

The Greatest Commitment at Christmas Time

Introduction:

- Every believer must make a commitment to exalt Jesus Christ. Why?

Second, because of what Christ has done.

1. Last week, we saw exactly **who** Christ is, but now let's examine the **work** of Christ.
2. We had to look first at Christ in His person, because if Christ was not God in His person, then His work is not sufficient. It would be meaningless.
3. From Paul's writings, we established that Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn (the preeminent one) of every creature, the Creator of all things, and the Head of the church.
4. Looking at Paul's writings, we will see the absolute sufficiency of Christ's crosswork – what He has done and accomplished.
5. Paul will show us two simple, yet gigantic things. There are two accomplishments that no other human being could ever do. Only the Christ could do it.

Christ made peace through the blood of His cross. vs. 20

1. We read this and right away you know this sounds big – really big. He now can, “...reconcile **all things** unto himself.” The “*all things*” mentioned are the things He has created, visible and invisible, in the heavens and the earth. vs. 16-17, 20
2. You may be saying, “Pastor Dan, why would they need to be reconciled to Him? He made them.” Here is the reason: when He created all things, they were very good, but when Satan and mankind fell into sin, “*all things*” were defiled and corrupted. (Ephesians 6:12 – heavens; 1 John 5:19 – earth)
 - Creation was good – Genesis 1 (Past)
 - Creation is now groaning (under the bondage and curse of sin) – Romans 8:22 (Present)
 - Creation will one day be glorying (in freedom from the presences of sin) – Revelation 21-22; Romans 8:21 (Future)
3. Because sin has filled the heavens and the earth, the universe is at odds with its Creator. When two parties are at odds, they need to be

- reconciled, but first, the way of peace must be made. Without it, there can be no reconciliation.
- **Illustration:** a marriage relationship.
4. In order for the *"things"* in heaven and earth to glorify Jesus Christ, a plan of reconciliation had to be designed and implemented. The sin that fills the heavens and the earth had to be dealt with, paid for, and purged with a final and complete sacrifice. There had to be a peace plan.
 5. This is why Christ's work on the cross was absolutely essential. When Christ died on the cross, it was more than just Christ making it possible for **people** to be reconciled to God.
 6. While on the cross, Christ was defeating Satan and his angels; thereby He was guaranteeing their eventual defeat and casting away to the Lake of Fire. The heavens and earth will be purged and restored resulting in a new heaven and new earth for the redeemed of God to dwell in for all eternity.
 - Revelation 12:7-10 (heavens are purged)
 - Revelation 19:11-21 (the earth is purged)
 - Revelation 21:1-8 (the new heavens and a new earth with no sin or corruption)
 7. At that time, the governmental structures of the heavens and earth, which were created by Christ, will do what they were originally designed to do - glorify Jesus Christ.
 8. It is Christ's finished work on the cross that ensures this. This is why Hebrews 2:14 proclaims that through death Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Sin had to be fully paid for before peace and reconciliation could be possible.
 - The word *"peace"* means "to harmonize." Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin made it possible for the things in heaven and earth to be brought back into harmony with God.
Hebrews 9:23-26
 9. So why haven't *"all things"* been reconciled yet? Why are the heavens and earth still polluted by Satan's wickedness? The next verse holds the answer.
 - Currently, Christ is extending an offer of grace and reconciliation to sinners. He is inviting them to be a part of this great cosmic plan to reconcile *"all things"* to Jesus Christ.
 - The provisions for peace have all been made, but the implementing of this great peace plan awaits fulfillment.
 - But there is one more aspect to Christ's work that was essential.

Christ rose from the dead. vs. 18

1. Christ made a once and for all sacrifice for sin, but had He remained dead, it would have meant nothing. If death could have held Christ in the grave, then it would have proved that He was a sinner like all the rest of us.
2. But verse 18 declares, Christ is the "*firstborn from the dead.*"
 - Remember, the term "*firstborn*" means "of first importance, of first rank." It doesn't refer to time, but to rank or status.
3. Christ wasn't the first person to be raised from the dead (Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, etc.). But all those who were resurrected, died again. It was a temporary resurrection. Death still reigned over their bodies. The degenerative process was still at work, death would surely ensue.
4. But not so with Jesus Christ! Christ was raised from the dead, **never** to die again. He conquered it with finality! Hebrews 7:25 proclaims that Christ is able to save people to the "*uttermost*" because He ever liveth.
5. Satan, death, and hell could not hold Christ down! He holds the keys of hell and of death! His blood sacrifice was sufficient to deal with the sin issue! His resurrection is the proof!

In Conclusion:

1. What a statement Paul makes about Christ in verse 19! Compare this with Colossians 2:9. Everything finds its purpose and completion in Christ. The word "*fullness*" means that there is absolutely nothing lacking.
2. Christ is God incarnate. Only God could make a sacrifice that was sufficient to atone for sin, and only God could completely conquer death.
3. There were many false teachers who were trying to lead these Colossian believers away from a total trust in Christ. These false teachers tried to demean Christ and make Him out to simply be a created being.
4. Paul wrote Colossians to solidify these believers in their faith in Christ and assure them that that they didn't need anything that these false teachers were promoting. All fullness was in Christ, and they were complete in Him! Colossians 2:8-10

5. Christian, do you see why we should be exalting Christ in all that we do? Especially during Christmas time, when Christmas is supposed to be all about Christ.
6. If you are here and you have never trusted Christ as your Savior, please do so today. He has done everything needed to forgive you of all your sin and reconcile you to God forever.
7. This Christmas season, let's make a commitment to exalt Christ above all else.