

Why did Jesus die?

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Preacher: Tony Bickley

[0 : 00] Well, it's good to be with you, and I echo Phil earlier, Happy Easter. Much of what Phil has been saying has been pointing in some ways to what I'm going to be looking at this morning.

The question of why. Why did this happen to Jesus? Why did all of these things occur? I want to read a verse in 1 John chapter 3 and verse 8.

And those of you who have a Bible, I'll give you a chance to look for it. 1 John, first letter of John, chapter 3 and verse 8. The second half of that verse.

For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Well, that's an interesting verse. Many people don't even believe that there is a devil today, let alone that there is truly a Jesus. There are many thoughts regarding the death of Jesus.

[1 : 18] For some, it seemed like it was just a tragic accident or a great cosmic mistake. How could this happen? For others, they just simply deny that it even happened. They say that it wasn't Jesus on the cross or that he didn't really die.

He swooned or fainted. But the truth is, this is the truth about the gospel, the Christian message.

The truth is that unless it was Jesus and unless he actually died, the whole event was pointless.

It achieved nothing. Unless it was Jesus and unless he actually died, and indeed, as we're hearing on Sunday, unless he rose again, these things were pointless.

But we do with his death this evening. Unless it was actually Jesus who died, it was pointless.

Because for this purpose, as we read, the Son of God was manifest or revealed to destroy the works of the evil one.

To change something that had already happened. And these works mentioned, they go right back to the beginning of things. When Satan tempted Adam in the garden, tempted him to break God's law, his promise is that which sin always promises.

[2 : 36] His promise was that mankind would grow in understanding. But the reality was that he was greatly diminished. He immediately lost fellowship with God.

If you read the story in Genesis chapters 3 and 4, he immediately lost fellowship with God. And following this, death would come as being the consequence of sin.

The Apostle Paul converted not long after the death of Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote this. He said, The wages of sin is death.

And we see it because it happened to Adam. And it's carried on through all of his descendants. And it seemed like a natural thing to us. We're born. We live.

We die. It's inevitable. It's unavoidable. And in many ways we can say, So it is in this life. It's appointed even. That mankind once die.

[3 : 35] And then God's judgment. When Jesus comes again. We can't avoid having to stand before God. And give an account of the life that we've lived. In our body.

Because it's from God. It belongs to him. He made humanity under his law. And conditions. And by breaking them. That word sin.

We so often hear it. We so often use it. By breaking them. Sin entered the human heart. And it's like a disease. It's inherited.

It's imputed. That means it's put to the account of our life. It's enacted in every human being. Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. You think.

Adam and Eve's first two children. Cain and Abel. One of them was a murderer. Four people. That we know of. In existence. And one was a murderer. Psalm 51.

[4 : 30] David's psalm of repentance. As he tells us. That we're born in it. The very makeup of our being. Is shaped in it. And by it. And it is indeed bad news. It's bad news for all of us.

On what we call this apparently. Good Friday. How can it be good Friday. When there's such bad news. But it's bad news for all of us. But that's why we preach the gospel. And the gospel simply means this. The gospel means. Good news. So amidst the bad news. There is good news.

People say. Do you want to hear the bad news. Or the good news first. And we always go for the bad news. The bad news is that we're lost. And broken. And damaged in sin. The good news. Is that there is a gospel of hope.

Good news of hope. From the very beginning. God promised to send a redeemer. Promised to buy us back. From the wicked wiles. Of the devil. For this purpose.

[5 : 29] The son of God was revealed. To destroy the works of the evil one. He promised. To buy us back. From the very beginning. To turn around the heart of man.

You know your. Heart is. Troublesome. Your desires. When we talk about the heart. We're talking about the desires of man. You know they're troublesome. And that they. Draw you. Into all kinds of. Things that afterwards. You think. I wish I hadn't done that. I really didn't want to do that. And we do them anyway. But it is to turn around. The heart of man. So that instead of wanting to do his own thing.

It. He. Is enabled. He. Is enabled. To worship God. To do the thing that God. Has purposed in our lives.

The reason he created us. The original commandment to Adam. To worship him. And I don't know about you. But the whole idea of me being able to come. With boldness to the throne of grace.

[6 : 29] And worship God. When I think of who God is. It is an amazing thing. God. Separated by sin. Caused by Satan's temptation.

And man's weakness. And for this purpose. Christ was revealed. To turn that. All around. To turn it on his head. John 3.16. Christians know this verse.

I think. We tend to think. Everybody knows this verse. But. I don't think the world is as familiar. With this verse. As we might think. They might know the Lord is my shepherd. Our father who art in heaven.

But. John 3.16. It tells us that God. So loved. That he gave his only begotten son. Just stop and think about that for a moment.

I'll say the verse. God so loved the world. That he gave his only begotten son. That whosoever believes on him. Will not perish. But will have everlasting life. I wonder what. That evokes in your life. The idea of salvation.

[7 : 28] The idea. That we won't perish. That we'll have everlasting life. Or are you focused on the fact. That it's God. God. So loved the world. That he sent.

