

**“Why Jesus Came to Die”**

**John 12:23 - 48**

**1. To fulfill His purpose – vs 27**

It was Jesus' purpose to come to earth intentionally to die. People discuss who killed Jesus. Did the Roman guards kill Jesus? Did the Jewish leaders kill Jesus?

You and I killed Jesus because it was our sin that put Him on the cross.

But Jesus died voluntarily. He died intentionally. He died of His own act of His will.

John 10:18 “No one can kill Me without My consent. I lay down My life voluntarily for I have the right and the power to lay it down when I want to, and also the right and the power to take it again. For the Father has given Me this right.”

John 12:27 “Now My soul is troubled and distressed. And what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour of trial and agony? But it was for this very purpose that I have come to this hour.”

Before Jesus Christ went to the trial and crucifixion and all the suffering He went through He already knew in advance what was going to happen. That's why in the Garden of Gethsemane, the night before all these events occurred, He is agonizing emotionally over the struggle, knowing what He's going to go through.

When Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ* starts, it begins in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus going through emotional and mental agony – the passion – as He's considering what's going to happen.

Jesus says, I know what I'm going to go through. I know all the pain that's going to happen to Me. What am I going to say? God, get Me out of this? No.

He said, this is the very reason I came to earth. It's the purpose. I came to die.

**2. To glorify His heavenly Father – vs 28**

John 12:28 Father, bring glory to your name!“ Then a voice came from heaven, “I have brought glory to it, and I will do it again.“

When?

Philippians 2:11 “...one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians 2:9 “Christ was truly God. But He gave up everything and became a slave when He became like one of us. He even died on a cross. Then God gave Him the highest place and honored His name above all others so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow down – those in heaven, on earth and under the earth.” What does that mean – in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth? That means everywhere people are eventually going to acknowledge Jesus for who He is. In hell, in heaven and on earth.

People often say, “What is the world coming to?” I’ll tell you what the world’s coming to! One day there’s going to be a final day of judgment. Everybody’s going to stand before God and at that point everybody’s going to admit that Jesus Christ was who He said He was – that He is Lord. All the arrogance and all the skepticism and all the stupid, foolish denial is going to go away. One day everybody’s going to admit it. Every nationality will admit Jesus is Lord. Every age group will admit it. Every culture will admit it. Every religion will admit it. One day every rock star will admit it. Every politician will admit it. Every athlete will admit it. Every businessman, every homemaker.

God showed His great love for us. In other words, the death of Jesus shows God’s passion – God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us. When Jesus stretched His arms out on the cross, He was saying to the world and to you, “I love you this much! I love you this much! This is how much I love you. This is how much I care about you. I love you so much it hurts!”

### **3. To attract all people groups to Himself – vs 32**

John 12:32 “If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people toward me.”  
33 He said this to indicate how he was going to die.”

God so loved the world!

2 Corinthians 5:15 “He died for all people, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for the one who died and rose for them.”

#### **4. To save the world from sin – vs 46, 47**

John 12:46 I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.

47 I will not judge those who hear me but don't obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it.

John 12:48 There is a judge for those who refuse to believe in me and do not accept my words. The word I have taught will be their judge on the last day.

#### **5. To show God and speak for God – vs 49, 50**

John 12:49 "I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it.

50 And I know his commands lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say."

Think about this, friends. Jesus never claimed to be a religious leader. Jesus never claimed to be a good teacher. Jesus never claimed to be a prophet. He never claimed to be a moral and ethical leader. Jesus never claimed to be a man of God. He said, "I'm God." That changes things just a little bit doesn't it? It's like an either/or. It's not like there's a whole lot of options here.

Let me give you a little advice. If anybody ever comes up to you and claims to be God, you only have three options - only three possible options.

Number one, you could say, He's an idiot. He doesn't know what he's talking about. He has diminished capacity. He's mentally unstable. He may be retarded. He's like the guy on the funny farm who says, "I'm Napoleon." He's a nut case, a whacko. You could think that.

The second option, you could say, He's a con man. He's a crook. He's a fake. He's a phony. He's a swindler. He's trying to tell me he's something he's not, probably to get my money. You realize sadly don't you, that there are a lot of religious con men in the world? There are a lot. That would be a legitimate option. Maybe he's a con man, maybe he's a nut case.

The third option is He's telling the truth. He's telling you He is who He says He is if He is telling the truth, that He's God. That means I have to fall down and worship Him. I have to obey Him.

