him complete with a human body and a human spirit so that God became a Man also.

This is most important indeed. The Lord Jesus was and is forever God, blessed forever and glorified forever. As such He has always been and will always be rightly worshiped just as the Father and the Holy Spirit both are as well. But He also became a true Human Being so that He can also be treated in every way that a human being can and should be treated. This is how He was able to take responsibility for the sins of all mankind. As God, He could only be mankind's Judge. That is, human beings had nothing in common with Him and could only fear His terrible and awesome judgment upon their rebellion. But when He became a Man just like any other human being, He became one of us although He did not share in our rebellion. In other words, our fear was something that He could identify with even if not share in. It was now His Own brothers and sisters who were standing condemned before Him. These were not just rebellious creatures any more; rather, they were His very Own Family. And just as each human being has a certain feeling of responsibility for other human beings, now, so did He Himself.

Now, at this point, it is important to remember that God instituted a law of substitution to make it possible for those who are in trouble to be delivered. An animal's blood could be shed in order to preserve the life of an offender. A relative could pay off another's debt so that they could be freed from slavery or from the threat of it (Leviticus 25:47-49). A relative can redeem another's property sold for need (Leviticus 25:25). These things were to teach us that one may redeem another if one possesses the means. Now that the Lord Jesus had become a human being in addition to His Deity, He had become our "relative". Thus, He possessed the right to redeem His fellow humans from the just condemnation due to them for their rebellion against God. And since He was willing to, He was at total liberty to do so as well.

So, our Lord's possession of a human nature made it possible for Him to redeem every human being if He could pay the price for all of our myriad rebellions throughout human history beginning with Adam's and Eve's disobedience in the Eden of that time to the very last sin committed by the last human being to ever live and sin. So, the question is, could anybody actually pay such a price? What, in fact, is the price for sin? What can anyone do to expiate sin against a Holy and Just God?

[7]Yet they cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God.

[8]Redemption does not come so easily,

[9]for no one can ever pay enough to live forever and never see the grave.

Psalms 49:7-9 NLT

Sin is treason against God. Treason is an expression of a wish to rid oneself of a king's existence or influence. That is, the goal of treason is to be free of a king's authority. Where the king's death is possible, treason aims at achieving it. Since God cannot die, sin is really an effort to drive God out of His Own Creation and isolate Him. But since it is also a wish to be rid of Him, it really is a wish that He were dead. Thus, it would only be fair to demand eternal life in exchange for treason against an eternal God. But nobody, no human being possesses eternal life. Only God does. Therefore, no human being can pay the price for human redemption. Even were there any righteous man at all:

[14]even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves," declares the Lord God.

[16]though these three men were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord God, "they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the country would be desolate.

Ezekiel 14:14,16 NASB

What that means is that even were one human being perfectly righteous, he could only deliver himself with his righteousness because then he would not have rebelled against God and required redemption himself. But the price of redeeming sinners is not an individual human's perfection. It is Eternal Life. Only someone who has eternal life and is willing to give it up can pay for all the treason committed against God by humans throughout human history. And only God Himself possesses Eternal Life.

This is why the Lord Jesus Christ is so unique. He is the Only Human Being Who possesses eternal Life:

[4]In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

John 1:4 NASB

[26]For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself

John 5:26 NASB

Being God as well as Man, our Lord Jesus Christ was not only a Perfect Man but also a Perfect Man with Eternal Life. Thus, He could pay for all the rebellions of humanity against Perfect God. This is the Wisdom of God which Satan failed to account for. He did not account for God's Deity in His Plans. That is, he failed to appreciate that a creature cannot plumb the depths of God's Wisdom no matter how wise they themselves are. Satan may have been the touchstone of perfection but God was the One Who made him so and thus must be Perfection itself. Satan may have been full of wisdom but it was God Who filled him with it and thus must Himself be Wisdom itself. There could never be any comparison between God and any creature however great that creature may be. This is why the Scripture can say:

[19]For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the cleverness of the clever I will set aside."

[20]Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

[24]but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

[25]Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Corinthians 1:19-20,24-25 NASB

[7]but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory;

[8]the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 NASB

The Lord Jesus is God's Way of reconciling His Mercy and His Justice. In that reconciliation, the whole Creation was saved from the damage of creature rebellion. This was what Satan thought was impossible. And as we see in 1 Corinthians 2:7-8 which is quoted above, if he knew what God could do, he would not have had the Lord Jesus Christ crucified. In that act, he sealed his fate and that of

all rebels against God. The war ended effectively with the Cross. With the Cross, God was free to forgive sinners without violating His Justice.