His only begotten son. God the son. Into the world. So that we might have hope. For this purpose. Christ was revealed.

That we might have hope. And just think for a moment. The clear implication. In that we will not perish. Is that we are perishing.

That somehow the coming of Jesus will change that. Somehow the coming of Jesus will improve our situation. We are perishing. And we will continue to do so without him.

And only. Only by putting our faith. Our trust in him. Can we avoid this inevitability. We are already perishing. God in his love.

[8 : 28] God the father. In the majesty of his being. The eternal God. Who upholds. Is greater than. The whole of the universe. Has loved you.

He. Has loved you. He. Has come. In the person of his son. And loved you. We could travel through the Old Testament.

And we could see the continued promise. In plain words. And pictorial types. But the reality is this. The reality is that the love of God towards mankind is such. And so great. That he came in person. To save us.

In the beginning was the word. The word was with God. With God the father. And God the holy spirit. The word was with God. And the word was God. God.

[9 : 24] That doesn't mean. He was God. And when he became flesh. As we're told a little later in John 1. When he became flesh. That he ceased to be God. It means. From eternity past. He was always God.

There was never a time. When Jesus. Was not God. And he came. That word became flesh. And dwelt amongst us.

That we might see the glory of God. He came. He didn't send an angel. He didn't send a prophet. Who is as fallen as we are. In the same predicament that we are. He came. For this purpose. He revealed himself. That he might destroy. The works. Of the devil. He came. In the person of his son. He came. So he's destroyed.

All that Satan. Has done. For all whose faith. Rests in Jesus. As we rest our faith in him. So. I think Phil mentioned this. Substitution. So Jesus stands in our place.

[10:26] Of judgment. He bears our sin. Carries it to the cross. And that's important. We'll see that. I think.

It seems a bit of a no-brainer really. Isn't it? Doesn't it? That. Everyone who comes to understand this. Is going to want it more. Than life itself. I remember being so shocked.

When I first got saved. 1984. The first thing I did. Was I went and told my parents. And I thought. Well the only reason they're not Christians. Is that they've never heard this.

They just. If you hear this. You've got to become a Christian. Haven't you? That we're lost. And we're going to hell. And Jesus has come. And he saves us. And I told them.

And they said. Oh. That's nice. In just that way. You see. The stultifying effects of sin. Is that we are blinded.

[11:22] Both to God's truth. And our need of him. We reject the very offer of salvation. That God the Father has sent forth. Before us in Jesus. Who is God the Son. But he came.

He knew. That most people would reject him. And still he came. Even historians of the day. Josephus and others. Will tell you that he came. They're not Christians.

They just wrote history. And they mention him. And sometimes they mention. That there were claims about him. That he was the Son of God.

Or that he did mighty many miracles. Or that he rose from the dead. Or his disciples claim that. They record the same facts. As we have in the scripture.

He came. That Jesus would come from heaven.

[12:19] For you. For all who put their trust in him. How gracious is that? How kind is that? Loving kindness.

And the grace of God. The reality. Of the matter is the gospel. The good news. The message of Jesus. Is a true action of God's love.

Now for some. And you may have said this. You almost certainly have heard it. They will say. If God is love. Then why does he send people to hell? Well. But in truth.

The love of God is seen. In that he's made a way. For all. Who look to the cross of Jesus. To be saved. From the certainty of judgment. The very nature.

And holiness of God. Compels him to judge sin. It is his character. To judge wrongness. The general perception.

[13:19] Of the gospel. Many people. Might not think of it. In those exact words. But the general idea is. That the message of Christianity. The gospel. Is a threat. And that God is saying.

Unless we believe. You will be judged. For your failure. In reality. The reality of life. Is that we live in mortal danger.

Because. Hell is not. Merely a punishment. It's a destination. From which we need saving. It's a consequence. From which we need to be turned away from. And something that we need saving from.

And our only hope. In this loving God. Who sent his loving son. Our only hope of salvation. And redirection. Is found.

At the cross of Jesus. Let me give you an example. Earlier we said. The wages of sin is death. Jesus died. On the cross.

[14:17] To pay the wages of sin. But to realize the reality of this event. Demands. That we come to him. And seek forgiveness. That we realize. Our brokenness.

We need him to take our sin to himself. To pay its awful debt. It has to be punished. And paid for. The wages of sin is death. Death. But.

Some of the but's in the Bible are amazing aren't they? But. The gift. Of God is life. Through Christ Jesus. There's a way of death. And yet there is a way to life.

And it was always for this purpose. That Jesus came into the world. So as to destroy. The damaging works of Satan. That by attacking. Our first father Adam. He plunged the whole of humanity.

Into the inescapable abyss of lostness. And separation from God. God. We can't escape it by ourselves. We're. We're stuck in this. Sinking sand.

[15:19] This sinking pit of. Declining life. And he came. He came to reverse the devil's work. In all. Whose faith.

Now. Rests in him. And that's love isn't it? The love of God is seen in that he came. It's seen in that he. He took. Our judgment.

