



Church of God Ministries

Spanish Fort, Alabama

November 20, 2020

Death Penalty Paid for All

Warm hellos to you dear brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God, from our offices here in Spanish Fort, AL.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

We had discussed "What Moved You to Seek Baptism?" last Friday evening and ended the letter examining Paul's statement. "*For the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). This death is the second death mentioned in Revelation 20:14-15.

A good question many have asked is "How can this death penalty be satisfied short of each of us losing out on eternal life?"

This is where the sacrifice of Jesus Christ enters the picture. In what's often referred to as "the resurrection chapter" Paul states, "*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*" (1 Corinthians 15:3).

The apostle Peter states something similar about Christ, "*who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed*" (1 Peter 2:24).

The apostle John comments about the sacrifice of Christ applying to *all of mankind* (if they repent and in faith accept the shed blood and death of Christ on their behalf). "*And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world*" (1 John 2:2). The word "propitiation" here (hilasmos in Greek) can mean an appeasing, or a satisfying of a penalty demanded to be imposed.

How could Christ satisfy this death penalty?

First, He was God and was in the God realm and possessed eternal life before His human incarnation. John informs us that this separate being, the Word, was God and was with another one also termed God. "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" (John 1:1)

On our trip to Philadelphia and South Jersey (that I mentioned last Friday in my letter), I gave a sermon message while there on the importance of our Spiritual Father. This time of year most "Christians" focus on the birth of a baby, named Jesus Christ. Most completely miss the importance of the Father. The only other being revealed as part of the eternal God realm is the One whom Jesus referred to as the Father."

The apostle John refers to the mention of "the Father" by Jesus many times. Notice just few of these references. "*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, (who is in the bosom of the Father), He has declared Him.*" (John 1:18 parentheses added by me) "*I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.*" (John 16:28) Jesus clearly says He came from the Father into the world.

How did He return and go to the Father?

"*Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God*" (1 Peter 3:21-22) The Word had existed in eternity with the One who was Supreme and greater than the Word (John 14:28) "*And the Word became flesh . . .*" (John 1:14) In the prayer in Gethsemane Jesus prays to His Father and refers to His past glorified state. "*And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*" (John 17:5, See also John 17:24). The apostle Paul referred to the past status of Jesus as God. "*Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God*" (Philippians 2:5-6). Jesus identified Himself as "*I am.*" (John 8:58).

The death of Jesus meant the death of one who had eternal life who then gave that up. He was the One who made everything - the earth, the Universe and all in heaven and earth and both visible and invisible. (John 1:1; Colossians 1:16). He created Adam and Eve and prepared their environment. The death of Christ the Creator of all and the cessation of His past eternal life at death is considered worth and equivalent to paying the eternal death penalty for the sins of all mankind.

This is a sobering reality to consider before one is baptized, and then after as well. One's sins are serious enough that it took the death of their Creator to pay the penalty for incurring them. His death reminds you and me of just how serious sin is. It also reminds us of how wonderful God's love and mercy is, and His desire for us to begin and then successfully travel that road that leads to eternal life!

As I like to close with each Friday, arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

-Scott Hoefker

(Pastor, Church of God Ministries)

Scott Hoefker, Pastor

Church of God Ministries

(Ministerios de la Iglesia de Dios)

tshoefker@cogministries.org

www.cogministries.org

P.O. Box 7783

Spanish Fort, AL 36577

251-930-1797 Office /402-250-2389 Cell