

Sovereignty Series:
“The Preexistence, Deity and Work of Christ, pt.3
February 3, 2013

1 Timothy 2:5,6: “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.”

Theology (the study of God and His relationship to the world) matters to me for one reason: Jesus Christ. God’s relationship with the world takes on an intensely personal meaning because of the gift of His Son to the world.

Why would He send His Son into the world? The answer really wouldn’t matter if our theology excluded the truth that God is also a just God. God is a fully loving God, to be sure, but He is at the same time a fully just God. Still it doesn’t matter unless we understand that God’s justice is directed toward people. If our theology teaches us that humanity is *simply amazing, wonderful, cute and cuddly* creatures and that God adores these little image bearers, then the fact that God is a just God would not be relevant; we would simply say that God is love. But God is love and God is just!

Let’s look at the big buckets of the theology of the love of God and the justice of God. First, the Bible presents God as Sovereign Creator. In other words, He has right and authority over all He has made, which includes people. Second, the Bible quickly makes known that man sinned against Sovereign God, thus eternally offending Him. Third, that the wages of sin is death; and that God’s wrath must be issued upon us in fullness. With these in mind, then, the matter of God’s love and justice becomes of highest importance to humanity because the God who is just must be just and must do what is right. To understand the ramifications of this we need to consider that the Bible makes clear that all humanity is under judgment due to sin. This being the case, a just God must do justice and punish all who have ever been born in the line of the first sinner.

Now we can begin to answer the question of why God sent His Son into the world. The short answer is in order to satisfy both the justice of and to display the love of God. Christ Jesus Biblical theology becomes very personal and meaningful.

Our text from I Timothy is very important because it presents a picture of an active and powerful person who effectively mediates between two parties at enmity with each other. Christ’s purpose was to bring reconciliation between God and man, which He accomplished by way of His death on the cross, which was substitutionary death: He died in our place. His death, in this way, satisfied the justice of God and at the same time demonstrated the love of God for His elect! It satisfied the justice of God because Christ took upon Himself our sins. Man sinned and man had to pay the penalty of death. The problem for us in paying that penalty is that our death ends all hopes of reconciliation with God. But Christ’s death was powerful and effective because when He

died we died with Him. In other words, when He died His death counted as my death! This was God's plan before the foundation of the world! To save His people from their sins through the self-giving of His Son to die in our place and effectively redeeming us from certain damnation!

Can you see how at the cross the justice of God was satisfied and the love of God demonstrated?

Romans 5:8 spells it out, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

God's love is amazing because through the cross (that is, Christ's death on the cross) He provided the means by which He could justify forgiving the sins of His people! In fact, the cross is the pinnacle of the display of the love of God toward the elect of God. I don't think we can find a New Testament verse about the love of God that doesn't include in the context God's gift of His Son as the sacrifice for sin on the cross, which satisfied God's justice.

Here are three examples:

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

1 John 4:10: "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

Revelation 1:5b: "To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood"

We really wouldn't have any way to appreciate the love of God were it not for seeing the justice of God being satisfied through Christ Jesus on our behalf. It is sad to think that the greater number of all people who have ever lived never see, care to see, or receive the love of God displayed at the cross of Christ.

Augustine saw this clearly and called the cross, "the pulpit from which Christ preached God's love to the world." (from James Boice's "Foundations of the Christian Faith")

Christ came into the world to 1) fulfill all righteousness through His perfect obedience to God's righteous requirements of the law...ON OUR BEHALF! He didn't need to fulfill all righteousness because He IS all righteousness! But we cannot know God apart from righteousness. So, Christ fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law on our behalf! 2) to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8b) on our behalf! And, 3) to purchase men for God as Revelation 5:9 says about Christ, "You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from

every tribe and language and people and nation.” By His blood, or we could say, through His death, He redeemed a people doomed to receive the full brunt of God’s justice!

His work as mediator is, then, a very active work of mediation between God and man through His perfect performance record of righteousness. He alone was worthy for He, as the God-man (see message from January 27, 2013) was sinless and perfectly righteous on our behalf! His role as mediator required a passive obedience as well in that He submitted Himself to the will of Father becoming a substitute for us by dying in our place on the cross bearing the weight of wrath and satisfying God’s justice.

This act on the cross, this passive obedience is the act through which the love of God is displayed most prominently.

- 1) We see the love of the Father as He hands His Son over to wicked men in order for Christ to become our suitable substitute, condemned in our place (see Acts 2:23-24).
- 2) We see the love of the Son for the Father and for the people chosen in Him before the foundation of the world:
 - a. Through His self-emptying at the cross of glory, and rights as the Son of God, suffering as a transgressor our death in our place
 - b. By making Himself nothing at taking the role as the *suffering servant*
 - c. By representing the elect of God receiving the punishment that was justly due us. (Yes, even the elect need a righteousness found in Christ alone!)
- 3) At the cross we see Jesus Christ mediate our freedom
 - a. by becoming the ransom price saving us from the power and penalty of sin
 - b. by suffering, or bearing the pain of God’s judgment of death
 - c. by becoming our righteousness for us.
 - i. God is satisfied with the sacrifice of His beloved Son that He freely credits Christ’s righteousness to His people through faith.
- 4) Christ is our matchless mediator in that
 - a. Through His death God’s love is demonstrated
 - b. God’s wrath is turned away
 - c. And, through His subsequent bodily resurrection we have assurance that we, through faith in His blood, are justified
 - i. Romans 4:25, “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification!

O! Matchless, Impeccable Mediator! None but Christ could satisfy the will of God to save a people from their sins by removing His wrath and to satisfy His justice! Only Christ could appease God and bring many sons to glory!

Christ's work demonstrates the love and justice of God perfectly. The cross of Christ displays the fullness of God's love and the fullness of God's justice. I think J.I. Packer describes the work of Christ well in this statement:

"The wrath of God is as personal and potent as His love; and just as the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus was the direct manifestation of His Father's love toward us, so it was the direct averting of His Father's wrath against us." (I also found this in Boice's "Foundations....")

Christ work didn't end at the cross. As mentioned earlier, His resurrection confirms our justification. We, therefore, believe in a Risen Christ! And, just as we confess a bodily resurrection from the dead, we confess and affirm His bodily ascension to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of the Father. From this position of authority He lives to intercede on our behalf!

If you ever doubt the love of God because of hard circumstances in your life, I encourage you to shift your focus for just a moment from your circumstances to the cross of Christ. This is where you will see the love of God in splendor and glory!

Grace and peace be yours in abundance!

Sovereign Christ Bible Fellowship Church is committed to spreading the good news of the glory of the Gospel of God in Christ to every creature under heaven. As Hebrews 2:7-9 declares about Him,

"You made Him a little lower than the angels; you crowned Him with glory and honor and put everything under His feet."

"In putting everything under Him, God left nothing that is not subject to Him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to Him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for every 'son'."

Therefore, if it would benefit this cause the contents of the preceding message can be used in what ever form would be most helpful in causing more people to "**Behold the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ!**"