He hung upon the cross. Suspended between heaven and earth. Neither a part of heaven. Nor a part of earth. Cursed from both. And he carried upon his body. The sins of all.

Who come to him. Which begs that question. Have you come to him? Have you sought him?

He came. He came. God. Became man. That's a. A hard one to get your head around isn't it?

[16:18] God became man. God took our sins. God took our sins. In his humanity. God carried them to the cross. Why? Because God so loved that he gave. Jesus so loved.

He said this is love that a man will give his life for his friends. You are my friends. Jesus. Jesus born of the Virgin Mary without any help of Adam's sinful line.

Can't dispense with the Virgin birth. Living in holiness before the law. Born under the law. In the fullness of time. Born to keep the law for those whose faith rests in him.

Coming in love and humbling himself from divine God into human flesh. Fully God and holy man.

And taking upon himself our humanity. Why?

So as to pay the debt of humanity and all that stands between you and God is faith. In Jesus. As he mediates.

[17:20] Brings together. That which is in every other way irreconcilable. Faith in Jesus who suffered the worst things so that you might know.

That you might have the best of things. Faith in the Son of God who has loved us and given himself for us as a ransom. To pay the debt of our sin.

A ransom for our soul. Faith in the one who lived. The one who died. Who is risen again. Standing in heaven. Mediating for his own. Faith in Jesus whose love is made so plain.

And so clear. By his will and death. On the cross. Of my shame. You see this is love. It's not some emotional yearning and feeling that.

After a while just wanes. He gave himself. All of himself. He could have walked away.

[18:29] He could have. He could have stopped. The world from turning. He could have spoke. And destroyed. All that was before him. But he didn't.

He went to a cross. We heard. How he was beaten. And abused. And mocked. And if we'd read on. We'd have seen people shouting things at him.

On the cross. And he was nailed. To the cross. And he was hanging. On the cross. You know.

Crucifixion was an invention of the Assyrians. And the reason they invented it. Was they weren't happy. That impaling. People on spikes. And letting them slowly die. Was painful enough.

And torturous enough. Jesus. Jesus gave himself for us. You see this is love.

[19:36] Faith. Do you have it? Do you have faith. In Jesus. And if you haven't. If you don't believe you need it. What will you do when. Jesus comes again. Who stands in heaven.

Who presents your prayers. Your pleas. Your perditions. And needs before. His holy father. Who stands for you. When the wrath of God. Is revealed on earth. Against all sin.

If it's not Jesus. Then who will it be. He came to put things right. He came to repair our brokenness before God. He came to take our judgment from God.

His well pleasing life. Made out to the account of our life. It's imputed. In place of our sin. Put to the account.

Of our life. It's as though. We had lived that life. His sacrificial death. Is made. For the payment of our sin. It is imputed. Our sin. Is as though he committed it.

[20:38] The wages of sin. Is my death. My. My. The wages of my sin. Is death.

And Jesus died. In my place. His righteous life. Is given to me. And so.

I can come with boldness. To the throne of grace. Crying. Abba. Father. I don't know. If you think about that word. Abba. And think of a small. Jewish child.

Playing. And the father. Whom. This child. Adores. Comes walking towards it. And the child looks round. And runs with arms out.

And cries. Abba. Abba. It is that. Tender. It is that. Emotional. This word. It is not often a written word. Apparently. It is a spoken word.

[21 : 33] Of affection. A cry. Of those adopted. Into his family. Think of that. Adoption. Adoption. Adoption is. When you choose.

To take someone. Into your family. It is not an accident of birth. Or a purpose of birth. It is a choice. He adopts us.

Into his family. And when we are adopted. Into his family. He takes responsibility for us. As any. Good father would do. And he seals us there. By his spirit. Sin. Washed away. By the blood of Jesus. New life. Given from the life of Jesus.

And all. In the gift. Called faith. It is why he came. It is why he died. And it is why he is coming again. To take us. To be with him.

[22 : 28] Where he is. Think of him. Cut and bruised. For our transgression. Bleeding and dying. For our iniquity. That we. Might know God. And his life freely.

And willingly poured out. So that we might enter. Into the rest. And the joy of heaven's eternity. And even now. Even now. He is willing.

If you will come. Even now. He is ready. If you will cry out to him. In the desperation of your need. You know that you are not perfect. But God is perfect.

And the standard of heaven. Is divine perfection. And we only find it. When we are accounted. As having. Having it by the grace of God. Given. Giving us the gift.

Of faith. A countenance. As having the life of Jesus. Clothed. In his righteousness. It's possible. Some of you may not have understand. All that's been said.

[23 : 29] But don't be put off. Don't go away. Not understanding. Speak to someone. Because this is the love of God. We're talking about. It's not the love of some.

Statue or idol. Or. Some demigod. Who is. Limited in power. This is the almighty God. The holy God. Who so loved us. That he gave his son.

For the purpose of death. That he might reverse. All that Satan has done. To wrong us. And bring us. Into a relationship. Each day.

And for eternity. With the living God. In heaven. Amen.