



*Chalmette
Church of Christ*

June 8th, 2014

If Christ Had Not Come

Garland Elkins

The cross was not an untimely circumstance in the life of Christ. The choosing of it goes back before the beginning of creation, for He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). Peter wrote,

Knowing ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ: who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of times for your sake. (1 Pet. 1:18-20)

By no means, does this mean that the wicked men who crucified Christ were innocent. Peter said to those who crucified Him, "Beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1:22-24). The cross was not something that men were able to force on Christ. "No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:18). Jesus voluntarily gave His life that we might live. He said, "Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again" (John 10:17).

Amazing as it is to the world, much of the value of Christianity lies in the death of its founder, and this is true of no other religion. Death to the founders of all false religions is looked upon as a tragedy. Death to Mohammed and Confucius was tragedy. In spite of the sin on the part of those who crucified Him, death to Christ was victory. What if there had been no cross; suppose Christ had not died? What would be our condition now?

1. We would still be living in darkness. As Gentiles, we could expect that we would be worshipping idols. Therefore, the condition would mean that we were lost, without God either in life or death.

Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (Eph. 2:11-12)

If Jesus or if we as Gentiles had become Jewish proselytes, we would be bound by the law of Moses. If Christ had never come, one could not be saved, for apart from the coming of Christ and the shedding of His blood, there would have been no salvation (Heb. 10:1-4, 9:11-22, 13:39; Gal. 2:16).

2. We would still be in our sins. It is true that there were certain sacrifices that were to be offered up, but these were only for temporary atonement and depended upon His coming as the Lamb of God and offering Himself for the sins of the world (John 1:29, 36). Guilt would continue to burden our souls with no hope of forgiveness. Psychiatrists seek to relieve the pent-up emotions and mental conflicts by getting the sinner to confess his wrongs, but only Christ can bring inner peace through the forgiveness of sins.

3. Divine justice would not be satisfied. Divine justice demanded that man be punished. When a man kills his wife to get her insurance, a mother kills her children or a drunkard kills innocent people, all reasonable people agree that the penalty should be severe.

Sin—even one sin—in God's sight is far more serious than we comprehend and from the standpoint of justice deserves to be punished. The Father and the Son agree that divine justice demanded death for sin. Jesus, therefore, came to earth to pay the penalty that man deserved to pay. This He did that we might be saved (Gal. 1:4; Heb. 2:9-10; Rom. 5:6-8).

4. There would be no Mediator and reconciliation. Sin separated man from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Christ came to reconcile man to God (2 Cor. 5:19-21). The fact that Christ gave Himself for us touches us and brings about a desire for forgiveness on our part (2 Cor. 8:9).

5. There would be no life for us beyond the grave. Life and immortality are made possible because Christ came. He said, "...I came that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Paul wrote of Christ, "But hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

"But Now Is Christ Risen from the Dead"

Paul declares with a shout of triumph that Christ is risen from the dead and is become the "firstfruits" of them that slept. Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). He announced to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). His death brought the possibility of forgiveness from sin. His resurrection brings the certainty of immortality.

Paul, along with the other apostles and hundreds of additional brethren, had seen Christ after His resurrection and had been taught of Him (1 Cor. 15:1-8; Luke 24:13-34). Why does Paul refer to Christ as the "firstfruits"? Had there not been people brought back from the dead before Jesus was raised? Yes, some had been raised by the prophets, and Jesus had raised some, but in every instance the spirit simply came back to inhabit the body again, finally to die again. However, when Jesus arose from the dead, He arose to die no more.

Jesus offers eternal life freely to all who will obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21-23). The choice is ours (Josh. 24:15; 2 Pet. 3:1). Life and death are set before us. If we choose life, we may live the abundant life in this world (John 10:10), that we "may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. 6:19).

(from Christian Worker, March 2014)

News and Notes

- **Vacation Bible School** will be June 16-19. There will be a group of 30 people coming from Bybee Branch Church of Christ in McMinnville, TN. ****We are still in need of volunteers for housing. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board.**
- Please keep Alice Riley, and Margo Rodney in your prayers at this time as they are in poor health.
- Please keep Jackie Gamble and J.V. Russell in your prayers at this time. They came forward this past Sunday asking for prayers.
- Please keep Keiane Johnson in your prayers at this time. He is suffering from leukemia and will be undergoing a bone marrow transplant.
- We extend our deepest sympathy to The Babin and Snyder families who have lost loved ones this past week. Please keep these families in your prayers at this time.



June Birthdays

11th-Julie Borchers

26th-Katelyn Lance

30th-Josh Borchers



Prayer List



**Alice Riley & family
Sherry Towle
Margo Rodney
Judy Hennessee
Betty Grisham
Ella Gillard
Krisztian Montague
Linda Swanner
Jackie Gamble
Addrean Jenkins
Gloria Smiles
Joel James
David Ebeling
Ryker Amaya
Raymond Sanchez
Gary Huettmann
Malcolm & Marlene Vazquez**

***All of our brethren scattered across
the United States & our troops in
Iraq**



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Services of The Church Sunday

Bible Classes 9:00 am
AM Worship 10:00 am
PM Worship 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 pm

Elders

Mark Lance 504-250-8492

J. V. Russell 504-277-0251

Charles Whitley 504-277-4717

Evangelist

Mark Lance 504- 250-8492

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Deacons

Scott Russell 504-232-4120

Wayne Schulz 504-392-3999

Butch Snyder 504-682-0051

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