

Did Jesus Die In Vain?

Intro: Christianity centers around the death of Jesus on the cross. Paul states that Jesus died for the ungodly: Rom. 5:6, 8 “⁶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. ⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” John states that he laid down His life for us: 1 John 3:16 “¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.” While there are many other such statements, if certain things are true, it means that Christ died in vain.

I. IF ONE CAN BE SAVED BY THE LAW OF MOSES

A. Gal. 2:21 “²¹ I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

1. The Galatians had fallen prey to the Judaizing teachers.
2. Gal. 5:2-4 “² Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. ³ For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. ⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”
3. If Moses’ Law could save, there would be no need for Christ.

B. The Law of Moses could not save.

1. One of its purposes was to reveal sin.
 - a. Rom. 3:20 “²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”
 - b. Rom. 7:7, 13 “⁷ What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. ⁸ But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead. ⁹ For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death. ¹¹ For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*. ¹² Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. ¹³ Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.”
 - c. Gal. 3:19 “¹⁹ Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.”
 - (1) Paul is discussing the promise made to Abraham; Gen. 12:1-3 “¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And

I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

- (2) The Law of Moses could not disannul those promises.
 - (3) The inheritance did not come through the Law of Moses.
 - (4) The Law was added because of sin to reveal sin to man.
2. While revealing sin, it could not take away sin.
 - a. Gal. 3:10-13 “¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. ¹¹ But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith. ¹² And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.”
 - b. Blood had to be shed for remission.
 - (1) Heb. 9:22 “²² And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”
 - (2) Heb. 10:4 “⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”
- C. The Law pointed us to Christ:**
1. Gal. 3:24 “²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”
 2. John 1:29 “²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”
- D. Anyone who tries to justify their religious practice (sabbath keeping, a priesthood, instrumental music in worship, etc.) by the Law renders Jesus’ death worthless.**

II. IF JESUS APPROVES OF RELIGIOUS DIVISION

- A. Diversity has been applauded by denominations and some in the church.**
- B. Jesus approves of unity.**
1. John 17:20-21 “²⁰ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; ²¹ That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
 2. 1 Cor. 12:12 “¹² For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ.”
- C. Jesus built one church.**
1. Mat. 16:18 “¹⁸ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
 2. Eph. 4:4 “⁴ *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling”
- D. If Jesus is as pleased with denominationalism as with the one church He established, then He died for nought in that regard.**

III. IF THE CHURCH IS NOT ESSENTIAL

A. Jesus bought His church with His blood.

1. Acts 20:28 ²⁸Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
2. Eph. 2:16 ¹⁶And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”
3. Eph. 5:25-27 ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

B. Jesus, yes; the church, no.

1. A common but greatly mistaken concept.
2. If speaking of denominations, then it is true—Christ did not die for any one of them.
3. To include the church of Christ in that, is to say that Christ paid the price for it in vain.

C. His church consists of those who have been saved through His death upon their obedience to Him.

1. Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47 ³⁷Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? ³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ³⁹For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. ⁴⁰And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. ⁴¹Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. ⁴²And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴And all that believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. ⁴⁶And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
2. Eph. 5:23, 25 ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

IV. IF I AM LOST

A. God's desire is for all to be saved.

1. 1 Tim. 2:4 ⁴“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”
2. 2 Pet. 3:9 ⁹“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

B. God sent His Son to die so we could be saved.

1. John 3:16 ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
2. Rom. 5:8 ⁸“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
3. 1 John 4:9 ⁹“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”

C. Christ shed His blood to save us.

1. 1 Tim. 2:6 ⁶“Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”
2. Heb. 2:9 ⁹“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
3. Mat. 26:28 ²⁸“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

D. If I am lost, Christ may as well have spared Himself the misery of the cross as His blood would have been wasted on me.

Conclusion: How it behooves us to accept the salvation Jesus offers by obeying His Will in becoming a Christian, and then faithfully serving Him. Let us make sure that Jesus did not die in vain for us.