What The Cross Is

If the rulers of this age has understood God's Wisdom, they would not have crucified the Lord Jesus. But they did not, so they did. But what is the Cross really?

On the one hand, it was the instrument of torture and capital punishment used by the Romans to maintain their fearsome hold on their foreign holdings. The Lord Jesus was unjustly condemned to death on a cross. His physical torture and death was terrible and, since He was utterly perfect in character as well, unjust in the extreme so that the emotional anguish was equally great. But that is not all the Cross was.

The Cross was also where the Lord Jesus took responsibility for every last human sin ever committed, being committed or will ever be committed. He accepted divine judgment for every such sin and therefore freed every human being by default from any responsibility to God for them. Every human rebellion, every human treason is thus paid for. But this was a completely spiritual affair. It was a different event from the physical torture and death that occurred at Calvary as well.

In the three hours of darkness that happened at that time, the Lord Jesus poured out His spiritual life in exchange for the lives of all human sinners. He suffered the full punishment of all human transgression against God so that human rebels could be reconciled to God. As a human, He qualified to be a substitute for all human beings. As a perfect human being, He had no personal sins of His Own to disqualify Him from answering for other human beings. As God, He possessed Eternal Life to offer for human treason against an Eternal God. That Life was what He poured out in those three hours of darkness on the Cross (Matthew 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-34, 37; Luke 23:44-46; John 19:28-30).

[28]After this, Jesus, **knowing that all things had already been accomplished**, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty."

[30]Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

John 19:28,30 NASB

The Cross is therefore eternal in nature. It is the foundation of Creation. Creation would not have been possible at all without it. If the Lord God had not decreed before ever creating anything that the Cross would happen, there would have been no solution to creature rebellion. Because God already prepared a solution to the evil that would result from creature possession of a god-like free will, He went on to create everything and work it all out to lead to the Cross. The Cross is the convergence of all the ages. Angelic rebellion was summarily dismissed in it. Human rebellion was pardoned by it for every repentant rebel. And God's Eternal Goal in creation was guaranteed by it.

It should be kept in mind that the Infinity of God makes it impossible to fully comprehend sin and the Work of Christ to expiate it. This is because everything that touches on God is necessarily infinite in nature. Any transgression against God is by nature eternal in ramification. The expiation of such a transgression would be the same essentially. Therefore, the Cross is a far bigger thing than even the material universe. The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is greater than any human or angelic mind can conceive and certainly no human language can fully explain it. Still, we know enough from the Bible to appreciate that the Lord Jesus paid for every single human sin in human history from the first in the Garden of Eden to the last to be committed before human history is brought to an end and eternity begins.

The Issue of Sin And Judgment

This means that sin is no longer the issue between man and God. Because sin has been paid for by the Lord Jesus, the issue is each individual human being's attitude toward Him. The judgment that is left is one that differentiates between believers in Christ Jesus and unbelievers. Those who believe in Him have accepted His incredible Gift and been reconciled to God as a result without every sin they commit after that forgiven upon confession. Those who do not believe in Him either reject the Gift or refuse to accept it so that they are never reconciled to God and must therefore spend eternity in the Lake of Fire in anguish separated from the God that they hate.

Because also the Lord Jesus took responsibility for all human sinners and suffered divine judgment for it all from the Father, He has also been given the right to judge all humans.

[22]For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

[27]and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

[30]"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 5:22,27,30 NASB

This is why the Judgments of the Tribulation and the Second Advent including the Judgment of the Church, the Millennium and the Judgment of the Great White Throne are all called by the Lord Jesus and administered by Him both through the agency of angels. Even the Church is governed by His Judgments during the Church Age, for example,

[20]But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

[21]I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.

[22]Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

[23]And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

Revelation 2:20-23 NASB

Conclusion

In short, the Lord Jesus is why a universe like what we see is possible. Creature free will was made possible since the evil that resulted would be more than sufficiently answered by the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. The Divine Goal of a family of willing, god-like creatures who will spend eternity with the Lord God in a perfect creation was guaranteed by the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus because it made a separation between a full number of sanctified children of God on the one hand and rebels on the other.

Thus we come to the end of this overview of the importance and centrality of the Lord Jesus to the Plan of God. In it we have touched on a number of subjects that with the Lord's Gracious Help we will explore in the future.

Grace be with you.