

Gospel Truth #1

"Christ has already accomplished something for every human being. He died the second death for "every man," and thus elected "all men" to be saved. In that sense, it is true that "He saved the world." Appreciating what Christ accomplished by His sacrifice, lukewarm Laodiceans will learn the meaning of faith, and how to glory in the cross."

Robert J. Wieland

What the Bible Teaches - Truth #1

a) When Christ "died for all," He tasted "death for every one" (2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 2:9). It had to be the second death that He "tasted," because what we call death the Bible calls "sleep," which everyone experiences except those who will be translated (John 11:11-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). Therefore there is no reason why anyone should at last have to die the second death except that he has resisted or rejected the salvation already given him "in Christ" (cf. Hebrews 2:3; the Greek word "neglect" in the King James Version means "despise," see Matthew 22:5).

b) At Christ's baptism, the Father "accepted" the human race in Him (Matthew 3:17). Thus He is already "the Savior of all men" (John 4:42); no one can any longer doubt that the Lord has accepted him/her "in Christ." But Christ is "especially" the Savior "of those who believe" (1 Timothy 4:10). Our salvation does not depend on our initiating a "relationship" with Him; it depends on our believing/responding to the "relationship" He has already initiated with us.

c) Christ "has abolished death" (the second; 2 Timothy 1:10). Since no one need be lost at last unless he chooses to reject what Christ has already accomplished for him, the only reason he can be lost is his unbelief (John 3:16-19). Christ has "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10). For "every one," believers and unbelievers, He has brought "life," and for those who believe, He has also brought "immortality."

d) In Romans 5:15-18 Paul sets forth what Christ accomplished on His cross. Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 illustrates that "verdict of acquittal" or "justification" for "all men." Lincoln granted every slave in the Confederate Territories a legal freedom; but none could experience it until he (1) heard the good news, (2) believed it, and (3) let it motivate him to walk out into liberty.

How Jones and Waggoner Understood This

"Now [Christ] has done all that freely. For how many people did He do this? Every soul? [Congregation: 'Yes, sir.'] Gave all the blessings He has to every soul in this world; He chose every soul in the world; He chose him in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated him unto the adoption of children and made him accepted in the Beloved.

"Whether you or I let Him have us, that is not the question just now. Before the foundation of the world He bought me. Then whose are we? [Congregation: 'The Lord's.']

"How is it possible for one to get into doubt as to whether he is the Lord's or not? 'He that believeth not God has made him a liar.' He may not do that in so many words, but when he gets into doubt as to whether he is the Lord's, he has allowed unbelief to overthrow him and Satan to get the advantage and sweep everything away.

"But still the Lord will not take what He has bought without our permission. There is a line which God has set as fixing the freedom of every man and He Himself will never go over that line a hair's breadth without our permission, whether man or angel. But when the permission is given, then He will come for all that He is.

The practical value of this truth. "Well, suppose you get up in the morning with a headache and your digestion has not worked very well and you don't feel just right. How do you know you are the Lord's? [Congregation: 'Because He says so.'] Sometimes people say when we ask them, 'Have your sins been forgiven?' 'Yes, I was convinced that they were, for awhile.' 'What convinced you?' 'I felt as though they were forgiven.' They did not know anything about it. They did not, in that, have a particle of evidence that their sins were forgiven. The only evidence that we can have that these things are so is that God says so. Don't look to feelings. Feelings are as variable as the wind.

"We need not have any more doubt as to whether we are the Lord's. But there are some people who have not submitted themselves to the Lord and are not practically His. He has made them His by purchase; now how can they know that they are His? By His word.

Does this Good News give license to sin? "But now we sometimes hear people talk as though that was going to sanction sin. No. It will not do that. It will save you from sinning. When a man's choice is to be the Lord's, then God works in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. The divine power is in this thing. There is no sanction of sin about it. In fact, it is the only way to keep from sanctioning sin.

"When was it that he bought us? [Congregation: 'Before the foundation of the world.'] What kind of folks were we before the foundation of the world? Sinners, just as we are? Evil beings and willing to go into evil ways? Making no profession of religion and not particularly wanting to? Did He buy us then? [Congregation: 'Yes.'] And He bought our sins. Isaiah describes it—wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; no soundness at all.

"Then the choice is forever with me as to whether I would rather have my sins than to have Him, isn't it? [Congregation: 'Yes.'] When sin is pointed out to you, say, 'I would rather have Christ than that'" (Jones, General Conference Bulletin, 1893, sermon No. 17, condensed).

What Christ Accomplished. "God has wrought out salvation for every man, and has given it to him, but the majority spurn it and throw it away. The judgment will reveal the fact that full salvation was given to every man and that the lost have deliberately thrown away their birthright possession" (Waggoner, The Glad Tidings, p. 14).

"Someone may lightly say, 'Then we are all right; whatever we do is right so far as the law is concerned, since we are redeemed.' It is true that all are redeemed, but not all have accepted redemption. Many say of Christ, 'We will not have this Man to reign over us,' and thrust the blessing of God from them. But redemption is for all. All have been purchased with the precious blood—the life—of Christ, and all may be, if they will, free from sin and death" (ibid., p. 61).

Ellen White's Illustrations

"Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. The greater the sinner's guilt, the more he needs the Saviour. His heart of divine love and sympathy is drawn out most of all for the one who is the most hopelessly entangled in the snares of the enemy. With His own blood He has signed the emancipation papers of the race" (Ministry of Healing, pp. 89, 90).

"[Christ] took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, He restored the whole race of men to favor with God" (Selected Messages, book 1, p. 243).

"By His obedience to all the commandments of God, Christ wrought out a redemption for men. This was not done by going out of Himself to another, but by taking humanity into Himself. Thus Christ gave to humanity an existence out of Himself. To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption" (ibid., pp. 250, 251).

"The redemption price has been paid for the human race" (Review and Herald, June 3, 1890).

"For the world, Christ's sacrifice was made" (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 301).

"Christ . . . redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and saved the world" (My Life Today, p. 323).