There are no other alternatives. I hear a lot of people say, "I don't believe Jesus was God. I think He was a good, religious, moral teacher." He couldn't be. That option is not available. Because no good moral teacher would claim, "I'm God!" That was not in the options. You either are or you're not a good teacher. Good teachers don't walk around saying, "I'm God. You must worship Me."

This forces a decision. People at that time said, "We've decided He's not God so we're going to kill Him." Everybody in this room is making some decision about Jesus. You have already believed something about Jesus. You either believe He's the Lord, who He says He is. Or you believe He's a liar. Or you believe He's a lunatic.

Those are the options. He's either a **deceiver**, conning everybody. Or He's **delusional**. Or He's **deity** – who He claimed to be.

Jesus said, "I am God." And He claimed to be the Savior of the world. That's why He allowed Himself to be put on the cross. Obviously, as God, He could have prevented the whole thing. What was His purpose? His purpose was to save the world.

Jesus never wanted us to forget how much He loves us so He gave us a symbol. It's called the Lord's Supper or Communion. The night before Jesus went through all of those trials He sat down with His followers and He said, "Here's bread and wine. From now on I want you to use this to remember the blood and the body that I'm giving for you. It's just a symbol but it's to help you to remember how much I love you." That's why today, we're going to take communion together.

Why did Jesus have to die?

None of us are perfect. We've all blown it. We've all made mistakes. We've all sinned, the Bible says. Nobody's perfect. If you think you're perfect you need to see a psychiatrist. I don't measure up to my own standard, much less God's perfect standard. Sin deserves punishment. If you do the crime you've got to do the time. Justice demands punishment. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." Somebody has to pay for all the things you've ever done wrong – either you or somebody else. Either you go to hell or somebody else pays for all the things you've done wrong. That's what justice demands.

So God steps up to the plate and says, "I'll do it. I love you so much, I will pay for all the things you've ever done wrong so you can get to heaven on My ticket."

Jesus Christ comes to earth, lives a perfect life and dies on the cross for my sin and for yours. It's all been paid for. Every sin you will ever commit. When Jesus Christ died on the cross He stretched out His hands and one of the things He said was "It is finished."

He did not say, "I am finished" because He wasn't. It wasn't about that. He came to life three days later. He didn't say, "I am finished." He said "It is finished." The payment for all your sins, the plan of salvation has been paid for.

When Jesus said, "It is finished," that word in the Bible in the Greek is actually one word *tetelestai*. *Tetelestai* literally meant "paid in full." When a person had paid off a bill they would stamp *tetelestai* on it. That means it's paid in full.

When Jesus, on the cross said, "It is finished." He was saying "*Tetelestai!* Paid in full. I have paid for all the things you've ever done wrong so you can go to heaven."

Ephesians 1:7 "Christ sacrificed His life's blood to set us free which means that our sins are now forgiven. Christ did this because of God's amazing grace."

If there had been any other way to pay your sin debt God would have done it rather than putting Jesus through this torture.

### **How should I respond to the death of Jesus?**

**1. I ought to love Christ.** Even if God never did anything else for me, He deserves my total devotion because He's bought my ticket to heaven. I should love Christ with all my heart. The Bible says, "*We love Him because He first loved us.*"

**2. I ought to hate sin.** Why? Because it was sin that put Jesus on the cross. My sin. And, by the way, yours. So when I watch television and I laugh at sin or I watch a movie and laugh at somebody sinning, that is Satan's way of getting me to lower my standards. Sin is not a laughing matter. Just look at the cross. It is a serious matter and I should hate sin and do everything I can to fight against injustice in the world.

**3. I ought to tell others.**

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:19 “For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.”

If somebody died for you, wouldn’t you want to know about it? I think so! Jesus Christ died for your next door neighbor. Jesus Christ died for your mom and dad. Jesus Christ died for your brother and sister. He died for your best friends. Jesus Christ died for the people you work with and go to school with. Don’t you think they deserve to know about it?

This is why we do everything we do - so we can reach one more for Jesus. The typical resident in central PA, is sitting at home right now in their bathrobe reading the newspaper and watching TV totally oblivious to the fact of what Jesus Christ has done for them and how much God loves them. If your friend, your best friend, lives their entire life without knowing Jesus Christ and lives their entire life and dies without Jesus Christ then for that person the death of Jesus Christ was wasted. Wasted! Worthless!

2 Peter 3:9 “God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

The Bible says we must care because God cares and we are called to pass it on. Somebody told you.

#### **4. I ought to serve Christ & follow Christ**

John 12:26 “Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am; and the Father will honor anyone who serves me.”